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The renascence of faith





THE RENASCENCE OF FAITH



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# The Renaissance of Faith

BY  
RICHARD ROBERTS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
BY  
G. A. JOHNSTON ROSS



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## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE militant moral life of the age we live in is anxious and self-conscious and self-reviewing to the point of indecency. We have been made aware, with an exasperating clearness, of things as they ought to be; and have become perhaps still more painfully aware of our comparative powerlessness in the face of things as they are. The fight against wrong roars on around us on every side; with every possible aspect, from the exciting hope of real success to the most obvious and depressing impotence and failure. Panting in the smoke of the battle whose far sweep we cannot see, we call out for news of the fight as a whole: "Watchman, what of the night?"

In this book a manly effort is made to respond to that call, and to make report of the situation, its anxious aspects, and its hope.

It is an honor to introduce my friend Richard Roberts, of Crouch Hill Presbyterian Church, London, to the American reading public, and to be allowed to recall some facts which show that he has a right to be heard. In England he is fast making for himself an indelible name as an energetic leader in the interests of the Kingdom of God. Born some forty odd years ago in Wales, and dedicated to the holy ministry, Mr.

Roberts early won his spurs in a memorable forward movement of the Welsh Churches. Drawn into the vortex of London while yet little more than a stripling, he took his place from the first as an exponent of public questions, gaining the startled admiration of the Prime Minister of England by a deliverance upon the subject of Education characterized by Mr. Asquith as one of the most statesmanlike utterances he had ever heard. Carrying the heavy burden of a great metropolitan pastorate, Mr. Roberts has found time for a varied leadership in political and ecclesiastical life; he is an acknowledged expert in Sunday School reform, and has been elected President of the Metropolitan Council of Evangelical Free Churches.

If then Mr. Roberts passes in review the various aspects of the Holy War, he does so not as spectator only; he is combatant as well. The passion of the battle is in the report he makes. He has listened and watched while he has been fighting. Living right in the centre of the most turbulent current of thought and life, he has been alert to every sound ominous and hopeful; he has observed fearlessly and impartially and he speaks with decision and authority.

He knows the dangers of the survey he has made. "It is the easiest task in the world," he says, "to formulate an indictment of one's own time: it is also one of the most perilous." Mr. Roberts would be the last to affirm that he has wholly escaped the perils that are incidental to widely sweeping critical review. But whoever reads this book carefully will find himself in possession of an instructive estimate of the forces making for and against righteousness in our time:

and he will forgive the author's range of denunciation for the sake of the bracing effect of his tense and driving earnestness.

The style alone insures the reader against tedium. Mr. Roberts writes with the vivacious, surging fluency of the bilingual Celt, and there are phrases on almost every page that startle by their quick whipping of sound into the service of sense. Who, for example, is likely to forget the sticky vividness of the remark that the machinery of the Church is "clogged by a glut of unutilized grace"?

But while the style attracts and pleases, it is the range of view and sustained intensity of purpose that make the book's impressiveness; and the very frankness and daring of Mr. Roberts' trenchant criticism of the institutional forms in which for the moment the Church is clothed will help the reader to share the author's burning conviction that despite all failure, a genuine renaissance of faith has begun and a brighter day for the world is dawning. The book is an astringent tonic.

G. A. JOHNSTON ROSS.

NEW YORK.



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## PREFACE

A FEW words are necessary in explanation of the purpose and method of the following pages.

The book falls into three divisions. The first is a brief essay in diagnosis. It presupposes that the prevailing atmosphere of the time will embody itself in a certain temper and way of life, and it endeavors to discover the general character of that atmosphere by an analysis of the average man.

In the second division, the diagnosis is carried farther afield. It is an attempt to estimate the significance of certain movements and tendencies—intellectual, social, religious—of the present day; and it suggests that these influences, though heterogeneous in character, justify the belief that they will ultimately converge upon a single issue: namely, the resurgence of a new order of life through the renascence of faith.

The third division contains an attempt to appreciate the consequences which are likely to follow from such an awakening of the spiritual life, in the domains of religion, thought, and conduct.

The obligations which I am under are too many to be recorded here; but the reader will probably discover that I owe more to the stimulus received from Rudolf Eucken than to any other single influence.

Though pretending to no gift of prediction, I am not ashamed to confess that I am anticipating a revival of the spiritual way of life among us—a renascence which may make a new man of the average man of to-day, which will deliver the Church from that mediocrity of experience and endeavor by which Christ is discredited in our time, and which will deliver national life from the undisguised materialism of its policies and adventures.

The best I can hope for my book is that it may make some little contribution to the hastening of the renascence.

I have to acknowledge the kindness of my friend Mr. John Menzies in revising the proofs.

RICHARD ROBERTS.

CROUCH HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
LONDON, N.

*January, 1912.*

PART I  
THE AVERAGE MAN



# THE RENASCENCE OF FAITH

## I

### THE MAN HIMSELF

**T**HE Average Man, otherwise the Man in the Street, one morning awoke to find himself famous. Overnight a certain exalted person had (so it transpired) discovered him and constituted him into a Supreme Court of Appeal. Hitherto he had hardly been aware of his own existence; still less had he suspected that others, least of all the great ones of the earth, were aware of him. Then, suddenly, greatness, even sovereignty, was thrust upon him; and since that day his name has been the object of much fervid invocation. It has been the great resource of passionate politicians at a loss for an argument. This is the day of the apotheosis of the Man in the Street. He seems, at long last, to have come into his kingdom.

The event was indeed long overdue. It would be rash to say that the full implications of the arrival of the Man in the Street have even yet occurred to those whom it concerns. Meantime it is worth pointing out that this very ordinary person, so lately discovered, has always been the critical factor in every endeavor after political or social progress. He has determined the direction and velocity of all movements in the body

politic. This is not to say that he is a reformer—his best friend would hardly so call him. Changes are not grateful to him. Yet there can be neither change nor reform without him. The Roman poet could afford to say "*Odi profanum vulgus*," "I hate the Man in the Street"; but we have moved on a great way since then. Even the poet has nowadays to speak respectfully of the Man in the Street, and the politician falls at his feet and brings him offerings.

The philosopher has invariably paid the penalty of forgetting him. Abstract speculations which do not reckon with him are foredoomed, after a brief spasm of controversy, to pass into the populous limbo of "exploded ideas." The history of philosophy is, in great part, a pathetic scrap-heap. Sometimes indeed a speculative idea from some remote academy may percolate by devious ways into the street, but it usually arrives there after its own mother has disowned it. It is perhaps possible that some of the traditional positions of philosophy may have come down to the Average Man through preacher and teacher, and may even now form a part of his mental stock-in-trade. Yet he himself is certainly not aware of it; and the philosopher would be hard put to it to discover the possible Platonic or Aristotelian streak in the intellectual furniture of the ordinary person. Philosophy cannot come down to the street. It never has come; there has been no such thing as a popular philosophy. The Man in the Street in Athens or Alexandria may have absorbed a thin smattering of philosophy from his surroundings; but he did not establish a tradition of vulgar philosophy. The academic philosopher (there is

no other) and the Man in the Street have no points of contact. This is so much the worse for philosophy.

Religion has, on the whole, treated the Average Man with more understanding. The test of a true religion is whether it can be proclaimed on a street-corner. The refined abstractions of an ethical society may edify a few select highly organized souls, but they stand no chance of acceptance by the crowd. The religion with a future is one that can come down into the street. The secret of the expansion of Christianity in the early centuries of its history was simply—as Deissmann has so clearly shown—that it came down to the street in a splendid thoroughgoing way. Its appeal was hardly heard in high places, but it was gladly heard in mean streets. A religion stands or falls by what it has to offer to the common man. It looks indeed to-day as though Christianity has lost its ancient genius and has no longer anything to offer to the common man that he has any need or use for. This is a matter which requires much serious looking into. The trouble can hardly be in the Man in the Street, for in essence he has hardly changed at all these two thousand years and more.

It is the tendency nowadays among religious folk to chide the Man in the Street for his indifference. But this is an exceedingly futile thing to do. It is as though a doctor were to criticise a man for having spots on his skin, instead of getting to work to discover and remove the cause of the spots. There is, moreover, a considerable fallacy beneath this somewhat querulous criticism of the “indifferent masses,” which is not sufficiently recognized—namely, the assumption that they are more indifferent to-day than they nor-

mally are. Despite emptying churches, it is very doubtful whether this assumption is true. There are historical instances of communities being caught up by a quick, flaming sense of God and of His claims upon them. But these have been comparatively few in number and brief in duration. Principal George Adam Smith speaks, in his exposition of Zephaniah the Prophet, of the "obscure, nameless persons who oppose their almost unconquerable inertia to every movement of reform, and are the drag upon all vital and progressive religion. The great causes of God and humanity are not defeated by the hot assaults of the devil, but by the slow, crushing, glacier-like weight of thousands and thousands of indifferent nobodies." That seems to be the usual state of affairs, though it hardly meets the case to describe the Man in the Street as a nobody. There may have been periods of autocracy and oligarchy when he did not count for much in the determination of affairs; but in modern times he commands the situation. In all matters of our collective life the last word is with him.

It is worth notice, moreover, that beneath all his inertia the Average Man possesses a certain inflammability which has, on occasions, had very ugly consequences. Sometimes after a spell of anxiety he may be caught by a contagion of hysteria; and in our day this characteristic has added a new word to our vocabulary. Mafficking is not a modern thing; the name only is modern. At other times he may be seized by a sense of having suffered an accumulation of injustice, and may break out into hot revolt until a whole country is swept by an avalanche of passion, as France was in the days of the Revolution. Perhaps

the Man in the Street is properly described as a sleeping volcano, with fires deep down in his soul. If only the fires could be trained to give a steady light, and not be permitted to produce out of sight a surcharge of heat which must sooner or later erupt and send forth a deluge of silly hysteria or destructive wrath!

The Man in the Street is, in sober truth, the outstanding challenge to religion and modern civilization. To educate him into an intelligent vivid sense of personal and public responsibility were to transform the face of the earth. The Church has always had its eye on him, and here and there manages to capture him. For the greater part, however, he remains stolidly outside the circle of religious and other cultural influences. He does not belong to any particular class in society. He is indigenous at all social latitudes. The mistake that many people are making is to imagine that the area of modern indifference is delimited by certain social gradations. We speak of the "alienation of the working class from the Church"; but this alienation is not confined to the working classes—it is even questionable whether it is not proportionately more general and diffused among other classes. Nor is it to be supposed that indifference to the Church implies indifference to religion. Of indifference to religion there is probably less among the working classes than among the well-to-do. And such apathy as prevails among the working classes is not specifically and exclusively indifference to religion. There are those who, with very little acquaintance with the facts, are readily persuaded that the working classes have discarded religion for socialism. As a matter of fact, the statistics relating

to trade unionism (which does not in itself entail any necessary adherence to socialistic ideals) show a very astonishing tardiness on the part of the working classes to enter trade combinations, and this despite the fact, obvious to the most casual onlooker, that combination is the one hope of such effective economic and social readjustments as may be required in order to secure some adequate measure of ease and sufficiency of life. The problem of indifference among the working classes is not to be solved by brisk and facile generalizations, nor is it to be solved apart from the larger question which is raised by the presence of the same problem in other quarters.

Neither does the Man in the Street belong essentially to any particular time or place. He is, in a sense, a perennial and universal type. He has changed the cut of his clothes, but he has not changed the cut of his soul. The hue of his complexion has varied in different places, but not the hue of his spirit. The variations from the type are determined by local and temporary circumstances. He has the chameleon's capacity for taking on the color of his surroundings—an absorbent quality which makes him the characteristic embodiment of the temper of his own time. We know him pretty well in his present phase. A description of him may not indeed actually fit any known person in detail, for there are minor variations which spring from a thousand and one hidden causes; but there can be no mistake about the type. Picture him, therefore, as a decent, respectable person, who goes to his work in the morning, and is glad to get home again in the evening—unless, indeed, he be of the highly gregarious kind which gravitates to the club. He has a few interests—

perhaps a family of children, the best of all interests; or a bit of garden; or possibly a dog that must be taken out for a walk on Sunday mornings. He follows the cricket and football news, and plumes himself upon being something of a sportsman, sometimes even putting a little money on a horse he has never seen. An assiduous reader of the newspapers, he derives from his morning sheet his opinions upon most subjects. He raises a mild interest in politics at election times, but is not much troubled by them in the interval. The big movements in Church and State do not break his sleep. He thinks that the Bible should be taught in the schools, and he cannot quite make out what the parsons are quarrelling about; but it does not occur to him that he might teach the Bible to his children at home. He goes to church sometimes, endures the service in a half-bored way, and then thinks, like a good Englishman, he has done his duty. He has his own little set of conventions and habits, which he hates to have disturbed. He is the typical product of our modern Western civilization, an epitome of all the problems of our own time.

The Man in the Street *is* the modern problem—for the preacher, the politician, and the social reformer. The waste of good human material at both ends of the social scale is only possible because the Man in the Street cannot be persuaded to mend his ways. The social reformer cries aloud for a more equitable distribution of wealth; and in the end it is not Dives, but the Man in the Street, who hinders it. A great deal of energy and endeavor has been spent in reclaiming the human débris which is strewn so prodigally about all great populous centres; much of it had

been better spent in inducing the Man in the Street to see the folly of maintaining a scheme of things which will go on producing human débris so long as it is permitted to exist. It is far too readily assumed that the social problem begins and ends with the "submerged tenth." The squalor and misery of the slum are not the disease, but the symptoms of it. The disease ramifies through the whole structure of society; and the point at which the remedy is to be applied is the Man in the Street. His vote determines elections; his voice is public opinion. To quicken his conscience, to compel him to think, to awaken him to a sense of social responsibility, to give him faith—this is the central problem of our age. And this is not merely the swiftest and directest, but the *only* road to the City of God.

## II

### THE ECLIPSE OF GOD

**T**HERE are no Atheists to-day. Atheism has been extinct for many a day. It belongs to the crude and elementary stages of unbelief. The Atheist, if perchance here and there he survives, is a quaint antiquity.

The habit of modern unbelief is agnosticism. The Agnostic neither denies nor affirms (though he has at times involved himself in the paradox of affirming the unknowability of God, which unsatisfying affirmation seems, on his own premises, to be beyond his competence to make). He says, "I do not know," and leaves it at that. It is perhaps not sufficiently recognized that the Christian believer sets out by implying, if not by saying, the same thing. But he does not leave it at that. He goes on to say: "Where I do not know, I believe; I have the right to believe, and the right to assume that by believing I shall come upon certain knowledge which is otherwise inaccessible." One must be an Agnostic in order to be a believer. Atheism is the negation of faith; agnosticism is the admission of ignorance and the preliminary of faith. The gulf between the Atheist and the Agnostic is far wider and more impassable than the gulf between the Agnostic and the Christian believer.

It is moreover clear that the modern Agnostic is in some senses very distinctly a man of faith. That

is what we should expect. The human spirit cannot live on negations, and there is in all true agnosticism an intuitive and inherent demand for a positive construction of the universe. It cannot remain static. It has been characteristic of all the great Agnostics that they have cherished a splendid faith in the certainty of human progress, in the noble inalienable destiny of man. And faith this undeniably is, for human progress and human destiny are as little demonstrable as the existence of God. It was practical faith, rather than the agnosticism they professed, that gave driving force to the work by which we remember Huxley and Tyndall and Spencer; and the content of this faith is simply an irresistible and indestructible sense of the essential friendliness of the ultimate moral and spiritual forces of the universe; which is only a thin and diffuse way of speaking of God. This kind of Agnostic is a believer, and a believer in God, without knowing it. His faith may not be cast into concrete or definite forms; all the same it is faith. For in the last analysis a man's faith does not consist in his opinions, but in his attitude to and outlook upon the world, and in the way he handles it. A man, though he subscribe to no creed, who looks upon the world and the future with a cheerful and hopeful eye, with so much good cheer and hope that he thinks it worth while to do real work upon the world, is a believer in spite of himself. He may deny it, but that makes no difference. He may not assent to every proposition or to a single proposition of religion; nevertheless in his heart (which is the organ that in the end really matters) he remains a true believer.

Agnosticism bore within it the seeds of dissolution

from the beginning; and its day is done. Nevertheless it must be conceded that it has been of enormous value in fixing and accentuating the limits of faith, and in safeguarding the liberty of faith from degenerating into license. It may well be that the historian of thought in times to come will regard it as a necessary phase in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of religious truth. At the same time it should not be forgotten that agnosticism, so far as it was a defined and articulate cult, was the monopoly of a comparatively small, highly educated class. It involves a standpoint which the Man in the Street is incompetent to appreciate. He does not wait to make nice distinctions between fashions of thought; and in particular a philosophy which has nothing to say to the future has little in it to commend itself to him. William James says that no philosophy has a chance of life which does not "define the future congruously with our spontaneous powers." Agnosticism from the nature of the case must remain dumb about the future; and the ordinary person is on the whole more interested in the future than he is in anything else. It is upon this that crystal-gazers and soothsayers thrive and batten; and he must be a very unusual person indeed, however stern the intellectual discipline he has undergone, who does not in his heart sometimes believe that "there's a good time coming."

It would, however, be idle to suppose that the agnostic temper has not reacted very considerably on very many people. The authority with which its first protagonists spoke by reason of their great scientific distinction, produced a widespread unsettlement of faith among a class of people who were impressed by

the eminence of the new prophets, but were ill equipped for a serious examination of their teaching. In consequence there has been a vague, somewhat elusive kind of doubt current which could not give any very intelligent account of itself. This, however, is not to say that there has not been or is not a very appreciable amount of genuine intellectual uncertainty prevalent; but, there is certainly nothing like as much as is generally supposed. But whether it be much or little, this kind of doubt is a thing to be devoutly thankful for. True doubt is only the spirit of faith bereft of the forms of faith and still seeking them; and it is resolved in the end, not by subtlety of argument or momentum of logic, but by the stern necessities of the endeavor after the moral life. It is not beside the point to remark that a good deal of what passes as honest doubt is deliberately dishonest unbelief which is intended to cover a vicious life or to choke off a troublesome conscience. For the rest, the vague, indeterminate feeling of the precariousness of faith, which is the actual result of agnosticism upon the ordinary fairly educated mind, has relaxed the hold of inbred piety upon many people and has led to incalculable impoverishment of life. Its effect has been wholly negative; and it has failed to provide a substitute for what it denies in the shape of another positive stimulus to right action and strenuous living. There is no more pathetic or hopeless soul in the world than that which is persuaded that the bottom has dropped out of its faith, without knowing how it happened, which is astray in a mist of uncertainty, and is unable to find any secure stance for the recovery of faith. The soul sick with doubt and sick of doubt, yet in-

capable of diagnosing its trouble, is in some respects the most trying problem of pastoral duty.

Faith has moreover been hard hit in our own generation by vague, indeterminate, abstract ways of speaking of God. Matthew Arnold's "stream of tendency not ourselves which makes for righteousness" is not easily apprehended by ordinary folk; still less easily worshipped. "The First Cause," "The Life Force," are poor, attenuated substitutes for the God to Whom our grandfathers prayed. For all practical purposes of real life, these abstractions are entirely useless. They may suit some highly speculative types of mind that can feed upon abstractions, but they leave the ordinary person hanging in mid-air. As Martineau pointed out long ago, you cannot pray to the First Cause; or say, "O Stream of tendency that makes for righteousness, be merciful unto me a sinner." There can be no reality or attractiveness in any religion, so far as the Average Man is concerned, which does not, in theory at least, profess to be a communion between a personal God and the human individual. But perhaps the severest criticism which can be directed against this tendency is that it denudes the Deity of moral character. For we cannot conceive of morality which is not associated with personality. It may be that all this is at last to be traced to the circumstance that physical science has led us to think of God largely, if not altogether, in terms of energy: and that therefore we are surer of God's power than of His holiness, the inevitable result being a relaxation and an enfeeblement of moral sanctions. This is sometimes called a revolt from Puritanism. It would be more correct to call it an apostasy.

Side by side with this vagueness in our thought of God is the growing emphasis upon the Immanence of God. Whether the conception of Immanence has contributed to the vagueness, or the vagueness has adopted the conception of Immanence as a doctrinal refuge for a religious instinct which would otherwise be homeless, there can be little doubt that there is some connection between the two. The doctrine of the Divine Immanence is a great, necessary, true doctrine, also a very ancient one. It received its earliest thoroughgoing expression in the Stoics, and we have hardly improved upon the form of it since their day. The place it should hold in personal experience it will be necessary to discuss at a later stage; meantime we may note that no little confusion has arisen in many minds by reason of the apparently irreconcilable antithesis between the two ideas of Transcendence and Immanence; and in consequence there is a good deal of the ill-digested pantheism abroad which exercises no moral discipline, and dissolves all the iron out of faith.

These tendencies have all made their contribution to the prevailing temper of our time; though it may be questioned how far they have directly affected the Man in the Street. His life lies for the greater part outside the circle in which these intellectual movements are live issues; and what reaction they have had upon him is on the whole indirect. What they have really done is to confirm him in a habit of practical atheism, which constitutes that eclipse of God which is the greatest menace and peril of the time we live in.

By practical atheism I mean that habit of mind

and way of life in which God counts for nothing. It does not go out of its way to deny God vocally; it simply goes on its way as though there were no God—says it, like the fool of the Scriptures, “in his heart.” That God exists is a pious opinion which lies on the surface of his brain and makes no difference to the man. He may go as far as to say his prayers; but more because it is an old habit which, omitted, would leave him with an uncomfortable feeling of something left undone, than because it has vital meaning to him. It is merely a part of the day’s routine. Otherwise the thought of God exerts no particular influence upon the management of his life. It leaves him where it found him. It is not that he deliberately separates God from the ordinary concerns of life as those do who say that “religion has nothing to do with business,” but that he simply leaves God out without reason or argument. The belief, deliberately and consciously held, in the existence of a moral God is bound to tell upon one’s way of life. The devils believe it, says St. James, “*and tremble.*” It does make a difference to them; but the Man in the Street does not tremble, still less rejoice. The thought of God brings him neither fear nor gladness nor any other emotion; for it never occurs to him.

This temper leads to many things. It certainly is the most fertile of all causes of that “indifference” to which reference has already been made. A quick, vital sense of God compels a man to take sides. It cannot leave him unmoved. When once it is fixed in one’s mind that behind the sum of things there is a moral power living and moving and working, one is bound sooner or later to range oneself with it or

against it. There can be no standing still. One may choose to fight with it or withstand it. In either case there is an end of all practical atheism. One's recognition of IT makes one a theist, whether friendly or otherwise. The practical Atheist is the man who is neither for God nor against Him; who is, like those miserable souls in the outer rim of the Inferno, for himself alone. For this kind of indifference is at bottom only selfishness; and selfishness is the worst and last of atheisms. The man who stands aloof from the great movements of God and humanity, who spends his life within the narrow circle of his own private interests, who cuts himself away from the throbbing life of his nation and his race, with its mighty hopes and burning desires, denies God far more effectually than the man who says with his lips, "There is no God." For this is a denial of God and a denial of man at the same time; for "man has no end which is not also God's." All the great flaming enthusiasms of history have been born of God. "The name of God must be inscribed upon our banner," cried Mazzini, fighting for a free united Italy. "And the best of all is," said John Wesley in his great enterprise of evangelism, "God is with us." The great causes of God and man move tardily to-day because the face of God has passed into eclipse.

Together with this blight of indifference, there is a grave decline in the authority and the activity of the moral sense. There are a few strong souls who can keep their moral natures tautly braced up by sheer energy of will; but for common folk it is only the reinforcement which the thought of God constantly impinging upon their consciousness brings, that can

keep the distinction between right and wrong clear and imperative. The Man in the Street certainly recognizes in a general way that things are right or wrong; but the rightness of the right and the wrongness of the wrong do not greatly move him, and are not controlling and sovereign principles of action. When it is not conventional, what morality he has is frankly prudential. If he is honest, it is mainly because it is the best policy. He has superseded the Decalogue with one comprehensive commandment: "Thou shalt not be found out." His conscience is afflicted with two disorders—an incorrigible sluggishness and an uncertain attachment to his will.

It is to this moral sluggishness that we are to trace the tardy and meagre recognition of the ethical inwardness of great political and economic issues. Politics and Economics are, at bottom, departments of the science of moral relations. The questions they raise are ultimately moral questions. Yet the moral question is the very last we ask concerning our political and economic enterprises. In that region, right and wrong are synonymous with Liberal and Conservative, Individualism and Socialism, or contrariwise; and there is nothing more to be said. It is only to a few that it occurs to ask the fundamental and more material questions which at last decide the fate of all our political and social adventures. It is, however, in the single life that we may trace the consequences of this relaxation of moral sanctions with most certainty. A man may go a long way quite respectably even upon this level of moral mediocrity so long as his social moorings hold. His love for his mother or wife or children, or some other deep sentiment, will save him.

But let him lose that, and all his safeguards come tumbling down, with such results as we frequently see. Anyone who has seen the tragedy of unemployment at close quarters has seen this kind of catastrophe over and over again. When lack of work detaches a man from his usual social anchorage and he has no other safeguard to hold him up, the end is almost always the same. There are hundreds and thousands of men in this country to-day, who started with all the possibilities of a fine humanity, who have declined into loafers and vagabonds because, having no abiding and sure anchorage, the pressure of adversity and the stringency of economic conditions have crushed them into the gutter.

Is it to be wondered at, then, that recent years have seen a steady increase in the statistics of crime? Saving only for a slight check in 1906, the number of indictable offences in England rose from 50,494 in 1899 to 68,116 in 1908. This represents an increase of nearly 30 per cent., whereas the increase of the population during the same period was probably no more than 10 per cent. However we may account for the *immediate* causes of this advance of lawlessness, its ultimate source is to be found in the decline of inner moral authority, in the stifling of the moral sense. And this is only possible because God has passed out of our common life.

"Be not over-anxious," said Jesus. ". . . Your heavenly Father knoweth." He was speaking to a people held by a depression almost chronic by reason of many things; and His antidote to worry and depression was a quick remembrance of God. Where there is a vital sense of God, morbid conditions of

mind, together with the graver and more organic mental disorders of which they are the source, tend to disappear. A man is detached from undue concern for his own little affairs, and is able to throw himself upon the unfailing resources of the Infinite Love. This was Isaiah's message to the depressed and desperate exiles of Babylon: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold Who hath created these things." But, having lost this stimulus to faith, we are a generation of depressed and harassed souls, and we are producing disordered minds at a calamitous rate. The average annual increase of insanity for the ten years ending December 31st, 1908, was 2,370 cases; the increase in 1910 was 2,703. In the space of fifty years the number of insane persons known to the authorities has grown by 250 per cent., while the estimated increase of the general population has been about 82 per cent. Allowance must be made for a certain amount of congenital insanity, and for insanity due to purely physical causes. But disordered minds have their origin usually—directly or indirectly—in morbid, self-centred preoccupation; and the only sure antidote to this condition is the quickening of faith. The same disquieting factor is to be discovered in the similar increase in the number of suicides during the same period. Worry, depression and despair arise, in the last analysis, from the obscuration of God, and the increase of insanity and suicide bears an intimate relation to the prevailing godlessness.

There are certain moralists who ascribe the bulk of crime and insanity to alcoholism, and think that there is no more to be said upon the matter. Certainly drunkenness has much to do with the great and

tragic prevalence of social and mental disorder. But it is a very shallow view of the position which enables a man to believe that if we could only get rid of drink we should be rid of our troubles. If the diminution of drunkenness is the thing to be aimed at, then we should hail periods when work is scarce, for men drink less at those times. But if they drink less, they are more criminal; for periods of acute unemployment are marked by an increase in the number of indictable offences. It is moreover germane to our point that, while for the fifty years 1857-1907 the proportion of indictable offences has decreased from 2.84 to 1.76, convictions for drunkenness have increased from 3.94 to 6.01. In 1875, which gives 215, the highest index number in the measurement of convictions for drunkenness, the index number for indictable offences was 74; whereas in the year 1865, which gives us the maximum index figure for indictable offences, namely 100, the index number for drunkenness was only 126. On the other hand, in more recent years 1906 shows the highest index number in both classes of offences—64 for indictable offences, 163 for drunkenness. Looking at the figures as a whole, however, the inference is irresistible that, while our record has greatly improved in the matter of indictable offences in the fifty years, the record for drunkenness has become worse. These facts are adduced simply to show that the connection between drink and crime is by no means so simple as it appears to be on temperance platforms. Drunkenness is an enormous factor in our problem; it would be criminal to minimize its importance. It is necessary, however, that we should put it in its true relation to the whole

position. It is not the disease, it is at once a symptom and an acute complication of it. But if we were to get rid of it, the disease would still remain, no doubt cleared of many of its most loathsome concomitants, but still devastating and disastrous to the last degree. That disease is the decay of faith.

### III

#### THE ECLIPSE OF THE OTHER MAN

**I**T was asserted in the preceding chapter that "selfishness is the last and worst of atheisms." The assertion and worship of oneself is a pragmatic denial of God. But this, like other general statements, needs qualification; for it is true that the real end of man is to be and to assert and to express himself as fully and as completely as possible. It is true also that to discover and to believe in God is in the end the only way to discover and believe in oneself. And that not in the vague and perilous way of believing in the God within, for that may only be a new justification for a good conceit of oneself. Unless the doctrine of the Divine Immanence is held in a very clear-sighted way it may lead into very dangerous places. It may be very dignified and splendid, as the old Stoics felt it to be, to feel that we can carry God about with us in our souls; and it is true that we do so; but unless we recognize clearly within what limits it is true we simply end in a confusion in which we lose both God and ourselves. Until I recognize that God is also without me and above me, I cannot have any adequate sense of the individual distinctiveness of my own personal existence. As I move about the world I know that I am not another. I am myself among others like me. But the God-within doctrine unbalanced

by the God-without doctrine robs me in the end of that assurance. The outlines of my personality are swamped and lost in an endless ocean of flat being. I am as much the other man as I am myself. Now, this is a thing that my nature resolutely refuses to believe, and that is why pantheism has gone on the philosophic scrap-heap. My deepest craving is to be and to feel that I am Myself, to be able to say emphatically, without misgiving, I. I long for self-realization; I spend my "fire and restless force" in seeking it. But I can get no glimmering of it until I see myself stand out in relief over against the God-above-me Who is as personal and distinct from me as I am personal and distinct from Him. The Stoic, who was always talking about the "God-within," never wholly discovered man. He only discovered states and commonwealths. The older Jew, who had no notion of the "God-within" at all, did discover man. The Psalmist could say, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." And no man ever discovers himself so acutely and convincingly as when he is constrained to conjugate the verb "to sin" in the first person past.

The other end of the truth, however, should not be overlooked. Precisely in so far as he did not know the God-within, the Jew failed to discover the whole man. The Greek also had his share of the truth. The Jew, because he only saw God above, saw man below; the Greek, because he saw God down, saw man up. The Jewish sense of the God-without made man a worm. The Greek sense of the God-within made man a king. It was Christianity that solved the problem of how a man could feel a worm and a

king at the same time—which is just what a man should feel.

For, according to Christianity, it is the very thing which makes me feel a worm that makes me also feel a king, to wit, my relation to God. It is my consciousness of God which gives me at once a sense of weakness and a sense of power, the sense of my utter shame and the sense of my splendid inalienable majesty. For the singularity of the Christian view of man's relation to God lies in its double character. It brings God to our side, what time it leaves Him in the highest heaven. If I were a Jew, my apartness from God would isolate and crush me. If I were a Greek, my oneness with God would inflate me. But since I am neither Jew nor Greek, and yet both, being a Christian, neither of these things happens. My combined sense of my apartness from and my oneness with God keeps me where I ought to be, humbled by the thought of what I am in myself, exalted by the thought of what I am to God.

Now, the average man is not acquainted with this experience of humiliation. He does not feel himself a worm, because he takes no thought of the God above him; and if he plumes himself on his majesty, it is not because he takes any thought of the God-within, for then he would infallibly discover that his next-door neighbor is also and equally a king. His trouble is that he forgets "God-within-the-other-man." The first practical implication of the God-within doctrine is that the other man is as good as I am; the inevitable corollary of the God-without doctrine is that I am not quite so good as the other man, because I am really the worst man that ever lived. Paul, the best of men,

looking straight at God, describes himself as "the chief of sinners." This means that we are neither to look down or at the other man, but up to him. Reverence to God means reverence to man. One owes the other man not merely recognition but respect; one is not merely to be aware that he is there, but that he is there to be respected and served. This is the true secret of effective brotherhood. The feeling and constraint of brotherliness is attained to not by condescension from above, but by ascent from below. One has to climb up into the experience of brotherhood from a sense of personal insignificance. The average man is never sufficiently low to begin the climb.

And it is on this plane of brotherhood that a man becomes conscious of true human dignity. If he feels a king, it is as a king among kings. (Self-realization begins in humility and is achieved in service.) The one way to miss oneself is to serve oneself. The man who is for ever anxious about realizing and expressing himself is really losing himself. It is the man who is always careful of his dignity who sooner or later loses it. He usually makes himself ridiculous, and men call him a pompous fool. He who has a real dignity never thinks of it and leaves it to look after itself. The man who sets up a machinery to safeguard his self-respect sets up an engine which will in the end crush his self-respect. It is the old principle of Jesus that he who would find himself and keep himself, his soul, his life, must be content to lose them all.

The weakness and the peril of the man in the street is that he has never learnt this lesson or has forgotten it. His life gathers around himself. Save only for the necessary intimacies of business, and possibly for

a small circle of friends, he cuts himself away from the common life of his fellows. Only within his family circle has he a quick sense of duty or obligation to others. It is true that he sometimes gives a copper to an importunate mendicant, moved perhaps by some real but feeble impulse of pity, or it may be only to purchase a pennyworth of relief to his own feelings. It is not that he is incapable of kindness, but his kindness is spasmodic and fragmentary, in no sense a steady principle. He is not in any conscious organic relation to the common life of his fellow men. This does not arise from any strongly conceived and deliberate ideas about the virtues of independence and self-reliance, but from the fact that he is asleep. He may sometimes talk foolishly about keeping himself to himself, but that does not indicate a policy of exclusiveness; rather, one of sheer ignorance and stupidity. He is not selfish in the little things of life; but he is selfish, criminally selfish, in the big things, and he does not know it. He tacitly—probably in semi-consciousness of it only—expects the world to revolve around himself, and sometimes gets so far as to think it does. Generally, however, he inclines to quarrel with it because it does not. A great deal of the endemic dissatisfaction and criticism of the street is due to the world's failure to give the man in the street what he thinks is his due. It does not occur to him that the failure is not the world's but his own.

The average man is hardly interested in anything that does not bring in some immediate grist to his mill. It does not strike him that just because he is a member of society he is under obligation to do things that will bring no grist to his mill. Take, for instance,

his attitude to municipal government. He is often hardly aware that there is such a thing. He has, before now, been known to be ignorant of the name of the municipality in which he lives. So long as the streets are kept well cleaned and well lighted, and the main drainage is properly cared for, and the town clock keeps good time, so long as he is not put to inconvenience or discomfort, he is content to let things go. He so far fails to realize that he is directly responsible for the proper conduct of municipal business that he only very rarely troubles to vote at the election of municipal councillors. At the London County Council Election in 1910 only 55 per cent. of the electorate voted. Sometimes the apathy of the average man delivers the municipality into the hands of corrupt men, and then he turns round, and in his own sweeping way declares that men only go on public bodies for what they can make out of it. The truth is—and having regard to the great lack of interest in municipal affairs, it is a matter of no little surprise—that there is comparatively very little corruption in British municipal life.

It is only just to concede that the average man is not unmoved by the sight of real suffering or of a concrete wrong. That is what was meant when it was said that he is not selfish in little things, and that he is capable of spasmodic bursts of kindness. But he breaks down altogether when the evil is on a large scale or some distance away. He sees a man run over in the street, and he is all pity. But a tremendous colliery or railway accident far away hardly excites more than a passing remark. The cry of fallen and broken men and women fails to find him. He sees a little child badly treated by a ruffian, and he is ready to

knock the ruffian down. But the brutal savagery of a civilization which kills its infants by the thousand every year, and maims and handicaps other thousands who escape the killing, by the ignorance and the greed which it tolerates, leaves him unmoved. The infant mortality in this country, the wholesale slaughter (for it is nothing else) of thousands upon thousands of little children is a far greater menace to the Empire than a thousand German Dreadnoughts. Yet the number of people to whom an uneasy thought concerning this matter occurs is probably exceedingly small. The average man, like the Priest and Levite in the parable, "passes by on the other side," because it does not pay him to step aside to save a soul, because the straightening out of the social tangle brings no grist to his mill. When Jeremiah lamented the evil case of his captive people and sang their sorrows, he cried, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" And right out of the heart of our British life to-day rises the cry of broken men and women and stunted children, of the innocent blood of babes, "Is it nothing to you, all that ye pass by?" And hundreds and thousands of average men virtually answer, "Nothing." The average man stands to-day outside all the big hopes and all the big fights of humanity. Jesus Christ was an outsider in His day because others made Him so. The average man of to-day is an outsider because he makes everybody else an outsider.

And the law works out. He is surely and thoroughly losing his soul. Because he is living to himself, he is losing himself. Consider the miser—the shrinkage of heart, the hardening of all the tenderer emotions, the decline of faith and hope and love, and of

everything that goes to make life rich and abundant. This same thing is happening slowly but with a tragical certainty in the lives of a million average men today. They hoard their love, their faith, their hope, all the deep potencies of their souls, and by so doing damn their souls. The Greek word from which comes the word "idiot" signifies merely a private person. But the idea of detachment and self-centredness has so gathered around the word that it means to us a man incapable of interests outside himself. The average man is not many removes from this awful blankness. Mr. Chesterton starts his apologetic for Christianity from the lunatic asylum. Hanwell, he says, is full of people who believe in themselves. Self-isolation is the root of idiocy. No man ever lost his reason because he believed he was generally loved, but a great many have lost their reason because they thought they were universally hated. Whether their isolation is due to the egotism of self-conceit or of self-contempt the end is much the same. This is the inevitable penalty of cutting oneself adrift from the main current of life, of imagining that the whole universe ought to revolve round oneself. Swelled head is a prolific cause of softening brain. The law holds good on every side. Selfishness involves a man in a thousand impoverishments and deprivations; that which we vainly conceive will make us opulent makes us paupers and dotards. Selfish living is suicide by slow starvation. It is the inevitable end of the man who has no concern for the other man.

Perhaps not the least tragical aspect of this matter is the amount of vital force that is lost in the narrow selfish life. The crust of selfishness conducts neither

light nor heat. The light and heat are bottled up and lost. Suppose all the heat and light that are suppressed in a million average men to-day were to be liberated! We should begin to see the rising walls of the New Jerusalem to-morrow. But the causes of God and man are languishing to-day because of the selfishness of the average man. The missionary enterprise of the Church, the momentous social movements of our time, these are dragging because so many of us are spending on ourselves what we were meant to spend upon the world. Selfishness entails not only lost souls but a lost world. We sometimes hear of the unused energy of nature, of the tides, waterfalls and the like, power that might be harnessed to industrial uses. But what of all the wasted unused power of mind and heart, of speech and sympathy, of love and hope and faith, that might be harnessed to the chariot of God (which is also the chariot of man), and which is stagnating and wasting away, what time the world is calling aloud for it, and dying for the need of it, just because the Average Man has lost sight of the Other Man?

## IV

### THE BLIGHT OF SHALLOWNESS

**I***SRAEL doth not know, my people doth not consider,*" this was the prophet's lament long centuries ago; and ever since, all the great prophets and seers and leaders have uttered the same complaint. From Isaiah to Mazzini comes, in unbroken monotone, the despairing indictment: "*My people doth not consider.*" The average man does not use his brains. Not indeed that his brains are unused. It is one of his tragedies that his brains are so frequently used by unscrupulous and dishonest men.

Yet if this neglect of the power of thinking be a chronic note of the average man, the average man of to-day sins the more in it than his ancestors. He has less excuse for not using his mind. It is fashionable among certain classes to depreciate and despise the education which the masses of the people of this country have received in the last generation. It certainly has not been perfect; from the very nature of the case it was for long necessarily experimental, and mistakes were inevitable. But when all allowances and discounts are made, even if it did not lead to a very effective use of one's brains, it at least helped one to realize that the brains were there. Perhaps the deepest trouble is that the education has not gone far enough. That, however, was not the fault of the

educators, but of those who cut the education short. When boys and girls are taken away consistently from school as soon as they reach the age of fourteen, the education they have received is as much a peril as it is an advantage. They have received just enough education to make them shallow. Wholly uneducated people are sometimes very deep. It is little short of a miracle if a half-educated person is not shallow. There is little hardihood in asserting that the low age-limit of school life accounts for much of the general shallowness of our time.

It does not of course follow that, because a man's education has extended beyond his fourteenth year, he then ceases to be shallow, or that he has learnt to use his brains. The average man is not unknown in the universities. Though a man amass colossal learning, it does not follow that he can think. He may possess endless stores of materials for thought; but it is another thing to have developed the power of thought. Yet a real education would do the latter for a man rather more than the former. We have too long conceived of education as putting in rather than drawing out. We have thought it our business to stock the mind rather than to call out its powers. We are passing away, however, from this phase, and realizing more and more that the aim of education is not the imparting of knowledge (save only as accessory to the real aim), but the awakening, quickening and developing of the power of right thought and right action.

When we have had a generation of rightly conceived and rightly directed popular education, we may be delivered from our modern affliction of shallowness. Meantime we are faced with a problem which shows

its acutest symptoms on the railway bookstall. The appalling piles of trash which are offered for mental provender to the traveller reveal a very feeble and disordered intellectual digestion. There is, true, a certain admixture of solid and substantial literature; but it merely serves as a respectable background to the more marketable literature which crowds the foreground. It is only fair to concede that, thanks to the cheap re-issues of first-rate literature and to the general lowering of the price of books, the average bookstall of to-day is very different from that of five years ago. Still the overwhelming preponderance of what is called "light" literature is only a reflection of the fact that our chief literary output, and therefore presumably our chief literary provender, consists of fiction. Of the 8,446 new books published in 1909, 1,839, that is between one-fourth and one-fifth, come under the head of novels and juvenile tales, while of 2,279 new editions no fewer than 1,042 (nearly one-half) belong to the same class. Fiction is a legitimate form of literary art, but it can hardly be maintained that the artistic qualities of current fiction are generally very high, or that it is read on account of those qualities. At least it scarcely indicates a wholesome condition of popular literary taste that there should have been as many new novels and new editions of novels published in 1909 as new works and new editions of belles-lettres, works of history, biography, theology, poetry, and the drama put together. It points to a prevailing shallowness which finds satisfaction in the thinnest of mental provender.

In the matter of periodical literature the case is even worse. It is perhaps unfair to judge the case altogether

from the railway bookstall, because railway travelling naturally lends itself to reading of the "lighter" sort. Neither is it one's complaint against the enormous currency of this kind of literature that it is amusing. Amusing, even comic, literature is necessary and legitimate; for God made the laughter of things as well as their tears. One's complaint rather is that this literature is nothing but amusing, and that it hardly recognizes that a man has appetite or taste for that which is not flippant and trivial. The humor of the professedly humorous periodicals rarely rings true, for it does not touch the deep springs of the soul. It is humor made to order, pure verbal horseplay. True comedy is always too near the tragedy of things to be merely comic. It is barely a step from the laughter to the tears of things in human life. Compare for instance our great weekly humorist *Punch* with some of his contemporaries. The one is full of comedy, the others are only comic, simply because the one is spontaneous and true, the others manufactured and unnatural—which means that *Punch* is greatly human and the others are not. True humor is never shallow.

A similar inference might legitimately be drawn from the present state of the daily press. The "scrappy" press is a sign of the times; and the older tradition of solid serious journalism seems to be in a bad way. The old newspaper had certainly something elephantine and ponderous about it. It was stodgy and respectable; but it was at least truthful. The new newspaper, because it is so scrappy, if it is not untruthful (though it is sometimes that), is hardly ever more than half truthful. It selects what it believes will suit the appetite of its readers, the spicy, the sensational,

the curious. It does not tell the whole truth about anything. The mischief with the old style of newspaper was that it was not interesting; the mischief with the new is that it sacrifices everything in order to be furiously interesting. It is superficial, and intentionally superficial. The modern newspaper assumes that the average man is shallow and makes itself shallow to suit. The success of the method is proved by the immense fortunes which the average man has bestowed upon some modern newspaper proprietors.

But here we come upon a curious paradox. While the policy of the modern newspaper is determined by the average man, the politics of the average man are very largely determined by the newspaper. He has ceased to exercise independent judgment. His newspaper supplies him with a formula, and all the king's horses and all the king's men cannot separate him from it. He repeats his party formula automatically, if he is sufficiently moved to join a party at all. Of reasoned and rational ground for his shibboleth he has none. He takes up positions concerning which he has never occupied himself with an hour's hard thinking.

One meets this lack of independence and originality on every side. The average man is a borrower and an imitator. He has nothing of his own. The capacity for imitation is a natural and necessary endowment; and up to a certain point its value is beyond measure. It is through imitation that the child learns to adjust himself fully to his physical and social environment. The thousand and one amenities that grease the wheels of the social machine are the products of imitation. In some things we tacitly (and rightly) agree to do

what everyone else does. But we carry this too far. Even in so trivial a matter as dress, we do not hold ourselves free to exercise an independent judgment. Somebody sets a fashion, and we must needs follow it regardless of any consideration of its suitability. Here no great amount of harm is done. At the worst it only makes for a certain external monotony of style. But there are regions in which this habit is symptomatic of a good deal. During the month of May, for instance, nearly everybody asks somebody, "Have you been to the Academy?" Because it is the fashion to go every year to see a display of generally mediocre pictures, we must needs go. But it hardly strikes us that it would be very much worth while to go occasionally to see and study the great artistic achievements which are gathered into our public galleries. The claptrap which one hears at the Royal Academy simply reveals the fact that a great proportion of the visitors could hardly look with patience, not to speak of intelligence, at a Titian or a Raphael or a Rembrandt. We are followers of a fashion, unthinking devotees of the new. A thing is not necessarily bad or poor because it is new—even the "Odyssey" and *Hamlet* were new once—but it is a very feeble and poor thing to worship a thing just because it is new. Yet it is the habit of our day. We bring offerings to the altar of "the latest"; and the name of our favorite deity is Novelty.

With some of us it is all the other way. If we are not enthusiastic admirers of the new, we are violent partisans of the old. If we are going to follow anything without question it is safer to follow the old; for the old has stood the test of time, and that is some presumption in its favor. But the old is very often

much the worse for wear. Time does "make ancient good uncouth." If it is bad to worship the new because it is new, it is no less bad to worship the old merely because it is old. The man who boasts that he is old-fashioned is doing as silly a thing as one who should boast himself new-fangled. One should have as intelligible and intelligent a reason for following the old as the new. But there is this difference between the cult of the old and the cult of the new; the worship of the new is generally the foolishness of the young average man; the worship of the old is the frailty of the old average man. This "tendency to leave the old undisturbed," says a modern philosopher, "leads to what we know as 'old-fogyism.' A new idea or a fact which would entail extensive rearrangement of the previous system of beliefs is always ignored or excluded from the mind in case it cannot be sophistically interpreted so as to tally harmoniously with the system. We have all conducted discussions with middle-aged people, overpowered them with our reasons, forced them to admit our contentions, and a week later found them back as secure and constant in their old opinion as if they had never conversed with us at all. We call them 'old fogies,' but there are young fogies too. Old-fogyism begins at a younger age than we think. I am almost afraid to say so, but I believe that in the majority of human beings it begins about twenty-five." There are very few who cannot confirm this from personal experience. But in any case, the extreme fluidity of the new-fashioned person, and the thick viscosity of the old-fashioned, are both alike by-products of brains unused and lying fallow.

But is shallowness a sin? Can a man help being

shallow? Is a shallow man not born so? The truth is, that men make themselves or permit themselves to become shallow. It is part of the present writer's contention that the prevailing shallowness is a consequence and a symptom of the tendency to which must be traced the whole range of circumstances which are now passing under review, and of which the diagnosis will occupy us later. It may be permitted at this point to observe that this is, in a sense, one of the central troubles of our time. We do not think; and this cessation of thought is in some respects as marked within the Church as it is in the outer world. The average man in the Church lets his minister think for him; and if that is bad for him, I incline to think it is worse for the minister. For that is the beginning of Papacy. It is a serious matter that Christian folk are so easily prepared to take their creeds and opinions ready-made, and that, speaking generally, they lack independence to challenge them. Creeds and opinions are no more exempt from the ravages of time than are flesh and blood. Perhaps it is that we are *afraid* to challenge them; and fear is the only thing that has ever been able to confound the truth for long. And even fear cannot do so for ever. It is this kind of temper that has made possible the doctrine of infallibility, whether of a Pope or a Church.

## V

### THE DISMEMBERMENT OF LIFE

A TYPICAL average man called on me not long ago on business; and in the course of conversation he said: "If a man cannot please himself sometimes and have a good time, what is the use of living?" That is in essence the average man's philosophy of life. It may be expressed in other ways, but the core of it is to please himself sometimes, and to have a good time. It was natural that one should at the time recall an old word: "Even Christ pleased not Himself."

The defect of this view of life is that it does not regard life as a whole. It looks upon one part of life as a burden, a space when a man may not please himself and have a good time; and it finds the real joy of life in the residual time of self-pleasing. There is clearly something profoundly wrong about a view of life which supposes that there is a necessary antithesis between work and play, which makes the one hateful and the other pleasant. As a matter of fact, on any wholesome view of life, work and play are both essential and should therefore be pleasurable. We cannot do the serious business of life efficiently without occasional, even regular relaxation. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Another way of life is possible, a way of life in which it is treated as a whole, and in which both work and play are regarded in the same

spirit, that is, both of them alike as subordinate to, and serving the higher ends of, life. Life is not to be made up of spells of work and play. Life is a larger thing than either, or both. Work and play are not the ends but the means of life. Life is not independent of them; but it is above them. It is an organic whole which cannot be chopped up into separate parts.

Yet it is the penalty we have to pay for living at this period that there are very few of us indeed that have not succumbed to this disintegrating view of life. "Life," said George Meredith, "is a little holding lent to do a mighty labor." If a man wants to cultivate a piece of ground properly, he must have a fairly clear idea of what he wants to get out of it; and it is only when he has such an idea that he is in a position to settle the arrangement of the ground, the size of the plots and borders. To cultivate it at haphazard, to attend to it in a casual way, is to court failure. Yet this is what most people are doing with the fairest garden that they will ever have the opportunity of cultivating. The whole and only policy is "go as you please." Here is a patch used, shall we say, as the kitchen-garden, the part occupied with our daily work, the routine of more or less uninteresting activity by which we gather the necessary bread and cheese. This particular area has to be attended to; but it is usually attended to in the spirit that the sooner it is done with the better. In some gardens there is no such area at all, for there are a good many folk who do not need to work for their daily bread. Some of them are in this condition because they have tilled their ground so well that they have enough left over for future necessities without continuing to labor. There

are others who were born into it; and many of these are apt to think it something of a disgrace to have a kitchen-garden at all, and to regard those who have to work for their living as belonging to an inferior order. This is only a weak and imbecile kind of snobbery. But whether there be a kitchen-garden or not, there are always some flower beds. Here is a border on which we cultivate what is called "society," a department of life given over to social engagements, some of which are useful and wholesome, some idiotic and contemptible. Another patch is devoted to the culture of pleasure, an area of life in which flourish the theatre, the ballroom, or what not. Here another plot—a little one,—on which we try to raise a little religion, attended to perfunctorily about the week-end and left to itself for the rest of the seven days. Here a parcel given over to the cultivation of an attenuated and bloodless philanthropy, a ministry of the poor not altogether free from the taint of patronage, which does not come in for much cultivation if some other more attractive area seems to call for attention. Most people have little bits of their holdings given over to such priceless interests as those of home and friendship; and many have small areas for cultivating the flowers of art and literature. So our life is made up, and in the best of us it amounts to little more than excellent patchwork. It is true our lives are very full; we pass on from one patch to another in breathless haste, and we are never at an end. We are always on the move, and never arriving anywhere; always doing something, and yet getting nothing done.

We must trace this tendency back in the end to a false view of the meaning of life. That false view is

indeed itself the effect of a still anterior cause which we must presently seek and examine. But life is dominated by one of two main philosophies, the "have-a-good-time" philosophy or the "getting-on" philosophy. The latter is pre-eminently the philosophy of the young average man. The middle-aged average man has given it up as something of a bad job and has substituted the "have-a-good-time" philosophy for it. There is nothing wrong with the idea of getting on in itself. In a sense, that is the end of life. A man should aim at progress. He should have ambitions. The trouble is that getting on in the modern view is usually synonymous with making money. The standard of greatness is the multitude of things, especially of dollars and cents, which a man possesses.

No one aims at making money, of course, merely for the sake of possessing it. Money means some kind of power. It enables one to purchase a certain measure of comfort, which is no unlawful thing until it passes into unnecessary and superfluous softness and fatness of living. It enables a man to enter what is called good society. Indeed, one of the most searching criticisms of our time is that the only things left which money cannot buy for a man are brains and character. But though the possession of money may not be regarded as an end in itself, it is regarded as a means to purely selfish ends.

It is much the same with whatever hope a man sets his heart upon. Our pleasures are essentially selfish and peculiarly useless. We do not conceive of them as means of recreation and refreshment for the better discharge of life's larger affairs. They are good fun, that is all. We do our athletics by proxy. We pay

others to play our football; and we go and see them do it. The public man too often seeks power and popularity for the gratification of purely selfish cravings. The preacher is tempted hard and often (and also often succumbs) to forget the saving of souls in the effort to acquit himself brilliantly. The politician forgets statesmanship in order to get the cheers of the gallery. The most subtle device of Satan for the undoing of a man's soul is to tempt him to use opportunities of public service for the pursuit of selfish ends. There is no prayer which should be oftener on the lips of the public man than the clause in the Moravian liturgy: "From the unhappy desire of being great, good Lord, deliver us."

All this points out in the end to the fact that our ideals of life have fallen into a desperate tangle. Life in consequence has lost the note of unity, and the resulting disintegration has forced its way into the deeper regions of the soul. It has until a recent period vitiated our educational ideals and methods. We are only now, indeed, beginning to recognize the need of organizing education from the standpoint of moral action as the end of life. But no moral action can ever be adequate which does not involve the whole man; and the real problem of education is so to develop and harness the powers of the mind, intellectual, æsthetic, emotional, in such a way that each shall make its own contribution to the stimulation and direction of the will. "Character," said Novalis, "is the perfectly educated will"; but the education of the will entails the proper education of the whole man, that is to say, his education in the direction of some one ideal which shall gather up all his various nature into

one obedience. The average man is suffering to-day from the defective education of his powers, and consequently he lives from hand to mouth, the creature of any impulse that may come along. He has no steady policy, no constant scale of values, no consistent standard of judgment. He is incapable of seeing the inwardness of a situation, and he has, because he can do no other, to take things at their face value. If he seeks knowledge, it is for some immediate personal ends; if he has any dealings with art, it is for certain evanescent personal satisfactions. He lives in streaks and patches. He has never seriously asked himself why he is here at all; and it is a very pertinent and a very damaging criticism of his education that it has not suggested the question to him. He finds himself here, takes himself as he finds himself, lives from hour to hour as fancy or necessity may dictate, never dreaming of the need of linking the hours together and making them tell a common continuous tale. All this is a colossal waste of life.

And he has only one life to live. He cannot have it over again. Nor can he gather up the patches and make of them one whole. For there has been irrecoverable leakage of life and strength in the intervals of his activity. This patchwork mode of life makes for waste, and a waste that can never be repaired. "You cannot kill time," said Thoreau, "without injuring eternity."

## VI

### THE EVIL SEED

THE dissection of the average man might be pursued farther; but what has already been said should be adequate to the end in view—to wit, a demonstration of the desperate tangle into which the life of the common man has fallen. It may be assumed without much argument that all this is the product of the prevailing public atmosphere which our average man is regarded as embodying. What, then, are the influences which have issued in this muddle and poverty of life? To what are we to attribute the lack of faith, the absence of true fraternity, of depth and of unity in the common life of our time?

At the risk of being criticised for over-facile generalization, I venture to think that one word covers the whole ground, namely, *Materialism*. It is, however, necessary to point out that materialism may be taken as referring to two things, the one a native human bias and the other a theoretic construction of the universe. The position which I venture to take up is this: that the poverty and inadequacy of our modern life arises from this native inclination to materialism reinforced by the materialistic tendency of the thought of the past two generations.

The final demonstration of the truth of this contention is, I think, to be found in the practical ob-

scuration, in our time, of the doctrine of a future life. It is true that the average man has not categorically thrown overboard his faith in a future life; in a more or less casual way he hangs on to it. It receives a spasmodic revival when the chill hand of death touches his child. But its reaction upon his ordinary life is infinitesimal, and the stimulus and the comfort which a vivid faith in a future life can bring are practically unknown to him. It is eloquent of the kind of hopelessness which has overcome him, that he can acquiesce in the brokenness of his own life and the inequality around him without now and again breaking out into that temper of other-worldliness, which does at least promise the possibility of redress in another world. I think it was Mr. Robert Blatchford who once told of an old peasant in the west of Ireland who, when asked what it was that he most desired to see, answered: "The Day of Judgment, sir." The Jew of the period around the beginning of the Christian era in his desperation turned to Apocalyptic, grotesque and fantastic in form, but nevertheless embodying a faith that the last word upon this scheme of things would be spoken from without and not from within. But nowadays we are not even capable of Apocalyptic. Apocalyptic may have been born of a perverted faith; but we have not even a perverted faith. We have hardly any faith at all.

There are some who would persuade us that the decline of faith in a future life is on the whole a sign of advance. The craving for immortality is said to be merely a crude desire for self-perpetuation. But it can hardly be written off in that summary way. Even though one were compelled to concede that

there is not in the present brokenness of life an argument for faith in future redress and compensation, the limitations of our present life demand some such faith if we are not to regard the universe as a piece of creative prodigality. There are capacities within us which require dimensions broader than those of time and place for their proper expansion. Modern psychology has tended more and more to believe that our life is a far deeper thing than we know, that there is incalculable depth and extent of life beyond the threshold of consciousness. But in this it has done no more than confirm an instinct, an intuition, which mankind has always possessed. The profound restlessness of the human spirit, its craving for movement, as we see it in the history of the race, especially in the wonderful western migrations of Iberian, Celt and Teuton, bear witness to its deep sense of a larger destiny than its immediate environment can afford. It is the same story which the writer of Hebrews tells in that great processional in the eleventh chapter, where he speaks of men who confessed themselves strangers and pilgrims on earth and sought a country of their own, a better, that is, a heavenly country. The craving for immortality is not merely a desire for self-preservation, for mere continuity, it is the desire for the opportunity of perfect development. It is the passion for perfect freedom.

It may not be unrelated to all this that religious faith is far more vivid in young countries than in the old. Possibly emigration may have behind it an unrecognized religious impulse. Let it be admitted that it is, superficially at least, due to a desire for better material conditions; but beneath this is the deep age-

long craving for enlargement of life which is not in the end to be rigorously differentiated from the desire for immortality. In any case, it is a curious circumstance that the lawless lumber camps of Minnesota and the mining settlements of the solitary West should respond so spontaneously and readily to the appeal of religion. May it not be that the spirit of adventure is at bottom, and unconsciously, a rudimentary phase of faith, which is capable of responding to its true appointed stimulus when that is applied?

If this be so, materialism is as fatal to the spirit of adventure as it is to belief in a future life; and we may be right in tracing the dull heavy-footedness of modern England, the lack of bound and spontaneity, to this cause. We may look enviously at the spring and zest of the young nations of the West; we do. And when we bring our thoughts home again, we begin inevitably to animadvert upon the gray and dull drabness of old countries. But the difference is not a question of age. It is fundamentally a difference between faith and no faith. If the older nations are fatigued, it is not because they are senile, but because they are faithless. Nations do not grow old; and if they become exhausted it is not through process of time, but through the invasion of unbelief. Materialism is the most effective and fruitful cause of national decline.

The reasons for this are not far to seek. It might indeed be argued that materialism, by diverting a great deal of energy from useless superstitious practices and turning it into channels which lead to material prosperity, should properly contribute to national greatness. But this does not square with historical fact. For the natural sequel of materialism is neces-

sarianism, the denial of freedom; and with the loss of freedom vanishes initiative; and inertia and lethargy follow. The only condition upon which human energy can be called out to its uttermost is the belief that man is more than the universe, possesses some endowment which may enable him to master the universe, and that he is in no sense merely a product of those hidden and mysterious physical forces which have produced the sum of things around him. He must be conscious not merely of difference, but in some sense of detachment from the universe; he must feel that he belongs to a higher region.

Moreover the necessarian character of materialism takes the heart out of all moral sanctions. Without freedom there can be no sense of responsibility, and consequently no such thing as morality. Morality can have no adequate sanction save only in the belief in an actual absolute righteousness from which it derives. Apart altogether from the question of future rewards and punishments, the right conduct of man towards man can never be guaranteed in the present state of things except upon the basis of the stimuli and the deterrents provided by the belief that such conduct is required by the ultimate authority, whatever it be, which always says the last word in the moral world. In a materialistic construction of the universe there is no room for an authoritative and absolute moral order; and human flesh and blood is so frail, that, bereft of that support, it inevitably slides into anarchy.

The proper antithesis to materialism is faith, and faith in a personal moral God to Whom there can always be an appeal, Who can be depended upon to rein-

force us in our struggles to satisfy His demands and Who is always accessible. Shut that door upon men and you involve them in that tangle of hopelessness and moral impotency which breeds crime and suicide and mental disorder. For that same reason materialism puts a premium upon, or offers a justification for, the native streak of selfishness which we have brought with us out of the jungle and the forest. We know what the ethic of the jungle and the forest is; and there are some who have found a scientific justification for the prevailing competitive anarchy of our modern civilization in the fierce struggles of the animal world. There is a good deal of the ape and the tiger left in us; and materialism can do no other than encourage their dominion over us. It has no sanctions which can evoke the spirit of fraternity or the temper of co-operation, save only in the exploitation of the weak. Its most characteristic products are the Trusts.

This leads to the conclusion that the real logical outcome of the materialistic temper is that we have come to believe that heaven lies in the possession of money, and in consequence of this belief our modern civilization is organized chiefly for the purpose of money-making (with brief occasional intervals of relief provided for by pleasure-seeking). Those of us who are not making money want to do so, and hope that some day we shall do so. In the meantime we are engaged in making money for someone else. Practically everything is subordinated to this one thing. That complex of troubles which we call the social problem arises out of this dominating fact. The grossly unequal distribution of wealth in our modern civilization is due to the money-making character of

our social organization; and so long as we tolerate a social scheme which is built around this idea, so long we shall have the social problem with us. Rival schemes of economic readjustment or fiscal reorganization will do no more than touch the surface of the matter until men are released from the entirely damning doctrine that a man's life consisteth in the number and size of his investments.

Meantime this passion is robbing us of both character and depth. What is the meaning of that strange and sinister word so frequently on our lips that "you cannot trust anyone nowadays"? Our greed of money is responsible for the atmosphere of distrust and suspicion which prevails to-day; and this same atmosphere is the judgment which we ourselves pass upon our commercial probity. Is the love of money making us a dishonest people? It is difficult to find a certain ancestry for distrust unless we trace its lineage to dishonesty. By our mutual suspicion we are accusing ourselves.

The influence of materialistic tendencies is accountable also for our shallowness. It affects us in two ways. The insensate and increasing pace of modern life is a sufficiently disturbing factor in the modern situation to require a section to itself. But the materialistic bias has also been responsible for a purely utilitarian type of education which has been fatal to all true culture. We have fancied it to be enough that we should equip the child with just sufficient knowledge to give him a start in life. The three R's with a few other odd touches were supposed to furnish the lad with enough mental capital to enable him to fight for himself. What we actually have done is just to give him enough to enable others to exploit him; and

we have left him, like a cake not turned, a shallow, dependent and often helpless individual. We are certainly learning more wisdom in this connection; but meantime we have produced an extent and a persistency of shallowness in our common life the evil effects of which we shall not outgrow for many long days.

The ill service which scientific materialism has done us is to confirm the average man in a way of life from which his true well-being and his proper development demand that he should be steadily and persistently called. No materialistic hypothesis is in itself adequate to account for human nature. There is that within man which sets him, not in a higher category than the brute beast that perishes, but in a wholly different region. The difference between him and the brute is not a difference of degree, but of kind; not a difference in stage of evolution, but a difference due to an altogether distinct and unshared endowment. It is true that he has affinities with the brute; but there is something added to those affinities which fix a great gulf between him and the brute. Yet this is a gulf across which he constantly tends to drift, if he be not steadily recalled to his true original course. Materialism drives him inevitably across the gulf; and just because this world is so much nearer than the other, because material things are more immediate and obvious, the natural man stands in jeopardy every hour. He has to be persistently reminded that his destiny lies the other way; but the materialistic tendencies of our time have pressed him into that great gulf in which he has lost faith and fellowship, and in consequence of which he has declined into a chaos of moral and mental disorder, of shallowness and despair.

PART II  
THE WILDERNESS



## VII

### THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

IT is the easiest task in the world to formulate an indictment of one's own time; it is also one of the most perilous. "Social philosophy has to be perpetually on its guard against satirists and sentimentalists, as statesmanship has to beware of anarchists and fanatics. Every age has had its moralists who charged it with vice, crime, and disease, who lauded an unreal past and prophesied an impossible future." \* It is the temptation of the stern moralist always to fall into a mood of "owlish pessimism." On the other hand, there are those whose peculiar temptation it is to live in a temper of "cuckoo optimism." The trouble with both alike is that they select their data and refuse to look frankly at all the facts. There never was an age of such absolute homogeneity of quality throughout as to justify either a thoroughgoing optimism or an unqualified pessimism. Every age is susceptible of drastic moral criticism; yet in every age there are always, for those who have eyes to see, circumstances which make for hope.

There has probably been no period of history of which it has not been said that it was a period of transition. Human affairs are always in a state of flux. There is no such thing as stagnation. Whether the

\* Frederic Harrison, quoted in *Public Opinion*, Oct. 30, 1909.

transition be from progress to reaction or contrariwise, there is always some movement; and one age is to be distinguished from another not only by the direction but also by the velocity of the movement. There are times when the movement is slow; times when men's hearts are hardened and asleep, and events follow one another in a monotonous, insignificant procession. There are other times when the movement becomes fast and furious, and the age is at last involved in a tumultuous confusion which seems to the onlooker to be the end of all things. The student of history who looks back at those periods from the vantage ground of quieter times recognizes that the clamor and the chaos were but the last gasp of an exhausted epoch mingling with the cries of great Mother Time in travail with a new era.

The course of history is punctuated with such happenings as these—Renasces, Reformations, Revivals, Revolutions. The progress of the race has not been a steady ascent. Rather does it appear somewhat like a weather chart, showing high peaks with intervening depressions, yet on the whole tending upwards. There are depths of depression which the race has left behind for ever, to which it will never more descend again. There are doubtless depressions and reactions yet ahead of it which, if historical analogies are to hold good, it cannot escape. But it will scale in the days to come heights more splendid than any it has yet attained. Painfully, it is true, yet with no uncertainty, here a little, there a little, it will press on until it come at last to the City of God. A far cry, no doubt, yet “there is no hour of human existence which does not draw on to the perfect day.”

To the man of understanding there has never yet been an hour of depression in the movement of the race which did not yield anticipations of the coming ascent. The period before the Renaissance—indeed, the whole of the sterile millennium which went before it—is studded by oases of enlarging hope, hope which at length materialized, and that richly. The Protestant Reformation cast deep, significant shadows before. The French Revolution—which, despite its bloody excesses, established the modern reign of liberty—may be traced back step by step to distant fruitful fountain-heads. It is ordained that, amid all the desperate aridity of times of reaction, influences shall be set afoot, and in due time converge on one point; and from that point they issue forth in a mighty stream which bears on its flood some new principle and ideal of life to fertilize and renew the world. And so, out of the wilderness of the most utter exhaustion, there never fails, for those who have ears to hear, to come the voice which bids men prepare the way of the Lord.

It was the distinction of the prophet that he heard this voice and echoed it; and his hearing was no mere subjective fancy. For the prophet was not only a moralist but an historian, and an historian who understood the great tendencies which operate unseen beneath the outer flux of human affairs. He heard the voice in the very movements of his own time, and, whether he proclaimed deliverance or calamity, it was with direct reference to past and current history. Apocalyptic proceeded on other lines. Prophecy saw the future issuing out of the womb of the past—invariably, yet not without travail or tumult; but Apocalyptic saw the future breaking like a bolt out of the blue

across the order of history. Prophecy, anchored in history, remained sane, though it passed away. The apocalyptic hope, with no such moorings, assumed grotesque and impossible shapes. This is not to say that the apocalyptic hope was itself a false or unreal thing. On the contrary, the apocalyptic hope is born of a quite sound spiritual instinct; but the literature which preserves the history of it shows that it lacked the intellectual discipline which would have delivered it from the two pitfalls into which it fell—namely, the kind of machinery of physical and political portent which it set up, and its misreading of the conditions which might precipitate an apocalypse. It belongs to our purpose to consider the present and permanent religious content of the apocalyptic hope; it will be sufficient at this point merely to indicate that it is a factor of which some recognition must be made. Meantime, it is rather our business to follow, however far off and however haltingly, the footsteps of the prophet, and to consider things as they are, and to inquire what manner of promise they have for the future and in what direction they seem to be tending.

Over against the materialism in which the average man is involved, the prevailing materialism of the atmosphere of our time, there is certainly a very considerable feeling of unrest. "Compared," says a recent writer, "with twenty or even ten years ago, men are talking a new language. They are thinking new thoughts. They are dreaming new dreams. They only partly know that their language and their dreams are new. These visions do not find expression in Lombard Street, in the Bourse, at a directors' meeting, in the club. Money-changers have dreamed no dreams from

the day they were driven from the temple by Christ. At most, men of big business have but a subconscious suggestion of the change which is impending, gained from the headlines of the daily press. But their sons are coming home from the universities with a new light in their eyes. Their wives are coming home from the cathedral with a new religion from the pulpit. Even the representatives of privilege in Parliament are unconsciously reflecting the new spirit which is in the air." \*

This writer is thinking particularly of the social and democratic movement and legislation in Germany, England, France, Switzerland, and Denmark; but it is hardly to be questioned that his words apply over a much wider range. It is beyond doubt that the most potent influence in modern political life is the new collective consciousness which has permeated the whole of the West. It is a big, momentous fact, the whole implications of which we can yet only partially discern. The present situation may be well described as one in which a selfish materialism is set over against the ascendant principle of brotherhood, in which, indeed, the issue between them is already joined; and the confusion of our time is simply the confusion of the battlefield.

Things have been preparing for this Armageddon for many days. Mazzini with prophetic insight declared more than half a century ago that just as Individualism had been the ruling principle of the period between the Protestant Reformation and the French Revolution, so the principle of the following epoch would be Collectivism or Association. The century

\*Mr. F. C. Howe, of the New York *Outlook* (Feb. 1910), in an account of his impressions of a six months' study of the industrial democracy of Europe.

following the French Revolution has been occupied with the establishment, the extension, and the purification of democratic ideals; and we are at last entering upon the new period (which sound democratic ideals alone could make possible) of collectivism and brotherhood. We have seen it coming in the legislation of the last generation and more, in which the ideal of collective responsibility has again and again been recognized; and now the tide is well on us. In Germany "the fear of poverty, the accidents of industry, and old age are relieved by pension schemes. There are schemes for insurance against sickness and loss of work as well as the most wonderful tuberculosis sanatoria, convalescent homes, and hospitals." And England is following hard upon the heels of Germany.

This same spirit is manifesting itself in very strong tendency towards international peace. There never was a time when the prospects of abolishing war were so bright; and the Arbitration Treaty proposed between Great Britain and the United States indicates merely the beginning of a ferment of peace sentiment which is bound, in time, to embrace all the great nations. The growing spirit of brotherhood is rapidly making war impossible.

It is clear that this tendency will issue in an increased security and ease of life; but it can hardly be supposed that security and ease of life are adequate ends in themselves for the powerful tendencies that are at work at the present time. It is probably largely due to the ubiquitous materialism of the time, that even the sentiments of brotherhood embody themselves almost exclusively in demands for economic readjustments and improved physical environment. But surely these

things are merely preparatory to some larger purpose; and it is perhaps the most salient criticism of our modern collectivistic experiments that we have not quite clearly formulated the thing we are ultimately aiming at. The Social Reformer has, no doubt, in his mind a pretty definite picture of the kind of economic paradise that he desires; but he has still to define the kind of being that he wants to produce in this paradise. Human life cannot be static, even in a paradise. The Chicago politician who said that he did not wait to hitch his wagon to a star, but that he hitched it to anything that was going his way, was smart and plausible; but he was profoundly wrong. Short views are entirely precarious; and it is only by having a star and keeping it in view that one can judge with assurance the soundness of each step one takes.

Something is going to happen. These deep, far-reaching movements are not upon us for nothing. But what is going to happen? Is all our social endeavor by means of legislation and otherwise to issue only in more loaves and fishes, with a little more milk and honey thrown in? Let us have our economic paradise by all means, and as speedily as possible. But when we have put the average man through the discipline of the economic paradise, what is the result we expect? We have not yet defined this result, and the kind of economic paradise that is to be should be determined by the result which we want to produce. Nietzsche dreamed of his "overman," but he was going to produce him by means which are concrete negations of the spirit which is operative in the social movements of our days. The Nietzschean overman is, in practice if not in theory, the apotheosis of the brute elements

of human nature, whereas it is implicit in the modern spirit that "the ape and the tiger" should die. Nietzsche's protest against all kinds of soft, morbid sentimentalism is necessary and comes opportunely. Humanitarianism is always in danger of deliquescing into ineffectual slush. Nevertheless the "overman" is as much out of relation to present reality as Jewish Apocalyptic was remote from reality in its day. But Nietzsche, at least, has endeavored to describe the kind of result that he would have human effort produce. As yet the modern social reformer has hardly reached the pitch of his courage.

The rising tide of brotherhood is the death warrant of materialism. We are without doubt moving with a steady momentum. But whither? Where do we want to get to in the end?

## VIII

### THE TYRANNY OF THINGS

**T**HE Voice which bade men prepare the way of the Lord was heard in the wilderness; and the wilderness was the proper setting for the Voice. It was the Voice of Life uttered over against that symbol of exhaustion and sterility—the wilderness of Judea. Of the reality of the Voice in our day there can be no question. It is articulate in our advancing social consciousness. But of the reality of the present wilderness there can equally be no question. The exhaustion of certain tendencies and influences constitutes as real evidence of coming change as does the emergence of a new positive factor of progress. One circumstance of this character is the undoubted work-weariness which our way of life is producing.

One consequence of the materialism to which we have succumbed (or, rather, from which we have never sufficiently emerged) is the habit of thinking that man's greatness is to be estimated in terms of his inventions and technical achievements. That the last century and a half has been a period of unique and unshared distinction in this respect need not be argued; and the passing of time has seen a great increase in the rate of the progressive triumph of human knowledge and ingenuity over physical forces, until it almost seems as though we had come nearly to the end of things in

this particular region. Forces of nature that our fathers hardly knew of have been harnessed to our common uses. The earth has shrunk immeasurably through improved and accelerated modes of travel. We have annihilated distance by means of the steam-engine, the turbine, the telegraph, the telephone, the motor-car, and wireless telegraphy; and there are still more wonderful and varied applications of electricity yet to come. The discovery of radio-activity has revealed a form of energy of the possibilities of which we can as yet form no adequate conception. We are at last beginning the conquest of the air. Without peradventure, this is a wonderful story. Its witness to the resources of the human intellect and of human ingenuity is overwhelming; and the exceeding wonder of man has been accentuated by the exceeding wonder of his marvellous triumphs. It is no longer permissible—in the face of the advance of knowledge and invention—to belittle man as the microscopic tenant of a microscopic wandering star. But the paradox of the situation is simply this—that man has only made himself the slave of the universe over which he seemed to be triumphing.

The activity and the industry which this advance of invention and technical achievement has produced is immense. The pace of life has been increased beyond calculation. Speed is the governing factor of our existence. We are for ever trying to break records, to discover how swiftly we can put up buildings, or produce books, or cross the ocean. We have become the slaves of speed. We bolt through holes in the earth because we cannot travel quickly enough in the daylight. We imperil our lives in order to save a few minutes in railway travelling. This were no evil

thing did it arise from a more insistent sense of the brevity of life and the length of art. But it arises out of no such exalted sense. We live at a faster rate simply because we want to make more money and to make it quickly.

And the consequences? To begin with, this feverish haste has all but made the fine arts impossible. We are not producing sculptures and architectures or pictures except on short leases. There is little that is abiding or eternal about the creations of modern art. We do not possess the calm and the rest in which men are able to build for eternity. We produce no "Faust" because we have not the patience to spend half a century on it. We produce no Amiens Cathedrals because we cannot afford to wait. Everything from boot repairing to church building must be done "while we wait." And, still worse, character is being affected in the same way. It is unnecessary to point out how the industrial organization which modern inventions have made possible is affecting the physical fibre of our people. The more serious thing is that men are reduced into mere machinery; and the result is an inevitable slackening of moral fibre. We are only parts of the machine, cogs and cranks and what not; and we have ceased to inquire of our souls. Even those who are not directly involved in modern industry are caught in its rush; and we are developing into a race of highly strung, neurasthenic, irritable people. Whatever other circumstances may account for this, it is in great part due to the unconscious subordination of man to technical achievement—which in the end means his subordination to Nature, which he is supposed to have put under his feet. Our conquests

over Nature, so far from adding to the content of our life, are only involving us in a deeper servitude to things.

In the river Conway there is a pearl-bearing mussel; and time was when a respectable trade in pearls was carried on in the town. But the demands of the English fish markets have assumed such dimensions that the mussel-fishery is carried on with much greater industry than formerly. Men do not gather pearls from the Conway nowadays, for they do not allow the mussels time to grow pearls. And the pace of life in our day does not allow us time to grow the pearls of character and culture which should adorn our manhood. We are in too great haste to enable us to cultivate the graces of character or to improve the furniture of our minds. After the rush of the day's work we have neither energy nor disposition to occupy ourselves seriously with the business of storing up in our minds and hearts the resources and materials of real happiness. This increase in the pace of life has probably as much to do with the disintegration of family life as any other circumstance. It is true that at one end of the social scale overcrowding, drink, the uncertainty of employment, make a secure and decent home life impossible. At the other end of the scale, the mania of pleasure-seeking has dissolved the common family life. And in the middle strata, the haste and rush of life is reducing home life to the very slenderest dimensions. A genuine home atmosphere takes time to grow; and in practice nowadays it is left to the mother. The graces of candor, reverence, geniality, and comradeship—which are the salt of family life—are not quickly produced; and they re-

quire far more deliberate and delicate handling and far more considered co-operation than they get. Our home life is too much a swift succession of happenings; it has little coherency, little homogeneity. And no education in the world can ever compensate for the loss of the discipline of home life, which is the only adequate foundation for the training of the individual for his place and responsibility in the larger social groupings, religious and political. The home is the proper school of honor, purity, and mutual obligation; it should be the primary, and therefore the most effectual moral gymnasium; and the slackening of family ties, the dissolution of the home, is the most formidable menace to the stability of our Western civilization. The home should be a haven, a refuge, a place of healing, the resting-place of body and soul, a centre of life and a very heaven for the children—instead of being the mere dormitory that, by reason of the pressure of our way of life, it is to most of us.

The practical result of all this is to make us a tired, exhausted people. Our great achievements do not contribute anything to the joy and repair of life commensurate with the energy which is being spent on them. They hardly touch the fringe of what is most vital and worthy in our manhood. It is true that the advance of medical science has brought large and inestimable benefits to the race, that the annihilation of distance has promoted the intercourse and comity of nations, and has contributed to the development of missionary effort; but when we have said this much we have practically exhausted the account of the spiritual and moral reaction of our scientific and technical triumphs. For the rest, all that we have gained in our

conquest of nature is subordinated to purposes of personal comfort and self-aggrandizement. It is scarcely necessary to point out that this does not make for the abiding joy of life. A man, in order to be permanently happy, should have the resources of happiness within himself, and if not all within himself, they should at least be very easily accessible. But our way of life does not tend to the accumulation of inward resources of happiness and recreation; and we must in consequence seek them outside ourselves. The elaboration of the means of pleasure in our time is the natural outcome of the insensate velocity at which our lives move—which, to begin with, wears us out; and, secondly, denies us the opportunity of storing up within ourselves the means of rest and repair. So we must needs have recourse endlessly to the infinite variety of pleasurable satisfaction which is provided with so much prodigality by the ingenuity of our time. Our very weariness destroys the palate for the simpler joys of domesticity and friendship; and we are satisfied with little that is less piquant and stimulating than a variety entertainment. We have become incapable of a sustained simplicity of life; and we only redeem life from staleness and flatness by frequent excursions to Vanity Fair. So far as the things which make for the joy of life are concerned, we live from hand to mouth, for the conditions of the time do not permit us to lay by a reserve of the resources of happiness. We are essentially a weary, exhausted people.

Nor can it be held that the advance that has been made in invention and technical achievement gives any indication regarding the future of the race. Certainly it has been a wonderful revelation of the resources of

human thought and human skill. But what is all this advance to end in? It would be temerity on any man's part to say that this advance is drawing to a close; we know not what unseen forces of nature may yet be discovered and harnessed to our uses. But it can hardly be conceived that any future discovery of this kind can carry us any farther towards the solution of the problem of human destiny. It cannot explain *man*. We have not yet had from this region a single ray of light upon the mystery of human nature. We did, perhaps, think at one time that our conquest of nature would unravel "the master-knot of human fate." As we looked upon triumph following hard upon triumph, we cried, "Man is coming into his own at last. After long centuries of child's-play we are at last doing the big real things that have been waiting so long. Yet a little while and the secret will be out!" But the secret is still to seek, hidden as securely as it was when the writer of Job xxviii. made inquiry concerning it. Were that ancient seeker to rise from the dead and come into this twentieth century, is it likely that all our achievements, our tall telegraph-poles, our motor-cars, our milligrammes of radium, would answer his question? We know, as no age ever knew, how great man is, how wonderful, how strong, how skilful. But what is the result of it all? Simply this—not to solve, but to aggravate a thousandfold the one enormous problem that remains, the problem of what man himself is and what he is to be.

Meantime we are concentrating our ingenuity and industry on things that produce certain immediate satisfactions, and we make no real inquiry concerning the goal which we want to reach and which these achieve-

ments of ours are supposed to help us to reach. We may evolve a paradise of subtle labor-saving devices, ingenious domestic utilities, of rapid money-making machinery, and the perfection of creature comforts. But is there nothing beyond that? We feel that it is no adequate issue for all our endeavor, and it is perhaps due to this that our thought is being increasingly deflected towards and our energy spent in pursuit of national greatness. But our conceptions of national greatness, by reason of our fundamental materialism, rest upon the notion of physical force. At least it is significant that almost the first question that we ask concerning a new invention is whether it has possible warlike use. We shall come, no doubt, upon a time when the aeroplane will be subordinated to domestic and commercial uses; but at the present moment the development of the aeroplane is being largely determined by its prospective utility as an instrument of war. We are for ever criticising the War Office and the Admiralty for their tardiness in investigating the value of some fresh invention. But signs are not wanting, as we have already seen, that there will be a diminishing demand for the elaboration of warlike instruments. Not only—to quote Mr. J. A. Hobson—is “this atavistic faith in physical force the deadliest enemy of the realization of that nobler purpose in State and Church by which the spirit of love works out human salvation,” but it is being slowly and surely crushed out by the rising feeling after brotherhood and international goodwill. We must reconstruct our ideals of national greatness accordingly—ideals in the realization of which the Dreadnought and the military aeroplane will be of little account. Nationality is cer-

tainly a necessary factor in human development, but a sentiment of nationality which has to be buttressed by physical force makes not for advance but for reaction and decay. There are few menaces so formidable to human progress in civilized countries as the wide diffusion of a type of Imperialism which is only another name for a thoroughgoing political materialism. There is something pathetic in the simple faith of many minds in the efficacy of armies and navies—as though there were no such thing as history. The secret of national preservation does not lie in big armaments. It must be sought elsewhere.

Our modern way of life is bankrupt so far as the deeper needs and the ultimate problems of mankind are concerned. So far we have come, breathlessly; and we have arrived tired and exhausted. Is it worth while? “We have toiled all night and have caught—nothing.”

## IX

### THE BLIND ALLEY OF SCIENCE

**S**IDE by side with the bankruptcy of our modern way of life stands the virtual insolvency of modern ways of thought.

It has been characteristic of our day that we have all with one accord fallen down at the feet of the god of scientific method. It was not unnatural that we should do so. Its great achievements in many fields seemed to justify its claim to say the last word about the whole of life. And if we did not altogether acquiesce in that claim, we did at least concede that science had a right to say a good deal. But science by its obedience to its own methods has come upon a region where its methods have proved inadequate. It has come by steam-train to the ocean's edge, and its conveyance will carry it no farther. We are looking to-day at the significant phenomenon of scientists of the standing of Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir William Crookes endeavoring to penetrate that veil which as yet the long arm of physical science is unable to pierce. It is in very many ways a promising situation. Science has abandoned its early dogmatism, and admits that there are more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in its first philosophy, and it is, moreover, beginning to understand that its ordinary instruments are inappropriate for the exploration and

understanding of these things that lie beyond its present view.

The present generation only knows by hearsay the kind of exultation with which, after the first astonishing and numbing onset of the new theory, the doctrine of evolution was hailed as the interpreter of the universe. What a splendid triumph it was of human knowledge and patient inquiry! How it seemed to explain things! Here at last was the solution of the first and last problem of the whole scheme of things. Evolution—the blessed word!

But the application of the clue did not yield the expected results. Huxley tried to piece his universe together in the light of evolution and ended in agnosticism. Of these ultimate things he not only said that he did not know, but held it impossible to know. But Huxley was a child of the dawn; he was working in the twilight. Surely half a century must have carried us beyond the point which Huxley arrived at; yet practically the whole difference which fifty years have made is that hard-shell agnosticism is out of fashion. The scientist, speaking generally, still denies the possession of knowledge concerning the ultimate things, but he no longer denies the possibility of it.

For Science itself has revealed the fact that the universe is not the simple thing which it had at first imagined it to be. It enunciated laws with a sublime assurance, and thought itself to be on the way to constructing the entire skeleton of law on which the structure of the whole universe rests. But it has been learning that to speak of a law at all is a highly precarious thing. Of course, there is a physical order, a rhythm and regularity of movement in the universe; but so

far as organic life is concerned there is a good deal more. There seems to be what is on the face of it a certain arbitrary capricious force at work which prevents the same causes always having the same effects. "In the realm of organic processes, the arts of mechanical calculation upon which science rests continually fail; new species arise, new adaptations, new modes of conduct not predicable from the minutest possible knowledge of antecedents. It is a world of miracles, in the sense of results which no science can enable us to forecast, and which differ in quality, in character, or in human interest from anything that has occurred before. When science comes to deal with life, the generalizations which it calls laws break down in consequence. The facts which science and her methods unfold do not furnish the full single harmony which we call the Universe." \* That unknown quantity which eludes the methods of science must, it would seem, be discovered—if it is to be discovered at all—in some other way.

And it is the existence of other modes of ascertaining truth—not necessarily alternative, but rather supplementary—that science is now compelled to recognize. The Victorian scientific philosophy tied itself down to the principle that nothing should be accepted as true which was not demonstrated by certain processes of ratiocination or by sensible observation. Reason and the senses—these are the only sure guides of man; and things which lie beyond the scope of these guides are better ignored. At best the existence of things which do not satisfy the demands of the senses and of reason is hypothetical. But plausible as the

\* J. A. Hobson, "A Modern Outlook," p. 241.

principle seems, it nevertheless is a quite gratuitous misreading of human nature. Man is not made up only of reason and the senses; he is strangely compounded of "loves, hopes, longings"; and it is entirely arbitrary to write off the objects of these instincts as unreal and illusory. It was a strangely unscientific proceeding to refuse to accept man as a whole, especially as, to quote G. J. Romanes, "if the religious instincts of humanity point out to no reality as their object, they are out of analogy with other instinctive endowments. Elsewhere in the animal world there is no such thing as an instinct pointing aimlessly."\* It was still more unscientific to ignore and to deny the validity of a non-rational human power, the operation of which is always in some degree involved in a complete scientific process. The acceptance of any hypothesis or theory for working purposes is essentially an act of faith. Experiment is always the venture of faith. You must always trust a hypothesis before you can prove it.

The truth seems to be that reason is supreme where causation is concerned; but—as Romanes asserts in the posthumous "Thoughts on Religion"—the organs for the verifying of truth in other domains must lie elsewhere.† "Great men of science," says Mr. J. A. Hobson in the essay already quoted, "have commonly been willing to admit the limits of reason as the guide of life, and to assign some real place to faith and imagination in the search after understanding." But they could hardly do otherwise. A life in time is impossible except on a basis of faith. Every step one takes is a step into the dark. Every enterprise under-

\* "Thoughts on Religion," p. 82.

† *Ibid.*, p. 112.

taken, every project conceived, is essentially an operation of faith. Men face to face with an inscrutable to-morrow must take risks. A thoroughgoing rationalism means stagnation. And it certainly seems irrational to suppose that the process of faith which serves us so well in the ordinary matters of life is going to break down utterly in the graver and more ultimate concerns of the mind.

Up to this point, then, science has failed to yield the clue to human existence; and it seems disposed to admit that it is not likely to do so. It is hardly too much to say that science is passing through a phase of scepticism of its own methods, "scepticism of the instrument," as H. G. Wells calls it; and it has arrived at this point by turning its own methods upon itself. It no longer dreams of supposing that it is even on the way to saying the last word upon the sum of things. It has discovered its own limitations; and it leaves the regions that lie beyond its own kingdom to modes of exploration other than its own.

But this is not a case of having toiled all night and caught nothing. The increase of our knowledge of the physical universe is enormous; and though we can hardly hold that this has added materially to our understanding of the ultimate problems of life, it has materially added to the stature of man. It lies behind all our great technical achievements; and it is not the fault of science that these great triumphs are not making adequate contribution to the moral and spiritual advance of the race. Science has undoubtedly strengthened the belief in the reality of human destiny. We believe that the creation means something and means it intensely, and that this meaning somehow cul-

minates in man. But *what* this destiny is science leaves us to speculate. It realizes that it has not to do with origins and ends, but with processes of which it cannot see either the beginning or the ultimate goal.

This is not the only thing we owe to science. The patience and the rigor of the scientific discipline has invaded other departments of knowledge; and our serious thinking is moving on a plane of greater thoroughness than ever before. We have become impatient of the maker of brisk generalizations. We demand that there shall be in history a rigorous scrutiny and criticism of the resources, so that our data may be sound. In religion it has led to a sustained and severe examination of documents, to a careful study of religious history and experience. There is no field of human knowledge which has not been invaded by the scientific spirit. And if evidence were needed of the completeness with which the scientific spirit has laid hold of the modern religious mind, it is to be found in the thoroughly scientific basis of the operations of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. Even Christian propagandism in heathendom has assumed the aspect of a science. The patient and painful accumulation of data, their thorough classification, and a perfectly fearless deduction from them—this is the contribution of the scientific spirit to all branches of knowledge; and its value is not to be weighed.

## X

### THE INSOLVENCY OF ORGANIZED RELIGION

**I**F the Church has fallen on evil days, it is not because she has lacked candid critics. Friend and foe have dealt with her with much faithfulness. The friend has prescribed for her frailties with inexhaustible ingenuity, though it can hardly be said that his diagnosis of her trouble has always been convincing. The foe has bidden her wind up her affairs and retreat ignobly to the crowded scrap-heap of obsolete causes.

But the Church still goes on—the despair and the wonder of friend and foe. Her appearance is not that of great prosperity; indeed, it must be confessed that outwardly she makes but an indifferent show. But the amazing fact is that with all her defects and frailties she continues to exist. She ought—judging from what her critics have said of her—to have disappeared this many a day into the memories of men. But she is still here; still on the field.

It certainly does not appear that she takes kindly to the nostrums of her physicians; indeed, they do not seem to have been sufficiently efficacious in occasional application to justify much confidence in their permanent value. May the truth not be that the Church does not realize yet that she is sick, and that in consequence she can hardly be expected to pay much heed to those who would physic her?

But that the Church is in a bad way is not open to question; and perhaps the clearest evidence of the disorder which has laid hold of her is the kind of test of her own efficiency which she, in common with her critics, applies. It is characteristic of the time—and this is simply a phase of that commercializing tendency which obtains in other regions also—that practically the only test of the efficiency of the Church that we are capable of appreciating is that of statistical returns. Fat statistics imply the prosperous Church. Lean statistics mean a failing Church. It was this test that they applied in Laodicea.

It is hardly to be doubted that the modern habit of occasionally enumerating the people who go to church has fastened this utterly fallacious and injurious notion very strongly on the Church in our day; and in consequence it has led men to think that the things the Church should aim at are big crowds and big collections. So we have been for more than a decade asking, "How shall we get the people to come to church?" as though that were the end of the Church. No doubt it is a good thing to bring in crowds and to collect piles of money; but these things are not to be had for long (though they may be had for a short time) unless they come as by-products. This is not the primary problem of the Church. That lies elsewhere; and when that is solved, the problem of filling the pews and the offertory bag can be left to solve itself.

In the days in which these pages are being written there is a very interesting instance of the way in which this servitude to statistics may warp judgment. The 1910 statistics of the churches have lately been pub-

lished, and reveal a very considerable decline in membership and in some other directions. There is a good deal of concern expressed with regard to this diminution, and writers in the public Press are at great pains to discover the reason for it. But as yet not one of them seems to have considered the question whether this diminution of membership may not, after all, be on the whole a sign of progress. The decrease is regarded without question as being an unmitigated evil. But it is conceivable that a decrease in membership may be an unmixed good. There is always in every congregation a large margin of people who are mere passengers, whose names are on the roll of communicants, but who make not the slenderest contribution to the total vitality and energy of the congregation; and generally not only does it not matter a straw that these people should drop out of formal connection with the church, but it is a positive gain. They cumber the ground. It is questionable whether the effective core of the average congregation amounts to more than a third of its total membership; and there is therefore a very considerable margin within which the decrease of church membership can proceed without even appreciable diminution of the working power of the congregation.

The serious element in the diminishing membership of the Free Churches is that even natural and inevitable decrease through death and migration is not compensated for by a steady accession of young men and women into church fellowship; and in order to discover the real cause of the ineffectualness of the modern church we should undertake a close scrutiny of the circumstances in which this particular state of things

originates. But one thing may be asserted with some certainty—that the present condition of the Church does not originate in a single cause or in a single class of causes. The complexity of the symptoms indicates a complex of troubles; though it should not be overlooked that many of the troubles, and the aggravation of the rest, may have at last to be traced to a single tendency.

There has hardly been a period when the Church was less sure of herself than she is to-day. She has not yet been able to lay the ghosts of evolution and criticism; and though she is persuaded that they are no more than ghosts so far as she is concerned, they still trouble her not a little. She is still timid and apologetic, and is anxious to justify her existence. She whittles down her demands to the very lowest dimensions; and when she would speak like thunder she lisps and stutters. She can hardly ask her constituents to support her without prefacing her request with an apology; and her people have taken advantage of her timidity to grumble about "these incessant appeals for money." There are some things that the Church should take for granted, and has no right to take in any other way. Her members' duty to furnish her with the necessary cash resources for the upkeep of her machinery is one of these things; and in coming cap in hand and timidly to beg this, when it should be asked for as her right, she is practically surrendering her right to make authoritative demands upon her members all along the line.

The Church is timid because she is afraid she may scare people away and show a statistical slump at the end of the year. She is obsessed by the entirely inex-

cusable fallacy that collections keep people away from church. Collections never keep people away from church. It is true that in poor districts a large building debt will frighten people and prevent their associating themselves with a church; but this is so frequently not the case that it can hardly be adduced in explanation of the failure of many churches even in poor districts. But to suppose that people are scared away by collections is a very grave misconception. It is entirely a question of how the matter is regarded. If the church through its office-bearers comes in a spirit of timidity to try to wheedle money out of the congregation, with profuse apologies, then it is courting failure. When the sufficient and worthy support of the church and its enterprises is declared roundly and uncompromisingly to be a Christian obligation, that it involves the honor of Christ, the money is forthcoming. Fear is the enemy.

This matter of collections is referred to as an instance of the kind of failure which follows timidity. But the trouble spreads into more vital regions. It is perhaps inevitable that the rationalistic activity of recent years should call out the apologetic note; but it has been overdone. Even for the over-emphasis upon the apologetic side of things there is, of course, some excuse. We had hardly recovered from the panic which Darwin's publication of the evolution theory precipitated, when we found ourselves in the full blast of the storm of biblical criticism. And while we were still in the midst of the endeavor to recover our equilibrium, the rationalist press flooded the country with its characteristic literature. We were naturally compelled to take up the defensive. But we took it up

without sufficiently realizing the limits within which reasoned apologetic is effective. The authority of revealed religion over against rationalistic hypotheses, the authority of Scripture over against critical theories—neither of these things is to be finally established by mere process of ratiocination; and so far as the average man is concerned there is no effective test but the pragmatic. The proper answer to sceptical and rationalistic onslaughts is not defence but defiance; increased aggressiveness, more unremitting propagandism—it is along these lines alone that Christianity can justify itself finally to the world.

It must, of course, be recognized that the coming of evolution and criticism (when once it was seen that they had come to stay) necessitated a good deal of readjustment of traditional schemes of belief. They naturally produced a considerable amount of anxiety, and the anxiety led to a certain amount of slackness pending the achievement of some measure of certainty. But it can hardly be supposed—whatever the consequences may have been to the form of doctrine—that genuine Christian experience was deeply agitated. And effective propaganda depends far more upon a sound experience than it does upon a definite, clear-cut construction of belief. The Church possessed amid all the tumult a kingdom which could not be moved; only she forgot it overmuch. It would have been her wisdom and her salvation had she seen properly the lie of the land, and announced boldly to the world that, her foundations being established on the "Rock" which is Christ Jesus, she intended faithfully to continue the work whereunto she is called.

It is easy to be wise after the event; and the present

generation can hardly appreciate the acute, intense anxiety which followed upon the apparent menace of the new scientific and critical tendencies of half a century ago. But the panic of the time entailed the losing of much ground; and when the note of authority is once dropped it is not easy to pick it up again. It has, indeed, not been recovered to this day, though there are some signs that it will be regained before long. But when it is recovered it will be found to be the authority not of intellectual certitude, but of an assured Christian experience. The propagandist will go forth not with *ex cathedra* propositions, but with the simple statement, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." And that "one thing" is an inalienable, unalterable possession which neither scientific nor critical theories can destroy.

Perhaps the day will come when we shall regard the challenge which faith received to have been, not a device of Satan, but a providential arrangement for clearing the air. For there can be no manner of doubt that the Gospel appeal was based frequently upon inadequate, not to say fallacious premises. I heard on one occasion a pious minister declare that he knew a young man who had gone wrong because a certain Old Testament scholar of reputation had said that there were two Isaiahs. But the responsibility of this calamity lay, not at the door of the critic, but of a system of doctrine which made the Christian life contingent upon the question of the number of Isaiahs. Whether there be two or twenty or two hundred Isaiahs, it is a matter which should not affect a man's relation to Christ. But it shows the extent of the bibliolatry which has for a long time stood for Chris-

tianity that a statement of this kind should be made at all. Christianity does not depend upon a theory of inspiration; and the fact that it has been so persistently represented as doing so has been a source of incalculable weakness to the Church for many days.

This has given some ground for the feeling that the Church has lacked candor in her attitude to scientific and critical problems. This feeling is only very partially justified; and the seeming lack of candor may very largely be explained by the instinctive human tendency to old fogginess—a tendency which is characteristic of scientists as well as of theologians. It has also to be said that caution is not of necessity lack of candor. We are beginning to see that our unquestioning devotion to the evolution hypothesis has involved us in many untenable positions; and we no longer propound evolution as the clue to every mystery with the same cheerful ease as we did twenty years ago. Those whose faith in evolution was from the beginning to some extent qualified are being justified by the present tendencies of thought. At the same time it is not likely that the ordinary outsider will make these qualifications. All he knows is, that Evolution is here and Criticism is here; and they are here for good. He does not see their inevitable limitations; but he knows that they have made some difference. And he notices, or thinks that he notices, that the Church is not facing up to them frankly, and that it is trying to hedge. He says that the Church is going on as though nothing had happened; and that it is condemned by its own default.

Now this is simply not true of the Church at the present time, though it may be true that the Church

has not yet co-ordinated the new knowledge fully with her way of life. One is tempted to think that a good deal of the criticism which is of this character arises out of wilful ignorance of the facts, and is intended deliberately to discredit the Church. Any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, even though you do not know what the stick is made of. But there is always a danger, if you do not examine the stick beforehand, that it may break in your hands and make you look foolish. There is not a little criticism of the Church at the present time which is simply silly, and will sooner or later befool the critic. There is within the Church also at the present some demand that the preacher should take the people more frankly into his confidence regarding the modifications of belief that the results of scientific and critical scholarship necessitate. But I am persuaded that the demand is a fallacious one. After all, what science and criticism have to tell us, and their relation to our schemes of belief, belong to the hinterland of faith; and what is wanted is, not frank expositions of the difference they make, but a frank (even though it be tacit) assumption of those results of scientific and critical work which seem to be well founded, and then to allow these to work out naturally their own consequences in the preaching and teaching. Very little good is likely to accrue from stated endeavors to explicate the results of modern scholarship to an ordinary mixed congregation. This is a case for a policy of indirect and peaceful penetration. It would require a far higher level of general education than that which prevails to enable the preacher to pursue a direct policy of educating his people into a genuine understanding of the

problems which science and criticism have raised and the difference that they have made.

But I am persuaded that it is possible to overestimate greatly the influence of this particular factor in a diagnosis of the present state of the Church, and that we must look for the more direct and effective reasons of her present impotency in other directions. And if, greatly daring, one may venture on a large generalization, our trouble is largely due to the fact that the people in the churches are religious without being distinctively Christian. Religion may be no more than a culture; Christianity is supremely an obedience, a witness, a service.

This is a thesis which requires a good deal of qualification, but I think it holds good as a broad statement of the case in the face of the modern situation. For multitudes of church-folk Christianity seems to consist in the main in church attendance and the incidental observances which gather around it. It is a good thing to attend the public worship of the Church, and it counts for not a little in the preservation of the tone of our general life that multitudes feel that church attendance is a real obligation. But when that represents the sum-total of one's Christian profession, it is clear that there is a great deal of Christianity left out. The consequence is that, saving only for the sense of duty done, our worship leaves us where it found us.

It is easy to blame the minister for this; and there is no doubt that some responsibility for it rests upon him. The explanation, however, is to be found for the greater part in the prevailing idea that our religion is simply a department of our life which, like other

departments, requires to be cultivated, and may be expected to provide us with a certain measure of emotional, æsthetic, and intellectual satisfaction, but which need exercise no very profound ethical discipline upon us. We go to worship for certain benefits which we expect, rather than for our equipment for the real business of Christianity. Our Christianity ends in church, whereas a true Christianity only begins there. The old phrase, "the means of grace," indicates the real character of the gatherings of the Church. We meet in fellowship that we may obtain grace; but it belongs to the very nature of grace that it should be passed on. There is no impression, says the modern psychologist, without expression; and the end of manhood is moral action. The business of our religious observances is to produce upon us those impressions which will work out in moral action on the Christian plane; and unless the impressions which we receive are expressed in this way, they will express themselves within us in ways that hurt and harm us. To dam up the grace of God in our own souls is to turn it into poison. Even grace can only be kept sweet and wholesome by being kept in motion. The Dead Sea is a dead sea simply because it has no outlet; and there is much "dead sea" in the Church to-day because its outlets are too few and too narrow.

Judaism had two co-ordinate points—God and Man. These were the two foci of the curve. Christianity has three—God, Man, and the Other Man. The distinction of Christianity is that it puts man in his own place, between God and his neighbor; and teaches him that he may receive grace from the One, which he may and must transmute into energy for the service

of the other. The problem of man—the individual and the community—is so to organize his life that the grace of God may find easy way-leave through him to the world beyond. Otherwise his religious exercises only produce surfeit and impotency. The Hebrew prophets frequently inveighed against a religion which exercised no moral discipline on those who professed it; for such a religion, being no more than a selfish and exclusive culture, has in it the seeds of corruption. Religion for its own sake, or religion merely for the sake of oneself, cannot escape distemper and dissolution. It is so with every human interest. The quest of truth for truth's sake—a purely academic philosophy—tends to end in the sterility of scepticism. Art for art's sake means inevitably a debased art. Religion, most of all, must suffer by an isolated culture. It must have wide-open outlets; and constant care should be taken to secure that the outlets are as free and unencumbered as the inlets are. The prosperity of a Christian community depends not less upon the enterprises in which it engages than upon the efficiency of its ministry or the frequency of its means of grace. Indeed, it may be that the very multiplicity of our meetings in these days may be at once a cause and a symptom of this trouble. We concentrate our energies upon securing big meetings, and are satisfied when we get them. We are not equally concerned (as we should be) that the meetings should have definite practical consequences. We are usually much exercised about our finances, and it is commonly the case that the income does not cover the expenditure. It is not recognized that it is a somewhat more serious matter that our spiritual income greatly exceeds our spiritual

expenditure, and the connection between the financial deficiencies and our spiritual surpluses is fairly close. May it not be that the Church is infirm and ineffectual to-day because its machinery is clogged by a glut of unutilized grace?

We may, I think, find corroboration of this view in more than one direction. The narrowness of outlook in the average congregation, the inability to realize the wider demands of God's Kingdom, the sheer incapacity of the majority of evangelical Christians to think imperially in regard to the obligation of the Church, arise out of this defective view of Christianity. It is no exaggeration to say that, speaking generally, the Edinburgh Conference has hardly yet made an appreciable difference to English Christendom at large. The missionary enterprise is regarded as being a secondary obligation and not as involved in the very substance of the Gospel. It is supposed to be something which the Church can take up at leisure; and no feeling of its urgency generally exists. The emphasis seems rather to be on making one's own particular church organization a good, prosperous going concern. The wealth and respectability of a congregation are conceived to be its main assets; and attendance at church is frequently no more than observing the requirements of good form. The entire scale of values seems to be wrong; that is to say, the Church has adopted the scale of values which prevails outside and carries itself accordingly. A great deal of energy is spent in the cultivation of social and recreative interests which bear no conceivable sort of relation to the main business of the Church.

It is due to this temper that the recognition by the

Church of its responsibility in the matter of social readjustments has been so tardy. It has been in a sense a just complaint that the Church has been excessively other-worldly; but it has been with a wrong kind of other-worldliness. There is a sane other-worldliness which is inseparable from a belief in immortality; but that manner of other-worldliness properly conceived has a very intimate bearing upon a man's present life. To be other-worldly in a genuine way is, if not to have contempt for, at least to appreciate at its proper value the kind of hope that the world sets its soul upon. A wholesome other-worldliness knows, for instance, how much riches and social position and the like are worth. But the kind of other-worldliness which has been current could exist side by side with the most flagrant and unashamed worldliness. And there is no sterility more appalling than that of a worldly Church. It is this vapid, sentimental other-worldliness, superimposed upon inner worldliness, which has made the Church blind to the nature of the need round about it. It certainly has distributed alms with a more or less free hand; and it has run a mission in some adjacent poor district. But there has been little apparent appreciation of the nature or dimensions of the actual problem which the existence of the slum area implies; nor has it seen the logic which demands that, since it conceives it to be a part of its duty to relieve poverty, it is also part of its duty to set about removing the removable causes of poverty. It has rather gone on in an unchangingly slipshod and casual way; and frequently by the indiscriminating character of its almsgiving has aggravated the problem which it was seeking to relieve. It is true it is no

longer possible to accuse the Church of ignoring the social problem; it is, however, still not unjust to say that, apart from a few organizations associated with the churches, it shows few signs of really understanding the problem of poverty and its own relation to it.

The Church has not in our day thought out or formulated a policy for meeting the need of the modern world. The casual and perfunctory way in which it approaches the social problem (which is far more intimately connected with the advance of the Kingdom of God than is generally acknowledged) is pretty characteristic of its attitude to most of the matters that are agitating the minds of people who think. The question of church extension is another example of the slack, slipshod way in which the modern Church works; and in many directions there is a great deal of overlapping and consequent waste of energy. All this contributes to give the Church an appearance of exhaustion and futility which handicaps it incalculably on every side. It is easy to extenuate the failure of the Church by speaking of the prevailing unbelief. But unbelief is never an excuse for the Church's weakness; it is a challenge to its energy. The only unbelief that really matters is that which arises out of the persuasion that Christianity does not matter; and if it does not matter, it is simply because those who profess it do not make it matter.

## XI

### THE HARVEST OF BAD HUSBANDRY

WE have laid the larger share of the responsibility for the existing state of affairs in the Church at the door of an inadequate recognition of the meaning of Christianity, which has produced an isolated and selfish religious culture and a narrow and false outlook upon the world. The greatest element in the tragedy of the situation is that we fail to commend Christianity even to the young people brought up within the circle of presumably Christian influence. It is little to be wondered at, that the Church hardly wins a recruit from among the young men and women outside its borders when it can hardly keep those that are within.

No one can contemplate the youth of the Church to-day with any degree of understanding without serious misgivings for the future of the Church. The organized Christian life of young people within the Church is generally represented by the triviality of Christian Endeavor. This implies no criticism of the good intentions of Christian Endeavor, but of the shallow and ineffectual life which it nourishes. Moreover, it must be conceded that generally the organized life of our young people has not borne any very definite relation to the main currents of the Church's life, nor has it shown any inclination to realize the larger prob-

lems which are involved in the promotion of the Kingdom of God. This, I am persuaded, is at bottom due to a defect of education. And if it be true that the Church has been haphazard and without policy in other departments of its activity, it is certainly also true that in this particular sphere of educating and training its young people it has exceeded even its characteristic slipshodness to a quite immeasurable extent.

Now let it be said as beyond controversy that the Church can only secure its own future by looking to its youth. It is easy to say that God will look after the Church and the future; easy, but only half-true. God will not work convenient miracles in order to redeem our bad husbandry. He helps those who help—Him. The business of religious education is central to a wise ecclesiastical policy.

We may at the present time be so far reassured that there is some kind of awakening to the urgency of a reasonably organized and worked-out system of religious education. That is partly the reaction of the educational advance of the last half-century; partly of the growth of the scientific study of the development of the young mind; partly also of the recognition (due to the psychological investigation of religious experience) that the bulk of the religious harvest must be reaped in adolescence. Already a great deal of change is in process in the Sunday school; and experiments in organization and in other directions are in full progress. The demand is growing for the better equipment and fuller preparatory discipline of the Sunday school teacher, and for a more rationally conceived arrangement of lesson material. But those who are seeking to work in this field are frequently cast into

sheer despair by the tardiness with which the Church is awakening to a feeling of the pressing need of these things.

But—and I am speaking with some knowledge of the matter—notwithstanding the slowly growing acceptance of the principles of reform in this connection, there is still an astonishing inability to realize the need of a single and steady point of view in the matter. The improvement of religious education is proceeding piecemeal; and there is no clear perception of the aim to which all the several elements in the case should be co-ordinated. The defectiveness of current Christianity is not primarily a defect of Christian impulse, but a defect of real understanding of the way in which that Christian impulse should work out. The background of ideas concerning the Christian ethic in the average Christian person to-day is a badly arranged and incomplete patchwork; and the result is that the Christian impulse works out in a patchy, fragmentary, incomplete way. There is hardly any real understanding of the nature and extent of the total moral demand that Christianity makes upon us, of the whole moral liability of the Christian soul.

Now this is clearly a defect of knowledge, and therefore a defect of education. This must be remedied before our new interest in religious education will achieve the right results. We must settle down to a new examination of the Christian ethic in the full light of present reality; and we must, therefore, so organize the business of religious education that there shall be a fairly complete understanding (of course in a simple and general way) of what the Christian ethic is by the time the young life enters upon the period of

adolescence, in which the permanent religious impulse is usually set afoot. When a young lad enters upon the Christian life, he should have no need to cry out in perplexity, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" He should at least have sufficient knowledge and understanding already in his own mind to make the question superfluous. This does not mean that his education is necessarily at an end. Education in religion and morals is, from the nature of the case, never at an end. But it should be, before adolescence has set in, sufficiently sound and complete to preserve it to the end on sound lines, and to enable the Christian soul from the time of its awakening to give a sound interpretation of the ideal of Christian conduct.

That Christianity does not commend itself to the modern world is due in no little degree to this inherent defect in the manner of education. The only policy which prevailed until recent years was that of sending the child through the Bible by way of a cycle of courses extending over seven years. But this scheme embodied a fatal weakness, inasmuch as it failed to make practical acknowledgment of the different values of different parts of the Bible for the purpose of religious education, still less of the relative relevancy of the various parts to different stages of the educational process. It has, moreover, provided no guarantee that the parts of the Bible that are of sovereign importance to a Christian education—the Gospels—shall fall to be given at the most critical periods of development. In addition to this there has been an incapacity to recognize that both nature and extra-biblical history have a legitimate part to play in religious education; and that the latter is especially necessary in order to reveal

the continuity of the Christian tradition in history and to hold forth the Christian witness as a present-day reality.\* The result is a scrappy and shallow acquaintance with the Scriptures, the entire absence of a sense of the relation of revelation to existing conditions, and a thinness and mediocrity of spiritual experience which must inevitably fail to commend Christianity to the onlooker. There can be no adequate and secure foundation of Christian life and experience save that of a scientifically conceived and thorough introduction into the spiritual and ethical significance of the Gospel.

But this criticism of the Christian education of the past is purely a criticism of methods; and a weightier criticism lies in the general neglect of this question of education altogether. The Church is only at this late hour realizing the importance of the child and its own educational opportunities. Hitherto it has allowed this part of its responsibility to shift for itself, and has permitted it to be discharged by any well-meaning individual who would volunteer for the work. It has never taken the matter seriously. It is paying the penalty of this neglect to-day in the loss of four-fifths of its Sunday scholars, and in the prevailing ineffectualness of the large proportion of its membership. And even yet it is not recognizing the necessity of movement in this direction with the readiness which the case requires.

It is the absence of this background of real understanding of the implicates of Christianity that explains what I have called the triviality of Christian Endeavor.

\* Since these lines were written, the situation has changed materially by the resolution of the Sunday School Union to institute a scheme of completely graded lesson material.

This movement came at a time when the problem of the young people was very acute; and it seemed to be a heaven-sent provision for that need. It contained exceedingly valuable elements; in particular, it emphasized the need of Christian service, and committed its members to some kind of work. But it was initially weak in that it made the meeting the supreme interest, and its distinctiveness lay in the obligation it imposed upon its members to take some part other than singing in every meeting. It is, of course, absurd to suppose that every individual is capable of taking, or that God intended that he should take, a public part in every meeting; and the result is that the pledge, when it is kept, is frequently only kept by a formal repetition of passages of Scripture. In many cases it appears that the pledge is not steadily kept. Very often this has meant that leadership and prominence has passed into the hands of persons of excellent intention but of doubtful fitness for so considerable a responsibility. The crowning defect of the movement was, and is, that it made no provision for the education of its members in a systematic way. The programme of the weekly prayer-meeting has generally provided a fairly reasonable basis for the devotional aspect of the gathering; but no one who is at all acquainted with the Christian Endeavor meeting will venture to assert that this was at all adequate to the training of the members for the larger responsibilities of Christian service. Young people should be and are prepared to be guided into sustained and systematic study of the meaning and possibilities of the faith they profess; and Christian Endeavor has done nothing of this kind. This is not to say that Christian Endeavor has not done much valua-

ble work and turned out many fine Christian souls. But the radical inadequacy of its basis has led to a thin, superficial life; and it is hardly to be denied that for the needs and purposes of Christianity in the face of the modern situation the Christian Endeavor movement is exhausted. The time has come for something more radical and systematic in its educational methods, and more exacting in its demands, if the Church is to breed a generation of men and women who have both the capacity and the courage to undertake and carry through the necessary labors of the kingdom of God. The Church must see to it that it rears a race which will face the future with broad, well-founded constructive ideals.

It is probably a part of the same disorder that we meet in the admitted insufficiency and the frequently unsatisfactory quality of candidates for the Christian ministry. It is hardly to be wondered at, since we cannot commend Christianity to our young men sufficiently to keep them within the Church, that we fail to induce them to enter the Christian ministry. The people who attribute the decline in the number of ministerial candidates to the meagre stipend which the ministry provides are altogether beside the mark. It is due in part to the fact that we have failed to present the claims of Christ in a reasonable and ungainsayable way to our young men. The heroic and the romantic in our young men are not yet exhausted; and many are persuaded to go to the uncertainties and the perils of the mission field who would hardly have entered the ministry at home. We have also to recognize the fact that it has been far too easy to enter the ministry. A large number of incapable persons have been able to

enter it, and this has led to an inevitable lowering of the status and dignity of the ministerial office. It may seem a paradox, but I am persuaded that it is true—the more difficult the passage into the ministry is made, the larger will be the number of those who will seek to enter it; and the more likely will it be that the men who do enter the ministry will be the right men.

But why, in these days of the higher education of women, should the ministry be the monopoly of men?

It is hardly necessary to point out the weakness that accrues to modern organized Christianity by reason of its disunion, for that is an evil which is now in process of disappearing. Under the stress of the example afforded by the churches on the foreign mission field, the churches at home are conscious of a more real feeling after unity than has ever been known. It may be that we have traversed the full cycle of the special emphases upon the diverse elements of Christianity out of which our sectarianism has issued; and that the very process of time is bringing us face to face with the need of a new synthesis. It is probably a far cry to the day of reunion in England because the causes of division are deeper and more numerous than in most other lands, apart, of course, from the chasm which yawns between Romanism and Protestantism. The tenacious adhesion of the Anglican Church to its State connection, and the advance among the clergy of the sacerdotal school, constitute barriers to English reunion which are at present simply and completely impassable. Among the Free Churches the time for union has not yet arrived, though it is probably not so far off as some would imagine. The chief hindrance is a bad sense of proportion. Meantime, there will be a great deal of

overlapping, and a criminal waste of energy; and the spectacle of disunion will continue to provide the hostile critic with his stock demonstration of the failure of Christianity. Happily, however, out of England the prospects of evangelical reunion are far more rosy.

There is one more fact of our modern life which speaks of the exhaustion of current Christianity. It is the multiplication of quasi-religious movements like Christian Science and the New Thought. There can be no doubt that these cults provide some satisfaction which the churches are failing to give. The intellectual chaos of the Christian Science cult needs no demonstration; nevertheless, it apparently does open the door to a certain peace of mind. But it would hardly have the vogue it has except in an age which has become neurotic by reason of its extreme feverishness; and, apart from its "healing" of physical maladies, it has no nostrum which the Church does not also possess, but has lost through atrophy the faculty of using. Within the Church itself the characteristic teachings which are associated with the Keswick Convention and other holiness movements are evidence of the exhaustion of the current Christian impulse in the Church; and while the Keswick movement has retained a measure of sanity, there are other endeavors to resuscitate Christianity of which so much cannot be said. The Pentecostal Association or Convention for seeking the gift of tongues, which met in Sunderland in May, 1911, and which is carrying on an extensive propaganda in many countries, seems to show that where the Christian impulse is not exhausted it is running to seed.

## XII

### THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

**I**T has been the purpose of the preceding chapters to survey rapidly some of the main features of the life of the time; and while we are able to rejoice in the advent of a new constructive spirit of brotherhood, we have to set over against it the exhaustion of the traditional syntheses in thought and religion, and the moral ineffectualness of our modern way of life. Nevertheless, may it not be that all these diverse circumstances point to a single issue, and indicate one comprehensive need?

It is clearly a time of change, and therefore of some confusion. Life has fallen into a desperate tangle. There are very few persons whose minds have not felt the pressure of the materialistic thought of the last two generations; and though they have not put up the white flag over the whole of life, yet they have in part surrendered to the siege of these tendencies. It was impossible altogether to deny the claims put forward on behalf of physical science in the face of its wonderful achievements; and when it claimed to speak the last word upon the whole of life, we felt constrained to admit that it had a right at least to say a good deal. The inevitable result has been a lowering of the spiritual banner, and decline into a confusion of life which could only be endured by dividing life up into water-tight

compartments. It has been a commonplace for our generation that "religion has nothing to do with business," and "that there is no room for sentiment in business." We have been trying to "reconcile" science and religion as though there were an essential antipathy between them, or as though, if there were such antipathy, we could by subtlety of argument overcome it. We have staked out a little area of our life into which we have crowded our spiritual ideals, and have left the rest open to the invasion of the time-spirit without any real inquiry whether its implicates could possibly subsist permanently side by side with the religious ideals which we have been unwilling to abandon. The consequence is that we have done lip-service to our religious ideals on the first day of the week and have left them to shift for themselves on the remaining six. But the soul cannot stand such inner schism without suffering grave injury, and we are paying the penalty of it to-day in the flat and dull mediocrity of our morals and culture. The heroic note has been lost from modern life; and literature and art are generally devoid of the bound and vigor which animate them when they have a genuine and thoroughgoing spiritual inspiration. They do not cut to the quick of our souls. They do not draw blood, because there is no blood in them. It is only a spiritually driven literature or art that can cut to the core of life, and comparatively little of the prodigious energy spent to-day upon literature and art touches even the fringe of what is most vital and worthy in our manhood. It leaves us morally where it found us. The dominant character of our time is mediocrity; the epic touch is unknown. The Lord seems to have ceased making giants, in morality

or culture, and certainly this is not compensated for by any appreciable elevation of the race.

It is hardly necessary to examine in further detail how the materialistic temper has affected our various politics and ideas of progress. We have conceived social reform almost exclusively in terms of improved physical environment and of economic readjustments. We have frankly subordinated the great mechanical and scientific achievements of the last century to immediate personal ends of comfort and self-aggrandizement. Our imperial ideals are thoroughly commercialized. Do we not say that "trade follows the flag"? This nation had once a great tradition of chivalry in its foreign and colonial enterprise. This has been effaced by the lust of markets. We have become a nation of shopkeepers indeed. Our morality is unashamedly prudential. We have lost touch with those deeper sanctions and ideals which can give our morality such stiffness of impulse as will neither compromise nor ask for quarter. I am not unmindful of the survival, in the professions and in individuals of all callings, of an idealism and a sense of honor and obligation which are altogether admirable. But these are the more marked because they are so exceptional. Our modern civilization can produce few persons who can enter into the spirit of Mr. Herbert Trench's fine lines:—

If thou hast squandered years to grave a gem  
 Commissioned by thine absent Lord;  
 And while 'tis incomplete, others would bribe thy needy  
 skill to them,  
 Dismiss them to the street.

It is not hard to imagine that Wordsworth raised

from the dead would write for this generation another sonnet which began—

The World is too much with us. Soon and late,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

I have already tried to trace the origin of this disastrous materialism, and have endeavored to show that it is the virtual negation of that spirit of brotherhood the advent of which is the most cheerful and encouraging feature of the time. Agnosticism is a brave creed, and they have been brave men who have held it; for they have not shirked the moral demands which a social life makes, and, indeed, have served a high ethical ideal with loyalty notwithstanding that their creed provided no adequate dynamic in the shape of either an antecedent impulse or an ultimate goal. But materialism is an easy creed: it has no practical implicates for the individual beyond "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." It is a philosophy of selfishness, and no humanitarian passion in its advocates can silence the *cui bono* of the natural man to whom they may commend humanitarian courses. The materialist can have no gospel of humanity at all save only as he breaks with the logic of his system. A creed must be judged by its ethic; and the ethic of materialism may be seen in the jungle. It is the ethic of the ape and the tiger. But to the man whose life leads him into the great highways of human existence, it is being constantly brought home that human society needs not more of the individualism of the jungle but more of that spirit and practice of brotherhood which alone can make a social life possible and tolerable, and which, since man is social in a sense in which no other animal

is, is the predestined principle of genuine human development. This principle of brotherhood requires a spiritual foundation. It cannot survive except it be conceived and born of a thoroughgoing spiritual idealism.

But it is not only the coming of the principle of brotherhood that creates the demand for the spiritual point of view, but the very poverty of our modern way of life. The note of mediocrity in our general morality and culture reflects itself in a meagre and inadequate personal life. We are living from hand to mouth—in a perpetual rush. We are laying up no real resources of actual happiness, no reserves of abiding joy. We have put ourselves out of tune for the more permanent interests of life.

The scale of values which governs our modern life does not lead to satisfaction and rest. It rather makes for hunger and restlessness. The things at the top of the scale—money and the things money can buy—do not satisfy. They always leave us, however much we may gain of them, asking for more. There is no finality in them—nothing to rest in. And yet our whole life is subordinated to them. We have subordinated our scientific and mechanical triumphs to them. Men are dominated by the passion of money-making. They cannot make enough money or make it quickly enough, and so they plunge themselves and hire others to plunge themselves into this amazing vortex of hurried barter and speculation. Meantime the things that might make for peace of mind and completeness of life are away at the bottom of our scale of values; are, indeed, sometimes off the scale altogether. And there is no hope for us but in deliberately turning the scale upside down.

I recall that Mr. Chesterton says somewhere that it is a fallacy to suppose that it does not matter what a man's philosophy is, and that it is a question whether, in the end, anything else matters. Every definite sustained way of life has a quite definite kind of philosophy behind it, and the philosophy which lies at the back of our modern life is a frank materialism. We can only reverse our scale of values by a definite break with materialism, and just because the seeds of it are inlaid in our human nature, by keeping on breaking with it.

On one occasion, when His disciples had toiled the night through and had caught nothing, Jesus asked, "Children, have ye aught to eat?" And they answered Him, "No." That is our condition. Bread we have in more or less sufficiency; but man lives not by bread alone. We need some other provender; and that more impalpable provender our modern way of life does not provide for us. We are in a chronic state of famine so far as the deeper hungers of our manhood are concerned. The only policy which is going to produce different results is that which Jesus indicated to His disciples on that occasion: "Cast your net on the right side of the ship, and draw." We require a new policy of life—a thoroughgoing renunciation of the old. From our blind uncalculating materialism, from our servitude to gold, to a definite and sustained spiritual life—that alone is our salvation.

It is to the recovery of a spiritual idealism that I believe all the signs are pointing. When Paul said that the Law had been the schoolmaster to lead to Christ, what did he mean? If we are to assume, as I think we must, that he is interpreting his people's history

in the light of his own experience, he meant this. The Law had led them up to a certain point; but it was a point at which they could not remain. It had provided certain satisfactions which only revealed and accentuated the necessity of some last satisfaction greater than the rest. But the Law was unable to carry them beyond that point. It had carried them just so far as to produce an irresistible demand for a satisfaction which it could not itself provide. It had come to the end of its tether. But they could not remain where the Law had left them. They had to push on; and there was only one way in which they could proceed. Since the law had broken down, they must trust to faith to carry them to their journey's end. The bankruptcy of the Law had compelled them to make the venture of faith.

Now, as we shall see later on, this antithesis of law and faith is parallel to the classical Pauline antithesis of flesh and spirit, and when that is borne in mind the analogy of the situation which Paul describes and that which exists to-day will be seen to be very close. The very immensity of our scientific and technical achievements has left us unsatisfied; is, indeed, more and more laying bare the need of deeper satisfactions than those which the physical universe provides. The very rigor of the scientific method of the last half-century has brought it to a blind alley, after failing to provide us with the knowledge of the things which most of all concern us. Just as the ethical discipline of the Jews led them up to a point at which they felt a new need and demanded a new power to satisfy it, so the scientific discipline of our own time has brought us up to a point beyond which it is inadequate to carry us, and yet at which we are unable to rest. And just as the

next step of the Jew was to a spiritual view of life, so our next step must be—for it is the only possible and thinkable step—to a spiritual construction of the universe.

It will complete our analogy if we recall the fact that when Paul was writing, Judaism as a religious system was old and decrepit and exhausted. Our traditional Christianity has come to the same impasse. Not, indeed, altogether by reason of the same circumstances; yet there is a sufficiently similar decadence of spirituality to justify our parallel. Just as Judaism made way for Apostolic Christianity, so the organized Christianity of to-day must make way for a more radically and comprehensively spiritual reconstruction of the Gospel way of life. Already the word has been given. The letter of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference to the Churches of Christendom speaks of God's demand upon us for "a new order of life." Nothing is adequate to the modern situation short of a renewed Christianity which shall be as superior to our current conceptions of it as Apostolic Christianity was superior to Judaism. But it will be Christianity still, for the person of Jesus Christ is final and definitive in its bearing upon manhood.

It belongs to a later stage to consider in some detail the implications of this tendency in reference to Christianity. A word may be permitted here as to what appears to be the present task of philosophy. This may be described as the construction of a sane and uncompromising spiritual idealism—not the idealism of the Hegelian tradition, which is insufficient for the need of human life, because the Hegelian ideal is already real and absolute, and leaves no room for per-

sonal initiative and work. All the freedom it gives is the freedom to assent to what already is. Just as naturalism makes human consciousness merely the upper reach of the sense-life, so the Hegelian idealism makes it no more than the lower reach of the Absolute. Neither view gives real independence or freedom; and it will require more showing than this to make the common man disbelieve in the reality of his freedom or the indivisible integrity of his personality. We need a philosophy, then, possessing power to present a spiritual idealism which will appeal and be acceptable to all men, and specially to the average man—an idealism which will respect his belief in his own personality and power of initiative, and will do this by calling him to real work. This means that the new idealism is one that a man can work for—an idealism in the making. All its implications must be melioristic; it must bear directly on the actual life that men are living. It must tell us that though the ills of the universe are real, they are remediable; and that the incompleteness of the world is the promise of its completion. It will leave the static Absolute to the select few who can live by it. It will demand a categorical breach with all forms of naturalism, and lay all the emphasis upon the superior reality of the spiritual life. It must hold to the underlying unity of the spiritual life of the whole world, and the final unity to which our deepest intuitions tell us things are tending. Pragmatism (particularly in Dr. Schiller's hands) came to many minds with a promise of relief from the severe intellectualism of the Hegelian tradition; but it is vitiated for most people by the pluralism which its chief protagonist, the late William James, found in it.

Pluralism is not satisfying. It defines the future in too indeterminate a way—leaves it, as it were, in a tangle of loose ends. James says (in a passage already quoted) that no philosophy will command assent except it “define the future congruously with our spontaneous powers.” And straightway he propounds a philosophy which overlooks what he himself has defined as our “emotional response to the idea of oneness.” Whatever else we were born, we were born monists.

It is encouraging to believe that in this respect we are already in sight of the Promised Land. The teaching of Rudolf Eucken is beginning to tell effectually upon our thinking. His philosophy is essentially the gospel of the supremacy of the spiritual life. Like the Pragmatist, he claims a place for the whole man in the business of life and thought; but, unlike the Pragmatist, he sees man as more than narrowly human. He sees in him the emergence of something superhuman, divine; and he attempts such a philosophical reconstruction of life from the point of view of spiritual idealism as our present extremity calls for. And he is calling us to a true sense of the values of things by demanding a thorough and unqualified application of a spiritual point of view over the whole area of life.

Eucken's vogue is immense in his own country; and, however badly off we may have been in this country, there is no doubt that we were never so deeply involved in materialistic views as Germany has been. The unspirituality of the *Kirche*, the inordinate license of much German biblical criticism, the epidemic of militarism, all show how greatly Germany had departed from a spiritual way of life. The vogue of Eucken betokens a deep and widespread reaction; and he

would be rash indeed who would deny the real possibility of seeing in Germany on a very large scale what one of the prophets calls "a famine for the hearing of the word of the Lord."

Nearer home it is possible to detect similar tendencies. That shrewd observer and stimulating writer, Mr. J. A. Hobson,\* expresses the view that we are on the verge of a renaissance. He sees the beginnings of it in a new spirit of literature, art, and drama. He points out that the prevailing fashions in thought, the old party watchwords, the old religious traditions are exhausted, and that we are living in a time of short intellectual leases, due to the discovery of defects in all the traditional syntheses; and he adds: "What is needed is not so much a system of thought, whether monism or pluralism, not so much a single faith, religious, ethical, intellectual, æsthetic, practical, as a single spirit in the conduct of life." It is not difficult to see that the writer is looking to such a recovery of a sound spiritual idealism as we are now contemplating.

May it not be that in all of us in whom the Spirit still stirs, be it ever so feebly, there is, perhaps without our knowing it, even now a preparation, an expectancy, a waiting, and that, sooner than we know, we shall pass out of the bondage of things into the freedom of the Spirit? "Is there not," asks Dora Greenwell, "now among us, a core of vital religion, a hidden Church, waiting as a fruit tree in spring will wait long, all set with blossom, for a day warm enough to blow in, a day when it will blow all at once?"

\* "The Task of Realism," *English Review*, October, 1909.

PART III  
THE SPIRITUAL POINT OF VIEW



### XIII

#### THE TRUE SUPERMAN

**B**EFORE we embark upon our examination of the probable implications of the emergence of the spiritual point of view, it may be as well to review briefly the ground already traversed. We have endeavored to analyze in a general way two sets of circumstances. First of all, in our examination of the Average Man, we sought to discover the main general tendencies and influences which have produced the prevailing atmosphere in which the mass of ordinary folk live, and which stamps its own character upon them. It appeared that the chief force at work in this region was the indigenous bias of the natural man to materialistic ways of life, confirmed and reinforced more or less directly by the materialistic character of the current thought of the last half-century.

From this we set out on another survey of the present situation as it appears in the existing tendencies, social, intellectual, religious, of our time. We found that we were able to take heart of grace from the obvious resurgence of the spirit of brotherhood, but that we had to confess the virtual exhaustion of modern ways of life and modes of thought, and the apparent bankruptcy of the current Christian tradition. Nevertheless we have endeavored to persuade ourselves that historical analogy justifies us in believing that all these

circumstances taken together point to a coming renaissance of faith, and a revival of spiritual ways of life and thought and of spiritual standards of judgment.

It now becomes necessary to inquire what exactly the spiritual life means and what results for thought and conduct are likely to accrue from a frank, complete acceptance and application of a spiritual point of view. We shall endeavor, in a very diffident and slight fashion, to appraise these probable consequences. But first of all we must consider what the grounds are upon which our faith in the primacy of the spiritual life and the reality of a spiritual universe rests, and with what authority we may venture to call upon the average man to change his way of life.

There are two ways—and, at bottom, only two ways—in which we may regard the world. We may look upon it either as having all its significance within itself, or as having no significance worthy the name except as it subserves and leads to something without and beyond itself. We may say, with the scientist, that “there is an end *in* the world that is worth *all* the world,” and that all human striving is to enable him to move on “to some great worthy unknown end *in* this world.”\* We may go so far as to define this result as “perfect fitness for a social environment” †; but it is attained by purely natural processes and realized within this concrete phenomenal world. We may, on the other hand, deny the validity of this view, and assert that we can only discover the total significance of this world in the light of another universe which lies outside sense-perceptions. The question resolves itself

\* R. K. Duncan, “The New Knowledge,” p. 257.

† Saleeby, “Organic Evolution,” p. 119.

into this: Is there anything or is there nothing beyond what we can see, and handle, and prove?

The common-sense answer to a question of this sort may be stated in this way.

*First*, physical nature seems to have reached its high-water mark in man. The process of physical evolution has apparently been arrested at this point; and all the changes we may discern in the structure of the human organism during the whole time for which we have any valid data amount to little more than minor local variations. If there is to be development and progress in the future, it may be in the region of "psychical characteristics," as Dr. Saleeby would say, and as the result of processes essentially identical with those which have produced the physical organism of man; or in the region of morals, as Huxley would say, by "a course of conduct which is in all respects opposed to that which leads to success in the cosmic struggle for existence." \*

*Second*, man is conscious of inward stirrings and cravings and beckonings which are incapable of complete satisfaction or explanation in the sense-world. The materialist will, no doubt, assert that these inward movements are merely cerebral agitations, brain-storms which are to be accounted for on purely physical lines. Apart, however, from the fact that this explanation raises more questions than it settles, the scientist is yet to appear who will lay bare the physical process which is supposed to give rise to the "loves, hopes, longings" that stir us. The human soul is the great unsolved, insoluble problem of physical science. These instinctive cravings and strivings have every right to be regarded

\* Huxley, "Evolution and Ethics," Romanes Lect., 1893.

as being as authentic as any other instinctive tendencies which we may discern in the physical world. I have referred to the saying of Romanes that elsewhere in the animal world there is no such thing as an instinct "pointing aimlessly."\* It is, therefore, at least as logical to infer from these instinctive activities and tendencies the existence of a spiritual universe to which they seem to point as it is to attribute them to brain processes about which we can only speculate.

It is scarcely necessary to indicate the view to which the average intelligence would ascribe the balance of probability and the greater reasonableness. It may be admitted that from a severely intellectual standpoint the greater risk of error attaches to the acceptance of what may be called the religious view; but it is quite clear that the greater risk *to the whole man* is involved in its rejection. Satisfactory antecedent demonstration of either view is from the nature of the case out of the question, and the pragmatic is the only available test of validity. This test, however, is so intimately personal and private that it can hardly amount to a demonstration of a universal truth, unless we are prepared to admit that the immense preponderance of those who accept the religious view, after so many ages of practical test and application, amounts to a virtual proof of its validity. But for the ordinary man the issue will probably be settled when he realizes that ultimately the only alternative to the spiritual view of life is that he should remain content to look upon life as a cow does. If this be denied, and it be asserted that man's superiority is demonstrated by his triumphs over nature and his subordination of it to his own uses, the sufficient

\* "Thoughts on Religion," p. 82.

answer is that the cow also in its own way triumphs over nature—and consumes a part of it. If man is not spiritual, he can have no necessities differing *in kind* from those of the brute. Even the human distinctiveness of self-consciousness on the naturalistic hypothesis becomes the natural result of purely physical movements: it belongs to the earth even if it stand two or three removes from it. A materialistic conception of man cannot in the end indicate any human interests which are different *in kind* (however unlike they may be in form and expression) from the interests of the lower animals. To admit that there are interests or needs which are generically different is to give the case away. The difference must be explained; that is to say, the soul must be explained.

There is really no alternative—for the ordinary person at least—but a spiritual point of view for the interpretation and management of life. The extremely scientific person may be able to devise a satisfying working hypothesis for life out of his materialistic philosophy; but the ordinary person, who is not prepared to disbelieve in the authenticity of his strivings after a larger universe than this of his sensible experience, must have recourse to the perhaps less logical but certainly more reasonable and efficient spiritual interpretation of things. And that not as an addendum or an annexe to other points of view, but as fundamental, subsuming and giving its own color and perspective to every other point of view that may be necessary for the proper management of life. For, in the last analysis, what the spiritual viewpoint implies is that we belong to God; we came out from God and have a destiny in God. Our life is continuous with the life

of the Eternal Spirit, and the strivings and the beckonings of our soul are simply the welling up within us of the Eternal Spirit, Who is for ever endeavoring to force up our inner life to the level of His own, helping us to shatter the bondage of sense and to realize our true ideal. It is the spiritual point of view alone that can reveal things as they actually are to us, that can help us to overcome the obscurations and perversions of sense, to appraise with unerring judgment the circumstances which surround and make up our life. It is the fact that in theory this view is generally accepted by the average man; it is equally the fact that he by no means generally puts it to the proof of living by it.

The spiritual life must be accepted as the negation of the sense-life, and as a radical departure from it. It is too late in the day to propound naturalistic explanations of the spiritual elements of our life; and, indeed, there never was a time when the explanations of naturalism were in any way really convincing. The large element of hypothesis and the extreme ingenuity contained in the attempt to make clear, say, the origin and development of the moral sense, discounted it heavily from the start. We were led back to primitive and crude states of society; we were bidden see the moral sense opening out in the necessity which the most rudimentary social life demanded of a measure of individual self-limitation. The welfare of the group demanded certain modes of conduct and forbade others. That was the origin of the difference between right and wrong. Natural selection did the rest, and so we have a conscience.

On this showing, of course, the kind of authority which conscience has always exercised is an illusion; its

sole sanction is the idea of social welfare. That is made the criterion between right and wrong. But if there be anything which every man with a shred of living conscience knows, it is that when it speaks to him it does not say, "This thing will help or hinder the well-being of society." What his conscience does say is, "Thou shalt" or "Thou shalt not do this thing." When a man offends his conscience the momentum with which it reacts on him is not to be explained by ingenious pictures of primitive society. There is something intimate, personal, awful, ultimate about it. It seems to be the echo of a living voice clanging through the crust of things from some remote hidden world. There are such things as social or collective sins; but conscience does not deal with them on that plane. Guilt is an intensely individual thing; and the man who has had a controversy with his conscience knows that it is the ambassador within him not of a certain social order but of the moral order of the whole universe. The push, the driving force behind it is the ultimate moral force that invests the whole scheme of things. It is not the mere reverberation in a man's soul of a social order evolved by way of natural selection. Conscience is native, elemental, primitive. It is impossible to get behind the beginning of it. However far back your data may carry you, conscience is there before you. It is a far more likely hypothesis that conscience made society possible than that it originated in the necessities of the primitive social order. It is no doubt true that the necessities of the growing social order determined to a great extent its conception of the actual content of the categories of right and wrong; and this conception has varied a good deal with the passing of time. But the thing which in-

vests wrong with wrongness and right with rightness, and speaks in the imperative mood, is an indigenous thing antecedent to the most primitive society. Conscience has to be accepted as a genuine, original element in the human constitution—a valid, authentic thing, which springs from and points to an absolute Righteousness of which it is the embodiment and representative within the dimensions of human nature.

The spiritual intuitions of humanity stand in the same category as conscience. They are not growths out of the physical organism. They are parts of a new thing which was superimposed upon the nature—that new thing which lifted man out of the state of mere animalism. And the whole future development of man is destined to be along this line. Nature is not likely, so far as we can see, to produce a higher physical type than man; and if there is to be a superman, he must be evolved along the line of the spiritual life. This is analogous to the entire process by which evolution seems to have proceeded. From inanimate matter to life, from life to conscious life, the movement proceeded by the inoculation of some new element into the existing mass of things, by some creative synthesis which inaugurated a new plane of development. Last of all, in man a new force was introduced into the process, and another plane of development was reached. That new force was the spiritual life.

I am quite aware that the scientist will scoff at this *deus ex machina* interpretation of the evolution process; but it nevertheless does remain the most reasonable interpretation of all the facts. Indeed, it is becoming more and more recognized that all through the world of organic nature there is still a creative

force at work. M. Bergson's "*L'Évolution Créatrice*" shows how deep and far-reaching this process is, and it is probably more in accord with the present scientific position to believe that the spiritual life of man originated in a supreme activity of this creative power than to assume that it is a variation produced by natural processes within the physical organism.

It is likely that we are doing less than justice to Nietzsche to-day because we fasten too exclusively in our estimate of him to his worship of power. He is recalling us to a real and necessary truth when he reminds us that man has struggled up from animalism and barbarism to his present physical development, and then asks if the process is to stop here. He protests, equally with the religious thinker, against the elimination of mind and will from the universe, and thinks that it is possible for man to evolve out of himself, by the exercise of mind and will, a type of life as much higher than himself as he is now higher than the barbarian or the primate. He holds that the possibilities of manhood are still unexhausted, and that a great deal of development is possible through "a favorable accumulation and augmentation of human powers and arrangements."

We have no right to quarrel with this position. It is in essence the New Testament position when it speaks of "the full-grown man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." We have not yet evolved the highest type of manhood. But Nietzsche's characteristic ethic compels us to part company with him. Despite the anxiety of his disciples to deliver him from the imputation of condemning altruism, the logical outcome of the worship of the will power is the restoration of

the ethic of the jungle and the forest into human life, and the destruction of society. It is all very well for the philosopher to say that he is merely addressing a select congregation; but when a man begins to preach he cannot choose his hearers, and Nietzsche forgets that already the will to power is so awakened in the mass of men that the possibility of his ideal super-feudalism has gone by for ever. The number of giants for whom there is room in this world, and for whom there is likely to be room in a world of militant democracy, is very small and is growing less; and Nietzsche's own preaching has still further decreased it. For there can hardly be found a virile man who does not feel that the call to be a superman is meant for him.

The very process of history had already made Nietzsche's ethic a back number. The growth of democracy with its ideals of individual liberty and power, and the coming of brotherhood with its recognition of the mass-movement as an element in human progress, have placed irremovable qualifications upon the will to power. The superman is to emerge not out of the resolute initiative and struggle of select individuals, but out of the womb of a continually ascending social life. We must grow together into supermanhood.

The type of that supermanhood is, I think, already revealed to us; but it is enough that now we should recall that only by the development and advance of the spiritual life in man is it to be achieved. The average man in our day is one in whom the spirit is suppressed and subordinated to the sense-life. The true superman is he in whom the spirit has overcome sense, and has triumphantly returned upon it and laid it under tribute to its own development.

## XIV

### FROM FLESH TO SPIRIT

ONE is not bound, because one welcomes Nietzsche's fierce challenge to the Christian ethic, to endorse the grounds of the challenge. It is enough justification for welcoming it that the time is overdue for a radical re-exploration of the Christian ethic, and not the Christian ethic only, but the entire Christian view of the world. Whether it be from the attrition of the Christian ideal by the process of time, or from original misconception, or insufficient apprehension of its content, there can be little doubt that modern Christian practice, both religious and ethical, has diverged greatly from that of the primitive Christian community. It may be urged that if there is a change it is due to the natural variations that are inevitable in the course of development; but this will not bear examination in the light of Christian history. All great advances in the course of Christian expansion have been caused by the recovery and reassertion of certain primitive elements of the Christian experience and doctrine; and it is hardly open to question that the general historical tendency, outside periods of reformation and revival, has been downward rather than upward. The pressure of the time-spirit generally operates in the direction of wearing down the demands of the Christian ideal; and we have so lowered the flag

in our day, by a process so gradual that we have hardly perceived it—a process begun long before we had appeared on the scene—that only the historian could elucidate the connection between current and apostolic Christianity. It is, consequently, a fair comment that the hour has come for a very close scrutiny of the religious and ethical content of modern Christianity in the light of primitive Christianity on the one hand, and of existing conditions on the other.

Perhaps the best evidence of the truth of this criticism lies in the fact that we do not nowadays anticipate the kind of change in a man's life which the early Christians expected Christianity to effect. The impact of the Gospel on a man's life, according to the New Testament, precipitated a revolution. It produced a new man who was not at all a revised version of the old man, but a "new creation."

Paul, in an interesting parenthesis of autobiography, in the Epistle to the Philippians, gives a very significant account of the change which his conversion wrought in him. So far as we expect Christianity to produce revolutions in individual lives, we assume that they will be altogether ethical in character. Now, Paul was in no sense a depraved person; and it was not the ethical character of the revolution that was wrought in him that impressed him. It is true that his old pride was killed; but the underlying and dominating fact in his conversion was that his scale of values was turned upside down.

Paul was out seeking what all the world is out to seek—the sense of individual self-fulfilment, that completeness of achievement in which a man may rest. He had been brought up to believe that the goal was to be

reached by a certain road; and he set out with a great many antecedent advantages. Birth and blood were of high account in the scheme by which Paul had been taught to order his life; he vaunted that he was "circumcised the eighth day"—no mere Ishmaelite he; "of the house of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews"—no man had a better family tree. "As touching the law, a Pharisee"—he had belonged to the most exclusive and powerful of the religious sects, had been trained up in it. "As touching zeal, persecuting the church"—no perfunctory or casual member of this order was this man, no mere passenger, but an ardent zealot demonstrating his fervor by a fury of Christian-baiting. "As touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless"—every little observance kept, every detail of the commandments observed, every point of ritual and ceremony strictly performed. Here he was, a man who lacked nothing—blood, religious connections, personal achievements—he had everything he wanted, everything that could satisfy his craving and realize his ambitions.

But one day he found himself throwing all these things on the scrap-heap. He had no further use for them. What, then, had happened? Simply this—the impact of Christ had turned his scale of values upside down, and these things had slid off the scale altogether. Paul had come upon a new life, and a new philosophy of life. He found himself a new creation, a new man, called and committed to a way of life as different in its interests, its outlook, its ideals, as day is different from the night.

Paul's conversion is the classic instance of one type

of revolution. Augustine and Francis of Assisi represent, respectively, other types, and the relative place of the various elements, ethical, intellectual, emotional, in the revolution varies in each case. It was not only that sinners were made saints, but that the whole life was reversed; and even the principle of intellectual and æsthetic judgments was entirely revolutionized. The only adequate description of the change is that the natural man has become a spiritual man.

Human life is so complex a thing that it is not easy to define in a simple way the precise character or content of the revolution which the transition from natural to spiritual involves. It may, however, be said, generally, to be a transposition of the emphasis from outwardness to inwardness.

Externality is the note of the "natural" life along its whole range. The natural man seeks his satisfactions in the concrete phenomenal world. The pleasures of sense, the applause of the crowd, the acquisition and possession of wealth—it is in such things as these that he seeks self-realization. Even in the upper reaches of his life he is dominated by the same bias. He finds religious finality in concrete clear-cut embodiments of truth. He finds moral authority in an external code. The "natural" man cannot conceive of a goodness save one that is defined in a set of plain imperatives. A scale of values determined by a concrete immediacy of experience, traditionalism in intellectual matters, legalism in morality—these are the working principles of the natural man; and his life may be found ranging from one of vicious sensual gratification to that of most rigid orthodoxy in belief and of unbending pharisaism in conduct. It is obvi-

ous, therefore, that the change which the passage into a spiritual life involves is not wholly appreciated when it is regarded only as ethical; and it is a real question whether there has not been a considerable obscuration of all the implicates of the spiritual life by the almost exclusive emphasis upon the moral change which it involved. Or it may perhaps be that this is due to an inadequate and partial principle of ethical judgment, and that our definition of sin is not comprehensive enough. In current evangelism, conversion applies primarily to the drunkard, the thief, and the jail-bird; and respectability is regarded as a guarantee that a man is beyond need of conversion. He himself certainly thinks so. Whereas, indeed, anything is morally wrong which hinders the true predestined spiritual development of man. We are usually ready enough to pass a moral judgment upon the Pharisee without realizing that the uncompromisingly orthodox person is involved in the same condemnation. If the legalism of the Pharisee was a sin, there is also an orthodoxy which is sin. A hard-shell orthodoxy or a severe legalism may hinder the spiritual life no less than vice; and many a man needs to be converted from a creed as much as Paul needed to be delivered from the Law, or Augustine from sensuality.

The New Testament antithesis of flesh and spirit is conceived in this broad way. It is not primarily an ethical antithesis unless we broaden out our conception of moral evil to cover everything that hinders a thoroughly spiritual way of life. Indeed, Paul uses the word "flesh," in Galatians,\* in a way which is far separated from the idea of vice, and shows that even

\* iii. 3.

the flesh may have its own ethic. If T. H. Green's exposition of Romans viii. 4 is right, that passage also points to the same conclusion—namely, that Paul's conception of the flesh does not contain an inevitable and inseparable moral color. The flesh represents generally the principles which operate in the natural man, whether with good or evil intention. But Paul was too keen an observer of human nature, and too sure a judge of his own heart, not to realize that the natural man was incapable of a satisfying moral achievement, and that he tended rather to degenerate. The flesh is not necessarily depraved and vicious, and the natural man may have high and worthy aims. But he lives in the bondage of the concrete and the immediate, and he must be content to become a derelict or remain a permanent failure unless he breaks away from this bondage into the liberty and enlargement of the spiritual life.

It has been said that generally the change from natural to spiritual is a change from outwardness to inwardness; but this is simply one instance in which we are compelled to use spatial metaphors in order to describe something in which space is really no factor. We are little better off if we say that it means that a man turns his face away from the seen to the unseen, for this only refers to a quality and not to the essence of the two opposed universes. Similar defects belong to any of the antitheses in which the change is described; and this same difficulty follows us into any attempt to compare the new hierarchy of values with the old. For the satisfactions of the spiritual life are things that "break through language and escape." Paul's friends might well have said, when he went on

to describe the new scale of values which his conversion had brought him—"to be found in Him," "to know Him and the power of His resurrection," and so forth—that these were remote and unintelligible things, the mere sound of words. But they were, nevertheless, very intimate realities to him. The spiritual man is said to judge all things, but even he is not said to be able to describe his inner experience in speech which is readily intelligible to the natural man.

Nevertheless there can be no doubt in his own mind, or in the minds of his friends, that when a man has passed from natural to spiritual a great revolution has befallen him. That will be perfectly clear from the change in his attitude to the things he lived for. He may have been a lover of money; henceforth he ceases to love money and to live to make it. At the same time it does not follow that his love of money has been displaced by a contempt of money. To despise money is as absurd as to worship it. Money is an indispensable commodity, and it is only bad when possession of it becomes an end in life, or when one has too much of it. What has happened to the man is that he has found a single and sustained point of view from which he can judge the value of money and put it in its own place in his scheme of life. And not only money, but all other things that the natural man tends to cherish. Fame, pleasure, knowledge, intellectual power—a man may seek these to his undoing as well as wealth. What he needs, and what he gets in his new spiritual life, is a new principle of evaluation, by which he is enabled to give these things their own place and to appoint them to their proper uses. The man who breaks with the natural way of life finds his old

gods tumbling down and settling about his feet; but it does not necessarily mean that he must thereupon kick them, but simply that he must put them on those minor pedestals which are proper to them.

Now, we do not habitually expect this kind of revolution in a man's life as a matter of course when he assumes Christian discipleship. We have come to regard the notion of conversion as obsolete; and we believe that if a man has been brought up within the sphere of Christian influences he is beyond the need of conversion. Our theory is that the gentle pressure of Christian influence will sooner or later constrain the youth into a Christian life. But the poverty of our current Christianity in the churches proves the theory inadequate. There must be a definite, categorical, and conscious negation of the natural and appropriation of the spiritual life on the part of every individual. Christian influences may strengthen the spiritual elements in a man's life, and he may make the passage from the natural to the spiritual without being involved in a great cataclysm. The new life must nevertheless begin in a definite act of appropriation of the spiritual life; and the person concerned must know at the time what he is doing. Most men who have embraced the spiritual life have done so without really understanding what it implies, without experiencing the tremendous revolution which it should be and which they ought to have made it. The Salvation Army people speak of one who has been "soundly converted." The trouble is that most modern Christians are not "soundly converted." I confess that once I held strongly to Horace Bushnell's principle that one should grow up never knowing himself to have been anything

but a Christian; but that is, I now see, subject to great qualifications. The psychology of adolescence seems, for one thing, to make it untenable; and I hold that it should be an element in Christian education to emphasize the need of conversion, and especially to make clear all that conversion means. Most of us have not said a final irrevocable farewell to the flesh, to materialistic views and ways of life, and consequently our Christian life is a weak patchwork in two colors. We have tried to build the Christian life into the walls of the old life, and have in consequence only jerry-built it. It does not stand the storms of life, neither does it give us real covert in the tempest or shade from the heat. It is a poor, mediocre thing, because we set out upon it in ignorance of what was involved in making it a splendid majestic reality. This was, of course, primarily a defect of education. We were permitted to start building the tower without counting the cost. We are reaping the poor harvest which has grown out of the bad husbandry of those who set us out in the spiritual life.

It is necessary that we should realize that the call of the Gospel is not a call to a life which is an improvement upon the life of the ordinary person, or a call to cultivate a little religion; it is specifically a call to a different kind of life, with different aims, different ideals, different values, and a diametrically opposite direction. The call of the Gospel is an invitation to a way of life which begins in a revolution. It does not ask us to add one more to the interests that make up our life, to put a new iron in the fire, to add religion to our business and pleasure. It calls upon a man to reorganize and reconstruct his life from an entirely different point of view, to take his stand above this

world of concrete sensible experience, this world of eating and drinking, sleeping and waking, and to re-arrange his interests and preoccupations from the new standpoint. It asks that this new point of view shall underlie and determine all other points of view. There are circumstances which have to be contemplated from the standpoint of the home, of business, or of friendship; but this spiritual point of view is to subsume all others, determine their mode of action, give them its own particular color, shooting its own light through them all.

The passage into a spiritual life, as the New Testament regards it, is a change of universe. It is from the universe of the seen and temporal to that of the unseen and eternal. We have spoken of it already as a change from outwardness to inwardness, and have admitted the inadequacy of this description. It may be that the proper account of the process should be from one kind of outwardness to another. The person involved translates himself from one kind of world into another. The appropriateness of the word "inwardness" in this connection lies in the fact that one relates oneself to the new universe by means of intuitions and instincts and processes which are exclusively personal and individual, and are not amenable to observation nor contingent upon any external conditions. The whole affair is transacted within the area of the individual consciousness. It is a highly and exclusively private process.

The process is twofold. First, it has a negative aspect which in the New Testament is defined as repentance. It is a commonplace of religious thinking that repentance means more than a condition of con-

triteness and penitence. "Repentance," says Du Bose, "is the personal negation of sin. It is the entire opposition of our entire selves to sin. In the first place, what is our entire selves? The attitude required is not one of mind only; it must be equally of the heart and of the feelings or affections. Nor is that enough. It must be of the will and of the effectual will." \* This definition is satisfactory when sin is defined comprehensively enough to include all that hinders the awakening and development of the spiritual life. It is not merely an ethical process in the narrower sense. It is a complete opposition to the "natural" life in all its phases.

The positive side of the process is faith; and faith, according to Du Bose, is "the personal affirmation of God or of holiness. It is the entire setting of the entire self God-ward, or holiness-ward." Here, again, the definition must be accepted with the proviso that holiness is regarded broadly as the converse of sin in the sense in which it has just been spoken of. The definition is far more satisfactory with the reference to holiness left out altogether. Faith is an attitude to God—to the spiritual universe, if you will; but the "spiritual universe" is, after all, only a thin way of describing God. Repentance and faith are the obverse and the reverse of the same orientation process. They are the negative and positive movements in the same personal episode; but they are both movements which embrace the entire life through and through.

This act is not to be regarded as being done once for all, nor as an act which fixes unchangeably the "set" of the life thereafter, confirming it in one given

\* "The Gospel in the Gospels," pp. 148-9.

groove. It is merely the initial act of a permanent activity. "By repentance," said Luther in the first of his Wittenberg theses, "we are to understand that the whole life of Christians should be a repentance." Similarly, the whole life of Christians is to be a life of active operative faith. As time passes, the negative element in the experience may lose its immediacy in the positive activity and habit of faith, but it all along entails a protest against and a negation of the "natural."

May it not be said that faith is the characteristic exercise of the spiritual life in man, just as reasoning, feeling, willing, are the characteristic activities of other faculties? Eucken speaks of the religious faculty as one among other faculties which may be vitalized by the emergence of the active spiritual life. Religion stands in his scheme with art and conduct as a department of human interest and activity. But, unless we are going to be very fastidious in our use of language, it seems difficult to draw a just distinction between the religious faculty and that potential spiritual life which may by repentance and faith become actual and supreme in our experience. Is it not rather the truth that the religious faculty subsumes all the rest, and that they become vital and dynamic when the exercise of the religious faculty mediates to them inspiration and strength? It is surely beyond cavil that the highest achievements in art and morality (the two departments in which we measure human advance with the greatest assurance) have been religiously inspired. The sculpture of Greece, the ethic of the Hebrew prophets, the painting of the Renaissance, the most permanently vital music in all time, the civic passion of a Savonarola, the

political idealism of a Mazzini, the humanitarianism of a Wilberforce, have all alike had a religious inspiration. Is it not simpler to say that our capacity and power for what we call religion is identical with the latent germinal spirituality which, when it is liberated and asserted, issues into a thoroughgoing and effectual spiritual life? By the pragmatic test, the distinction between religious and spiritual is surely invalid. For there is assuredly no religious exercise worthy the name which does not establish a real and actual contact between the soul and that spiritual universe from which its growth and movement derive, and in which Eucken finds the secret of our self-realization.

It is too late in the day for naturalism to invite us to believe that the religious instinct is a morbid development out of the breakdown of some purely animal tendency, a mental fungus growing on a diseased and exhausted soil. The common man is beginning to see that even naturalism cannot do business without the help of faith. For naturalism must in the course of its work sometimes proceed from the known to the unknown. The scientist never makes an experiment on the basis of a given postulate or hypothesis without exercising a real faith. Life itself would become altogether impossible without some "speculating in futures," which means that human life, even on the very lowest plane, never ceases in some sense to be a religious affair, a dealing with the unknown. But in the natural man this power of faith is so hedged in by sense that it never exercises itself beyond a certain range of immediacies—such as the regularity of the physical order, and the innate (but quite unreasoned) sense of the general friendliness of the

enviroming universe. These are the things we *trust* in all the ventures of our life. What the breach with sense does is to set this power of faith free, to deliver it from the oppression of the obvious, and to allow it to reach out until it lays hold of the unseen whole, the universal spiritual life, the life of God. That potential and dormant continuity with the Universal Spirit is by this emancipation and activity of faith actualized, vitalized. The spiritual life becomes the characteristic note, faith the characteristic habit of the whole man.

But Faith becomes not a habit, an orientation of life only, it becomes also an organ of knowledge. Where ratiocination breaks down, faith carries on the tale. We begin to *believe* "where we cannot prove." Faith establishes a new point of view, a new mode of approach to our problems, a new experience and a new interpretation of experience. It brings us at last all the way to such reality as our finitude can apprehend. It is at once a "set" of the soul, an activity of the will, a power of vision, and an instrument of knowledge. It is that power by which at every stage of life we pass from the known to the unknown, from a life in the part to a life in the whole. It is at once the initial act and the permanent activity by which we appropriate for ourselves the divine life.

## XV

### THE UNIVERSE OF SPIRIT

**I**T is, of course, obvious that the very fact of personal intercourse entails the existence of some kind of continuity between man and man. What this continuity is we cannot say. The conception of personality is to-day once more in a fluid state, and we are as far away as ever from anything like a convincing account of the nature and content of the impact of one personality upon another. But that there is some spiritual aura which pervades all humanity is an irresistible inference from the fact that men do affect one another in a multitude of ways. If personality were a walled and gateless city, society and fellowship would be impossible beyond the very narrowest limits. It is one of the commonest experiences of thinking men that there are times of intellectual contagion which is to all seeming independent of any conscious personal contact, when they come upon thoughts in other men's minds which have emerged also in their own. We say sometimes that certain ideas, certain tendencies of thought, are "in the air." There are also moments of social emotion when we come, as Dora Greenwell says, "within the influences of the broad tendencies of humanity, where individual limitations disappear, swept away by the force of the current." "In contemplating men," she adds, "say soldiers, weavers, col-

liers, in a collective body, we feel the heart drawn out in a deepened sympathy and interest, which none among them perhaps as individuals would command." \* And yet, while we are conscious of our continuity with the great ocean of human life, we are also able to set ourselves over against it as distinct personal integers. We do so in the very act of recognizing its existence.

We may discover this continuity also in history. The course of historical events is the outward and visible sign of the operation of certain hidden forces. The sequence of circumstances which makes up any given historical episode has been determined by the action and reaction of living principles. To appreciate the meaning of history it is our first duty, having all the relevant data before us, to find out what principles have determined the course of events at various stages in human affairs. We shall naturally discover these principles in forms which are largely due to local and temporary conditions; but if we proceed to dig deeper and disentangle these principles from what is local and accidental, we shall come upon an underlying spirit from which they have issued, and to which they appear, in their original purity, to belong as permanent and abiding activities. Beneath the outer flux of human life, there is an immanent spirit in which we are to discover the source of historical movements, a spirit which has by its characteristic activities so determined the course of history that it is the commonest of all commonplaces that "history repeats itself."

Take such an episode as the Protestant Reformation. What the Reformers stood for, and what there-

\* "Two Friends," p. 73.

fore evoked the Reformation and determined its character, was the theological principle of Justification by Faith. It was not the first time that this same principle had expressed itself in a movement. It lay at the root of St. Paul's break with Judaism, and that period of apostolic history is wholly colored by it. It is not difficult to indicate the local and temporary conditions which, in either case, determined the particular *form* of the principle; but if we look beneath the form, what we assuredly come upon is the immanent spirit of man struggling to be free, fighting its age-long battle against the tyranny of institutions that had outlived their office, marching on to what it knows to be its destiny of perfect freedom. Mazzini used to say that the French Revolution was but the political translation of the Protestant Reformation; and beneath the welter of the French Revolution, despite its excesses and contradictions, the historical student discovers the immanent human spirit in another of its great uprisings and endeavors to lay hold of its predestined liberty. It is, perhaps, true that for the moment the real inwardness of the French Revolution was obscured and its true end defeated by reason of its excesses, but it was nevertheless the mainspring and origin of the nineteenth-century struggles for political and religious freedom in England. In the Renaissance also the human spirit is seen breaking away from the bondage of tradition in the realm of knowledge and rising up in its might to claim its rightful heritage of light. It is this power of dynamic eruption which the immanent spirit of humanity possesses that explains all the renewals and revivals, all the splendid leaps-forward of the race with which the course of history is punctuated.

It is significant that the early stages of all such movements appear as revolts, as breaches with the past. It is the tendency of human nature to embody its spiritual conquests in institutions and then gradually to ascribe permanent validity to the institutions. But all formal and institutional embodiments of spiritual principles are, for this reason, foredoomed sooner or later to a conflict with the living spirit out of which in the first instance they sprang. Time makes institutions very inelastic and brittle; and the ever-new wine of the abiding spirit of man requires ever-new skins for its accommodation. The course of history may be regarded as the ceaseless conflict—with fluctuating fortunes—between the native tendency of flesh and blood to cling to its formal institutions, and the latent spirituality of man which will not be for ever bound by any institution. Soon or late, it breaks through the old and embodies itself in new forms more adapted to and consistent with the conditions of a new age.

Now, the emergence of a triumphant spiritual life in the individual is marked by a clear sense of its continuity with this universal and immanent human spirit. It is recognized as being definitely grounded and established in a *whole*, and in experience this whole is not distinguishable from God. It is impossible to delimit the boundary which marks off the divine from the human; and it is impossible to distinguish this immanent human spirit from the fact which is covered by the doctrine of Divine Immanence. The immanent spirit of man is the immanent Spirit of God. This Spirit is atomised, if the term may be used, in human personality, yet it is all along continuous with the Universal Spirit. Whatever spiritual life we possess, it is the

life of God in us. For always "it is God that worketh in us both to will and to work, for His good pleasure."

Perhaps there is a danger to-day of such an emphasis upon the Divine Immanence as to involve the practical exclusion of the correlative fact of God's Transcendence. If we are to save ourselves from pantheism, with all its implied fatalism, we must insist upon the Transcendence of God; just as, if we are to be delivered from the sterility of deism, we must emphasize the Divine Immanence. We may, moreover, almost lay it down as a law that the ethical failure of most religious systems is to be traced to the neglect of one or other of these complementary conceptions. To the Jew God was transcendent only,\* at least until the pressure of Greek ideas began to suggest the notion of immanence. The consequences were twofold. First, a very keen sense of personal identity, a consciousness of sharp, clear-cut outlines of personality, and with this a very profound sense of *theological* sin—"Against Thee, *Thee only*, have I sinned." Secondly, a very secondary sense of the *social* moralities. From this there followed an exclusive concentration upon religious exercises, a process which exerted no moral discipline and produced no moral energy. This was the perpetual indictment of the national religion on the lips of the Hebrew prophets. Mohammedanism, equally and for the same fundamental reason, has developed a fierce religious consciousness, but a very inadequate sense of moral obligation; and the ethical emphasis which modern Mohammedanism is develop-

\* It is true that occasionally the Jew saw a glimpse of the fuller truth; e. g. "The Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart."

ing is bound in time to modify its theological preconceptions very profoundly. On the other hand, Stoicism with the emphasis exclusively on immanence, despite its recognition of the moral Ego as the pivot of its entire problem, never became anything more than a speculative philosophy, because it failed to leave its Ego free. It is necessary, therefore, while we emphasize the Divine Immanence, that we should preserve our sense of the Divine Transcendence. As a matter of fact, the spiritual life compels us to do so. For, paradox though it may seem, it is nevertheless true that, together with the keen sense of continuity with a universal spiritual life, the coming of the spiritual life to the individual brings with it an altogether new experience of one's own personal integrity and freedom. Unless this is wholly illusory, it must correspond to the fact of the Divine Transcendence, just as the sense of continuity with a universal spirit points to the fact of the Divine Immanence.

The contradiction between the conceptions of Immanence and Transcendence as they refer to God is largely superficial and verbal. To a stern, unbending logic they are mutually exclusive and therefore irreconcilable. But it is only when logic runs amok that this situation actually arises. To common sense and to experience, the two conceptions are not merely complementary, but mutually interpretative. They are accepted as two correlative facts of personal experience—the sense of personal identity and the consciousness of continuity with a spiritual life which is universal. It is only a God Who is at once transcendent and immanent Who will fit in with the demands of our spiritual experience. When we speak of the universal spir-

itual life we are speaking of the Immanence of the transcendent God. When we recognize an independent spiritual life in ourselves we are conceding the Transcendence of the immanent God. In our experience of the spiritual life as at once independent and yet continuous with a universal spiritual life, we do actually overcome in experience what is in a word an irreconcilable opposition.

There is a passage in the Epistle to the Galatians which supplies us with the precise analogy of this position. The apparent paradox implied in the sense of continuity with a universal spiritual life on the one hand, and of our own independent spiritual life on the other, is paralleled by Paul's words, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Paul says that he was crucified with Christ, and whatever else that may mean we must connect it with the expression, "The death that He died, He died unto sin once," and assume that Paul meant that he also had died to sin, had repudiated the life of the flesh. "Yet I live—nevertheless not I, but Christ in me." Here we have the strong assertion of personal self-hood side by side with a no less strong assertion of the merging of it in that of Christ. "God," says Paul elsewhere, "sends forth the spirit of His Son into our hearts." The repudiation of the sense-life, of the natural, means the invasion and the interpenetration of us by the spirit of Christ, Who absorbs and assimilates our spirits into His, and yet by some transcendent miracle leaves us not less, but more—and more gloriously—our own selves.

No view of the world is likely to survive many days which does not regard human freedom as axiomatic, and no accumulation of argument will prevail against

the inlaid conviction of the ordinary person that he is a free agent. It is, no doubt, true that most people speak occasionally in the language of necessarianism, or at least concede some degree of predestination in the affairs of life; but side by side with this, and apparently without much concern for the logical incongruity involved, there is invariably a profound belief in freedom.

But the freedom of man implies the freedom of God; and there is, perhaps, no aspect of God which has been so completely obscured as this. The doctrine of Divine Immanence has been of enormous assistance in enabling men to preserve their hold of God; but it has involved the sacrifice of the conception of the divine freedom. It is not quite easy to analyze the frame of mind which the pressure of scientific thought has produced in this direction. Either it has compelled us to identify God with the energy which is operative in the universe, and we have only been saved from pantheism by speaking of immanence; nevertheless the immanent God is a God in chains, a God contained in His own laws. Or it has driven us (and this is the case of most people) to a kind of deism which regards God as operating by unchanging processes from which there can be no departure or appeal. This is why we have ceased to believe in miracle and prayer. We have come to think that God has subordinated His freedom to His laws, that in the government of the universe He has abdicated in favor of the machinery which He created. But whether we have tended to pantheism or deism, we have ceased to believe in the freedom of God.

At the present time, however, we are being delivered from this heresy by the appearance of two tendencies.

The one is that represented by M. Bergson in his "*L'Évolution Créatrice*," in which he impugns the doctrine of the immutability of natural law and points to facts which compel the inference that there is a free creative energy in nature, which means that God immanent operates beyond and above His own laws. On the other hand we have the emphasis upon the apocalyptic elements in the teaching of Jesus which is compelling us to relate God transcendent once more to the course of human affairs. There are certain critical questions connected with the Gospel apocalyptic which are still outstanding; but though we are enabled to eliminate the machinery of portent and prodigy from the apocalyptic sections of the Gospel record, by tracing them to their undoubted literary ancestry in Jewish apocalyptic writings, and regarding them as additions to the original Christian records, it is impossible to deny the existence of genuine apocalyptic elements in the teaching of Jesus. The essence of Apocalyptic is, to quote Professor John Oman, "the conviction that the true divine order is ever ready to break into the world if men will only suffer it to break into their hearts." God has two orders of history, a lower and a higher. The higher order may under certain conditions break across the lower order and confound the best-laid anticipations of the historian. But this view constrains us to a belief in a God Who has not surrendered His sovereignty to His machinery.

God has made us free, but there would be no meaning in the gift if He had repudiated His own freedom. Nor would there be meaning in His freedom had He not also made us free. For it is this postulate of freedom which makes it permissible for us to conceive of

genuine spontaneous intercourse with God as a real possibility. An isolated God is unthinkable; and the intercourse of automata is an absurdity. But there is more than this involved. It becomes perilous to speak of laws in connection with history; or at least it makes the inferior order of history liable at any time to be disturbed by the interaction of the free will of man and the free will of God. The postulate of freedom introduces an endless range of unknown quantities, and the most careful antecedent calculations may be stultified by the event. Where God and man meet in intimacy one never knows what may happen. It is this belief that underlies the apocalyptic hope; and the recovery of this belief carries with it a restoration of faith in the genuine possibility of miracles and the validity of the belief in prayer.

Anything which helps us to recover our faith in prayer will add enormously to the possibilities of life. We have largely lost the sense of the reality of prayer; and it hardly amounts to anything more than a process of auto-suggestion, a spiritual gymnastic which does not do what we intend it to do, but does us good all the same. Unless prayer achieves the end which is expressly sought in it, through the agency of Him to Whom it is addressed,—if it is an absurd and gratuitous illusion all the time,—then the sooner we drop it the better. But the signs point rather to a rehabilitation of the practice of prayer.

William James, in one of his conclusions in the "Varieties of Religious Experience," says that "prayer is a process wherein work is really done, and spiritual energy flows in and produces effects psychological and material, within the phenomenal world." This

certainly does not carry us very far; it merely tells us that our prayers are something more than a process of auto-suggestion; that they are real causes producing real effects. It is only when we consider the relation of man to the spiritual world that we can really see the inwardness of prayer. There are two phrases by Pascal which are worth recalling—"Thou wouldst not be seeking Me hadst thou not already found Me"; "Thou wouldst not seek Me if thou didst not possess Me." The roots of prayer are in the divine indwelling; and a good deal of scepticism regarding prayer has arisen from a misapprehension of the course of the interchange between God and ourselves. Prayer is our response to a divine impulse. Our prayers are our answers to God. It is not we who by our prayers set the machinery of the spiritual world in motion; our prayers are but a part of a movement which began with God—a part of the process whereby

That which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Does not this explain certain perplexing scriptures? "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them." The giving precedes the praying. The prayer is the appropriation of the gift. Nevertheless the prayer is not an automatic or mechanical reaction, but, by reason of human freedom, a spontaneous approach to God. We may regard prayer as the effort and the pressure of the spiritual life within us seeking to rise to its true level. But, on the other hand, because of the real integrity of the in-

dividual personality, we may regard it also as a free and voluntary reaching out of the soul to God.

The proper view of prayer is that it belongs to the divine purpose and process of self-fulfilment, and because he who prays and He Who is prayed to are both alike free, prayer becomes in its maturity an "encounter of wills," and may affect the course of the world.

## XVI

### THE HISTORICAL JESUS AND THE ETERNAL CHRIST

**N**O passage in human history has had larger consequences for the whole race than that of which the central figure is Jesus of Nazareth. Soon or late, a discussion such as we are now engaged upon must set itself to face the questions which are raised by this episode; and it will be convenient for the purpose of our argument to consider at this point what results will accrue from the endeavor to interpret the person and mission of Jesus from the standpoint of a thoroughgoing spiritual idealism. It may, perhaps, be of some advantage to anticipate the conclusions of this chapter so far as to say that they virtually amount to a reaffirmation of the Pauline interpretation.

1. There are very few departments of knowledge and activity in which the pressure of the scientific spirit has not effected very deep and far-reaching consequences. Its insistence upon the absolute validity and relevancy of all data, upon the genuineness of the evidence for them, has set the fashion throughout the whole range of intellectual activity. In historical study this temper has expressed itself in the radical investigation of sources, the careful and punctilious sifting of evidence, a searching criticism of documents.

Historians have for the greater part in the last two or three generations concentrated their industry upon the discovery and attestation of historical minutiae and their external connections.

It was inevitable that in time this spirit should invade the study of the historical foundations of the Christian faith. But in this particular region the problem has been greatly accentuated by the gratuitous importation of rationalistic presuppositions into the inquiry. Biblical criticism has frequently been merely a stalking horse for private theories; and it is very largely to this tendency that the misgiving is due which has been felt by a great many intelligent folk concerning the validity of the critical methods that have been applied to the Bible. Baur, for instance, set out with certain Hegelian presuppositions in his mind which seemed to demand a Petro-Pauline controversy in the sub-apostolic Church, and his criticism amounted to little more than an endeavor to read this hypothesis into the New Testament. This is precisely the method of the Anglo-Israelites and the Christian Scientists. It is part of the evidence of the wonderful comprehensiveness of the Scriptures that every exaggeration and perversity of faith may find "proof-texts" of its own pet view within them.

In our own day Schmiedel has conceived a perfectly arbitrary criterion of the genuineness of the Gospel records. By his test only nine passages in the Gospels have "absolute credibility," and these alone can be taken as "the foundation pillars of a truly scientific life of Jesus."\* Before saying anything as to the validity of Schmiedel's criterion, it may be well to

\* "Enc. Biblica," ii., 1181.

observe that in any case the assumption that, unless the recorded matter squares with a certain more or less arbitrarily preconceived idea of what it should be, it is not absolutely credible, is hardly evidence of a scientific temper. Science does not impose its hypotheses upon the facts, but derives them from the facts. Criticism of this kind is not scientific in any real sense; it is a highly private and personal criticism, and a hundred external tests might be applied with an equal number of varying results. As to Schmiedel's own idea that only those passages which show no traces of hero-worship are absolutely credible, the obvious remark is that it is quite open for another critic to come along and say that only those passages are absolutely credible which do reflect a real hero-worship. For is not the hero-worship perhaps the most significant element in the whole story, seeing that only nine passages show no trace of it, and is it not therefore the one really indispensable datum for a truly scientific portrait of the person who evoked it?

But this is not the scientific way. That way is to ascertain the facts by an unbiased examination of the documentary evidence for their historicity and by the elimination of inner inconsistencies and contradictions, and then to let the facts tell their own story. It does not rule out a set of facts which do not happen to be consistent with a particular hypothesis. If it does rule out any facts, it is only because they are contradicted by facts that have better attestation, or because the evidence for them is inadequate, suspicious, or obviously false. The summary way in which the miraculous element in the Gospel history has frequently been ruled out as incredible, simply because on a certain

hypothesis miracles were impossible, was not the scientific method, but the denial of it. It is idle to deny beforehand that miracles are incredible. The credibility of miracles, as of every other recorded historical event, is a question of evidence.

Schmiedel's expression, "a truly scientific life of Jesus," is exceedingly luminous. For it is the outcome of the strange obsession that the thing that is needed is to reduce the figure of Christ to the lowest possible dimensions. There is at first sight a certain plausibility in the view that the growth of tradition has distorted the simple idyllic humanity of Jesus of Nazareth; and that our duty is to get behind all tradition and the superstitious veneration which has gathered around Him, and see Him in the primitive simplicities of His Galilean life. So we have cried, "Back to Jesus." It may be true that we have obscured overmuch the simple unaffected humanity of Jesus; and it was well that we should be called back to it. So far as the criticism of the Gospels has restored to us some sense of the manhood of the Galilean Jesus, it has been all to the good.

It is, however, necessary to assert very clearly that, having done this for us, it has done all it can; but it has not done all we need. Its work has been preliminary and preparatory in character; it has simply paved the way for a new reconstruction of the inwardness of the Gospel story for our own day. It has cleared the ground of much perplexing and confusing and irrelevant matter; sometimes, indeed, leaving a good deal of intractable lumber of its own behind. But criticism is not construction; and it does not, so long as it is merely the criticism of a certain group of historical documents,

provide us with all the relevant materials for construction. For we have not determined the significance of Jesus when we have written a "truly scientific" account of His life between Bethlehem and Calvary. What is of even more importance than this for a complete estimate of Jesus is the history of the ages which succeeded the period of His life. "How came it to pass that this particular point of life was the fountain-head of so mighty a movement, that old ideals were shattered and new ones arose, that the whole previous balance of life was upset and previous standards failed to satisfy, that a mighty longing took possession of mankind, a stormy unrest which even now after hundreds of years is not allayed?" \*

2. This is the problem that calls for solution, and which mere historical criticism cannot solve. It is the very height of illogicality to bid us consider the limitations of the historical Jesus; to reduce the figure of the Jesus of the Gospels to its lowest dimensions does not help us in the least. Rather it accentuates the stress of the problem instead of relieving it. It may satisfy the demands of an exaggerated rationalism to reduce the Gospel story to a mere aggregate of bald, inoffensive facts; but that leaves the problem of the subsequent history in a very much less hopeful condition. Even still more unintelligible does it leave the fact that ever since Jesus came out upon the world of men, they have persisted in feeling in Him a uniqueness and in ascribing to Him a character which makes Him not one of a class but a class by Himself. He does not fit into our common categories. What has to be explained is

\* Eucken, "Christianity and the New Idealism," p. 51.

the total impression which Jesus has made upon generations of men, the whole human sense of Jesus. One may go to the Nicene Creed or the Formula of Chalcedon or the Augsburg Confession to see how men have handled the metaphysical questions which are started by the Person of Jesus, and one may think them right or wrong. But that is not the point. The point is that hundreds and thousands of men and women in every generation since His day have had a sense of the significance of Jesus to their own lives which they could only express by worshipping Jesus as God—so immediate and overwhelming a feeling of His transcendent uniqueness and His moral majesty, that when they thought of God they thought of Jesus, that they saw the face of Jesus when they prayed to God. Unless one is going to write down the very deepest experience of an unbroken succession of the very best men and women in all the Christian ages a delusion and a madness, one is not going by any process of historical criticism to get away from a Jesus Who cannot be explained (and explained away) as merely a religious teacher among the Jews nineteen hundred years ago.

This is not a question of right doctrine or wrong. Doctrines change, must change, with growing light. But the saint's experience of Jesus has in essence never changed. That has always been the same. In the life and experience of the faithful, Jesus Christ is yesterday the same, to-day, and for ever. Even if we rule the saint out as a person of morbid soul, we are still face to face with the fact that men whom the whole sense of history regards as men of wholesome and vigorous spirit, leaders of thought and action, have found Jesus to be no less than the saints have found him to be.

There was Charles Lamb, who told a mixed company of literary people that if He were to come into the room "we should all fall down and try to kiss the hem of His garment." There was Shelley the atheist, who came to look upon Jesus and found Him the very perfection of all that was best in himself. There was Mazzini, patriot and prophet, who saw the hope of a liberated nation in the Cross. There was Savonarola, who wanted a king for Florence and made Jesus King. How came it to pass that a Jew's son, a craftsman of Nazareth, has come to be and to stand for all this—to respond to all this variety and complexity of human instinct and aspiration?

3. It is all the more necessary to insist that this is the only adequate statement of the problem presented by the appearance of Jesus and its historical consequences, in view of the present tendency in criticism to regard Him purely as an apocalyptic visionary. If the strength of Jesus had lain in His appeal to the prevailing apocalyptic temper, how came it to pass that the whole movement of which He was the centre did not collapse under the pressure of continuous and steady disillusionment? It would be idle to deny the presence of apocalyptic elements in our Lord's outlook, but the very continuance of Christianity in the teeth of the non-fulfilment of the apocalyptic hope proves beyond controversy not merely the presence but the predominance of other factors in His message and work.

The apocalyptic hypothesis is still seeking *terra firma*, and it is unnecessary to be greatly alarmed. When the question of the literary ancestry of Mark xiii. and the related passages in the other Gospels has

been thoroughly explored, it is almost certain that it will be found that, in the compilation of the records, what was the comparatively simple and straightforward teaching of Jesus concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and His Parousia has been complicated and confused by the super-imposition of apocalyptic matter from without. The traditional "stage property" of Jewish Apocalyptic is well known to-day; and obviously a good deal has found its way into the Gospels by more or less devious ways. We need not meantime surrender the Jesus Who spoke the fourth chapter of Mark in favor of the Jesus to Whom the latest criticism would attribute the thirteenth as His really characteristic utterance. When more work has been done on the lines which Mr. Streeter has laid down in his essay in the Oxford "Studies in the Synoptic Problem," it will be time enough to consider how far we are to modify our picture of the reasonable convincing Jesus of the earlier teaching by the addition of apocalyptic splashes. It is certainly necessary to inquire very carefully how far the prevailing apocalyptic temper and previous apocalyptic literature account for the presence of Apocalyptic in the New Testament, and for the keen apocalyptic hope in the early part of the apostolic age. For unless Jesus had Himself undergone some sharp revolution of outlook at the beginning of the last week of His life, it is impossible to believe that His teaching was responsible for all this. The difference in tone and color between the earlier teaching and the apocalyptic passages is far too profound to be explained save on the supposition of some such revolution.

At the same time the investigation of the apocalyptic elements of Christianity and the discovery of the spir-

itual truth which underlies them may indirectly help us in our ultimate reinterpretation of Jesus. For, as I have endeavored to indicate in a previous chapter, the feeling that underlies the apocalyptic hope, grotesque and curious as its form may sometimes be, is that the divine order may break into the world across the superficial processes of normal history. The appearance of Jesus, by reason of His own unique personality and the historical consequences which followed it, must, I think, be accepted as such a break in the course of ordinary historical processes.

4. It is due to the pressure of the evolution idea that we have been endeavoring to whittle down the dimensions of Jesus so that He may fit into our little schemes of thought. But the bankruptcy of an uncompromising evolution hypothesis in the region of organic life shows that we had been better advised if we had left the Gospels and the subsequent history to tell their own story. There are effects in the world to which we can assign no adequate cause while we admit the existence of a cause; and our endeavor to discover causes which would account for Jesus has led us into an extravagance of ingenuity which has only stultified our methods. The attempt to capture Jesus and hold Him in an historical pigeon-hole has been an increasing failure.

The appearance of Jesus was a real historical beginning. It is possible to trace the development of the particular environment into which He came—the long discipline of the Jews, the ministry of the prophets, the impact of Babylonian, Greek, Roman, and other influences upon the historical progress of Jewish life. In this there was a real evolution—at least, a chain of

perceptible historical cause and effect. But in all great creative epochs there have always been two factors—personality and environment. They issue from the meeting of the man and the moment. The antecedent history of the moment may be traced back through previous ages. But in the man there is always the emergence of something new, distinctive, which cannot be traced back to purely historical origins. We can trace the natural history of the soil and the atmosphere of the period in which the Protestant Reformation came to birth in many streams of tendency and influence, but we cannot trace back the fiery eruption in Luther's soul to any historical circumstance or any set of them. There is nothing in his heredity or education to account for it. It was a direct communication of spiritual life which transformed his experience, and which became the agent of that creative synthesis out of which grew the modern era with its struggle for freedom. It helps us very little indeed to imagine that we can interpret the personality of Jesus by a study of the historical and intellectual background of the Gospels. We certainly can explain, so, the environment into which He came. But what will baffle all attempt at explanation in this way is the emergence in Him of that spiritual force which has produced vaster and more distinctive historical consequences than can be attributed to the life and work of any other individual whomsoever.

5. But the uniqueness of Jesus does not begin with the character and dimensions of the historical consequences of His life. We discover it immediately in His immunity from that moral distemper which we

call sin. This is usually spoken of negatively as His sinlessness; but the ethical uniqueness of Jesus lies rather in a positive moral perfection which has made Him the absolute norm and measure of character and conduct from His day to ours.

Some endeavor has been made to prove that Jesus did not possess this quality of sinlessness. But the strained and elaborate ingenuity, the very cleverness of the attempt, proves its real hopelessness; and it is a curious piece of irony that anyone should endeavor to prove Jesus morally imperfect in the light of the very ethic which He Himself introduced into the world. It is a logical thing in those who deny the value and truth of the Christian ethic—for instance, our modern Gothists—to impugn the character and conduct of Jesus from their point of view; but even they can hardly deny that Jesus embodied in His own life the ethic which He taught. Jesus brought a new ethic into the world—an ethic which was a complete departure from current ethical ideas. The question of His sinlessness is the question whether He Himself gave in His life an adequate and worthy interpretation of His peculiar ethic.

An ethic is, of course, a derivative. The naturalistic theory derives morality from the necessities of social existence. Nietzsche's ethic derives from his master-conception of the overman. Jesus' ethic was likewise derivative; and its origin lay in His conception of the spiritual life as the true life of man, of human life in its relation to God, which in the ultimate analysis means that it derived from Jesus' conception of the character of God. God was the Holy Father; and His supreme attribute was Holy Love.

It is too late in the day to ask the question whether Jesus could have sinned. The question can only be asked where a doctrinal view of the Person of Jesus is assumed beforehand. The fact that Jesus was tempted proves that He did not possess a constitutional immunity from sin. Otherwise the temptation was a dumb-show, and lacks all moral value. More than that, if Jesus had no liability to sin, the story of the temptation shows Him taking part in a piece of play-acting. To believe that Jesus could not sin is to make Him a sinner. The story of the temptation, since it must have come from Jesus Himself, compels us to believe in Jesus' liability to sin, if we are to preserve our idea of His sinlessness; for either the temptation was a real, terrible danger, or Jesus represents Himself as playing a part. It is not difficult to choose between these alternatives. He would not be the Jesus we know if He were not free.

But though He was open to temptation, He did not fall into sin. This is the one point on which the evidence of the New Testament, recording as it does the evidence of His contemporaries, is overwhelming. From John the Baptist to Pilate's wife, the evidence of friend and foe contains no contradiction. The worst His enemies could say of Him was that He sat at meat with sinners—and this was supreme grace. When Peter bade Jesus depart from himself, a sinful man, when Judas returned the price of innocent blood, when the centurion perforce confessed Him a righteous man, they all alike testified to their impression of the clear, transparent moral perfectness of Jesus. Paul declares that "He knew no sin." Peter calls Him "the Holy and Righteous One," "The Righteous who died for

the unrighteous"; the disciple whom Jesus loved says that "in Him was no sin," and the author of Hebrews describes Him as "holy, guileless, undefiled, separate from sinners," and says plainly that He was "without sin." This was the impression which He made on those nearest to Him.

Jesus does not say much about it Himself. He once challenged His enemies with the question, "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" He declared moreover, "I do always the things that are pleasing to God." One question seems to imply a doubt of His sense of moral perfection: "Why callest thou Me good? There is none good, save God." But this may have meant no more than that Jesus had no use for a meaningless compliment. If, however, we may not infer much from what Jesus did say, we may infer a good deal from what He did not say. He never confessed to personal sin. He was ever insisting that others should ask for the forgiveness of sins; but He never asked for it Himself, nor showed that He felt the need of it. It has been the experience of the saints to be increasingly conscious of their sinfulness, so that Paul at the end of his life could describe himself as the chief of sinners. But Jesus showed no sense analogous to this. He knew no sin.

The sinlessness of Jesus was not a mere passive innocence. It was a massive, powerful goodness. He was good in a great epic sense. And by reason of His sinlessness, His is proved to be a radical goodness, not the fitful goodness of other men. It was not goodness without a struggle; but it was a goodness which always triumphed, and the struggles confirmed and deepened it.

Moral goodness is not one grace, but a complex of graces; and if we are to appreciate fully the positive side of Jesus' goodness we must analyze it in a little detail. There are two great aspects of moral goodness, individual and social. There are on the one side moral qualities which are primarily personal—that is, the absence of them affects the individual himself more than they affect anyone else. Of this kind are personal purity, honesty, truthfulness, and the like. There are, on the other hand, moralities which are more distinctly social in their reaction. Such are pity, sympathy, brotherliness. The distinction cannot, of course, be rigid. The impure man hurts his fellows as well as himself. The sympathetic man enriches himself as well as his fellows. We are so bound up with one another that we cannot be or do anything, even in the secret of our souls, which is without its effect upon others outside us. Yet the broad distinction remains. Moral goodness in act and habit is a complex of two families of moral qualities which may be gathered up under the two general heads of holiness and love. The one half does not thrive apart from the other. We have perhaps been apt to forget this, and to imagine that emphasis upon the one side relieves us in some measure from the obligation of the other. This was the defect of the Puritan character, whose severe holiness left little room for the milk of human kindness. It was a wintry, austere morality. On the other hand, it is perhaps due to the neglect of the emphasis upon personal holiness that our current notions of love lack strength and seriousness, that we confound purity with prudishness, and bravery with bravado. The parable of Sir Galahad is, however, perennially true:—

His strength was as the strength of ten,  
Because his heart was pure.

In the character of Jesus, holiness and love go together blended deeply and perfectly. His hatred of sin went with a great compassion for the sinner. His purity was unsullied; His uprightness never called in question. Great popular leaders have frequently been driven to shifts and compromises. This is not true in a single instance of Jesus. Before His hour was come, He retired out of the danger zone. When it was come, He went His way and faced the consequences. He preferred death to any compromise on moral issues. And this in spite of the fact that the way of compromise was easy. The astute ecclesiastics of His day would have welcomed Him with His power and ability as an associate. There have been leaders of revolutions in human history who have capitulated to the flattery and the blandishments of reactionaries. Browning's "Lost Leader" is a real type. But it was not so with Jesus. He refused all short and easy ways to His end. He gave no quarter and asked for none. His holiness was unbending, His purity of motive unassailable. And when one recalls in addition to all this His love for little children, His chivalry to the fallen, His compassion for the weak, the splendid abandon of His self-sacrifice, one sees another side of His character; and it is difficult to say which is the more impressive. It leaves no alternative but to say that in Him there was a perfect confluence of absolute holiness and absolute love.

Upon these two points hang all the graces which we inevitably associate with Jesus. His perfect balance, His unbroken calm, the usual absence of anything like a

sense of strain or effort, His patience, His meekness, His lowliness—these were the “fruits of the Spirit” in Him.

6. The moral character of Jesus, however, is only one aspect of His uniqueness. He alone bore our humanity free from moral distemper, but in Him it was free from other limitations of a non-ethical character which qualify manhood in the rest of us. That these limitations do not operate in the case of Jesus is no less significant than His immunity from moral imperfection.

This aspect of the Personality of Jesus may perhaps be best illustrated in this way.

The average Frenchman can never understand Oliver Cromwell, any more than the average Englishman can understand John Knox. We should not ask a German to say the last word about Joan of Arc, or an Italian about Martin Luther. Education and travel and the growth of international feeling have done much to familiarize the nations with each other's heroes. Nevertheless, the racial equation still remains an essential element in the complete interpretation of the great historical figures.

But the point can be pushed a great deal farther. Not every Englishman can or does understand Oliver Cromwell. It requires an Englishman of a certain type, the man of Puritan heredity and spirit. It is notorious that the name of Cromwell only irritates many of his countrymen. Not only the race factor, then, but what we may call the temperament factor is also necessary in order fully to understand any given person.

There is still another step which we need to take. The modern Puritan may be able to trace and appreciate the historical consequences of Cromwell's brief

but momentous intrusion into English politics. He may be able to analyze Cromwell's mind and character so far as to discover the mainsprings of his actions. But he can never feel that warm immediate sympathy, that intense personal spell, which bound Cromwell's men to him as with bands of steel. Times have changed, and with them the temper of society, the religious outlook, the national character. We may study, admire, respect Cromwell, but the most fierce Puritan of us all cannot get up a genuine personal passion for him. It required a fierce Puritan of his own time to do that; for Cromwell—as we of ours—was the child of his time. Not only, then, do we need the race factor and the temperament factor, we need also to admit the time factor as a condition of a full and intelligent understanding of an historical person.

But what is true of the understanding of Oliver Cromwell is not true of the understanding of Jesus of Nazareth. He was a Jew—in everything; yet this is almost the last thing we think of concerning Him. He appeals to every race of men without distinction; and our missionary records tell us how the Mongol finds as many and as easy points of contact with Him as a Latin or a Celt. It is probably true that He does not appear altogether the same to the Eastern as to the Western eye; but that is due not to any difference in Him, but to the difference in those who look upon Him. In His own day the foreigner found easy access to Him. A Syro-Phœnician woman could not be driven away from Him. A Samaritan woman was surprised to find herself conversing intimately with Him. A Roman officer found it easy to approach Him. Yet the very gait of a Jew of any consequence

in those days bade the foreigner keep his distance. When in later days His story went abroad among the Western nations, first the Hellene, then the Latin, then the Teuton and the Celt, all capitulated to Him. He appealed to them all—in different ways and at different points, no doubt—but so effectively that they all responded. Compare this with the story of Mahomet. Mahomet has never touched the outer west or the outer east, the farther north or the farther south. His appeal, powerful as in many ways it has been, has been nevertheless restricted and narrow. But east and west, north and south, the Person of Christ has touched the minds and hearts of men. Even the Mohammedans have made a Mohammedan of Him.

Nor is it only to men of one peculiar temperament that He makes His appeal. Men of reflection and men of action have alike found their highest inspiration in Him. The philosopher and the moralist have been forced to take account of Him. No other single individual has so stimulated the artistic powers, whether in music or painting; the poet and the social reformer have sat at His feet. He accounts for the massiveness of an Augustine, the power of a Luther, the endurance of a Hus, and the heroism of a Gordon. The nobleman and the peasant, both have bowed to Him. So, in His own day, Joseph of Arimathea and Matthew the publican—men at extreme poles of social status—followed Him. The calm, reflective Nathanael and the impetuous Peter found themselves at His feet. Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany, Martha and Pilate's wife, all fell alike under His spell. All men found points of contact with Him, who came within touching distance.

Lastly, His appeal is not confined to a particular

age. The whole course of Christian history is studded with those martyrdoms which show how, not only among all races, but in all ages, men have been bound to Him by indissoluble ties of loyalty and love. From the Christian slaves who were martyred "to make a Roman holiday," to the Chinese Christians of our own day who died rather than disobey Him, there has been no decline of His personal power over men. He belongs not to one age, but to every age. The change which time brings may change the exact incidence of His appeal, but it abates none of its force. Jesus has never been out of date.

This universality of His person is reflected in His outlook upon life and in His teaching. Look, for instance, at His illustrations. The prodigal son is a perennially universal type. The stories of the lost coin, the Good Samaritan, the Pharisee and the Publican, are for ever true. We know such persons as the prodigal and the Samaritan, the Pharisee and the publican, perfectly well. They are here with us to-day. Mr. G. K. Chesterton not long ago said a very true and a very fine thing. Speaking of the principle that self-sacrifice is the way of self-realization, he added: "Jesus said that long ago, as He said almost everything."

Let us take a step still farther. The differences of race, age, and temperament are more or less accidental. The difference of sex cuts a great deal deeper. It is the very deepest and most universal of human distinctions. Tennyson used to speak of the "man-woman" in Jesus. It would be very difficult to discover a single act of His which a woman might not have done. Even the cleansing of the temple was not so much an achievement of physical strength as of moral power; and there

have been women in history capable of acts of the same kind. We usually ascribe the qualities of initiative and aggressive strength to men, gentleness and the strength of endurance to women; and in a general way the ascription is sound. It would puzzle us very considerably to say which was the more prominent in Jesus. Among His friends were as many women as men. And in His wider appeal to the nations He has spoken with even more power to women than to men. Yet He was a true man, the embodiment of the ultimate manliness.

It is impossible not to feel that the humanity of Jesus was elemental, that it seemed to transcend the surface distinctions of nation or station, temperament or sex. His was the pure primal essence of manhood, unqualified and undifferentiated by any of those accidents which divide the Jew and the Gentile, the king and the peasant, the ancient and the modern, the man and the woman. Yet He was a peasant of Galilee. Hailing from an obscure village in an obscure land, born of a people trained through long ages into unparalleled exclusiveness and narrowness, appearing at perhaps the very lowest ebb in the history of religion and thought, yet there was a universality in His outlook which bade His disciples go and make disciples of all nations, and a universality in the appeal of His manhood which has made and is still making for Him disciples among all peoples to whom He has been preached.

It is the inevitable corollary of this that in the moral character of Jesus there should likewise be such spaciousness as His personality discloses. We may apply the epithet *Christlike* to two men whom we can scarcely compare at any two points. Here is a man of unique gentleness, another whose endurance of suffer-

ing is calm and cheerful and heroic, a third whose sacrifice for others is perfect and uncalculating. The highest tribute we pay to them is to call them Christ-like. The tender simplicity of Francis, the self-denying devotion of John Wesley, the moral courage of Luther—whatsoever, indeed, is lovely and true and gracious in men, therein we instinctively compare them to and link them up with Jesus. For we find all these things in their highest known expression in Him. Jesus is not a type of moral character, He is the very universe of it.

7. It is no part of our present purpose to inquire what manner of doctrinal conclusions these characteristics of Jesus point to. It is imperative, however, to understand what practical consequences followed in human experience from contact with Jesus—how those who have been most competent to judge have placed Him. Let it be emphasized that it is impossible to dissociate Jesus from the Cross, and the actual significance of Christ in human experience is inseparably bound up with the practical results of His death. In the meantime it is necessary and possible to consider how those who were nearest to Him in point of time actually interpreted Him.

One thing is perfectly obvious. Whatever the value of the evidence for the Resurrection may be (and here it is not proposed to attempt any appreciation of it), the early Christians habitually thought of Jesus as alive. This was central to their whole scheme of things. His significance to them was not determined by His passage from Bethlehem to Calvary. One of the most stupendous achievements of the apostolic age was the way in which the purely local and temporary cir-

cumstances were transcended and Christ came to be thought of in spiritual and universal terms. What the apostolic mind did with Jesus is precisely what Rudolf Eucken teaches us we should do with history—get beneath what is temporal and local and accidental and lay hold of the essential spiritual inwardness. To Paul the mere minutiae of the Gospel story were matters of indifference. He is concerned almost only with the death and resurrection of Jesus—the great summary facts in which the entire truth of the life of Jesus is gathered up, the points at which the real significance of Jesus breaks out most obviously and irresistibly. His neglect of the history is not merely accidental. It seems to be part of a definite policy. “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.” In Romans x. 6-8, Paul seems to be stating categorically (through a citation) that to bring Christ down from heaven or up from the abyss—that is to say, to restore an historical Jesus—is wholly out of keeping with the spirit and genius of the Gospel. What is needed, he appears to suggest, is a point of view—the “word” which is in our hearts—if we are to apprehend the significance of the Gospel.

This inward “word” is the spiritual point of view from which Paul demands that all the things of God shall be contemplated. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” He is incapable of it. Only the Spirit of God can reveal these things to him; and the spiritual man is he in whom the Spirit of God dwells. “He that is spiritual judgeth all things.” And this spiritual point of view is immediately defined as “the mind of Christ.”

To interpret Christ with the mind of Christ—this is what the apostolic mind set itself to do. We know what the consequences were. In the prologue of John's Gospel we find an attempt to define the real inwardness of Jesus. He was the eternal Word become incarnate. "And we beheld His glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." In the Epistle to the Hebrews He is called "the express image of God's person and the effulgence of His glory." Paul says that "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines upon us in the face of Jesus Christ." From all of which it would appear that at least Jesus had the value of God to His intimates. The figure of the historical Jesus refused to remain static. To these men's eyes it grew until it filled that blank space upon which they, like their fathers before them, had been trying to draw the outlines of the face of God. They saw the glory of God in "the face of Jesus Christ."

That one Face far from vanish—rather grows  
And decomposes but to recompose,  
Becomes my universe that feels and knows.

This word "universe" is indeed the only word which can describe the impression that this thoroughgoing spiritual interpretation of Jesus brings with it. It is the only word which describes Paul's sense of the super-historic Jesus. The name Christ occupies, in Paul's scheme, what the term Logos occupies in John's, and seems to represent the very universe in which the creative and redemptive thought of God moved.

The term Logos, by means of which John endeavored to interpret the origin of Jesus, had a long previous history in Greek thought. Whether we are to as-

sume that John was consciously reading into the word what thinkers before him had included in it, is a question which we need not discuss here. The originality of John's treatment of it lies in the statement, "the Word became flesh." It was a daring flight of thought to identify the Logos of God with the historical Jesus, and the tremendous impulse which lay behind the thought and enabled it to take this leap has to be explained. This Gospel, perhaps the latest of the New Testament books, is far away the most clear and emphatic in its assertion of the pre-existence of Jesus as the Eternal Logos, the Eternal Son, and in its endeavor to satisfy the growing demand for an interpretation of Jesus which should do justice to the apostolic sense of His immense significance.

Though Paul does not use the word Logos, he is not one whit behind John in his attempt to explain the inwardness of Jesus. To him the Jesus of history was one with the super-historic Christ; and in the super-historic Christ Paul sees the origin and destiny of all things. He is the "image of the Invisible God, the firstborn of all creation"; in Him "were all things created . . . all things have been created through Him and unto Him . . . in Him all things consist." \* Christ it is "in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." † God has purposed "to sum up all things in Christ." ‡ "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." § Yet the significance of Christ is not only cosmic. The name certainly represents the very inmost mind and purpose of God, the whole outgoing of God toward the universe and toward man. But it has nevertheless a very intimate

\* Col. i. 15-17. † Col. ii. 3. ‡ Eph. i. 10. § 2 Cor. v. 19.

personal connection. "I am crucified with Christ." "Till Christ be formed within you." "Christ in you, the hope of glory." "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." "God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts."

8. When the Church began first to embody its sense of the meaning of Jesus in a formula, it began a task to which there is no end. It is clearly impossible to capture the whole inwardness of a Christ Who stands for so much. It "breaks through language and escapes." The great temerity of Paul's speech arises from the fact that he was dealing with a matter that he could only hope to compass by far-flung figures and desperate straining of words. But we shall hardly appreciate Paul's endeavor to interpret the significance of Jesus unless we remember that he was at bottom endeavoring to explicate his own personal experience. There had come to him a new life through his contact with Christ, and there was scarcely one respect in which the new life did not stand out in a complete antithesis to the old. Once he had been wholly given over to an obedience to tradition; now he was emancipated from tradition and lived by the Spirit. Once he had been the victim of a narrow racial exclusiveness; now he held and practised an apostolate the range of which was as wide as the world. This enlargement was due to the invasion of his own spirit by another Spirit, and the occasion of this invasion was his first contact with Christ.

It may be laid down as a settled principle that Paul's own personal experience is the key to all his teaching. In his own soul he saw forces at work which he con-

ceived rightly to be at work everywhere. There is a deep, fundamental identity of method and aim in all God's work, whether in the single soul or in the life of a nation or in the universe. You will find this principle working out in that parallel which Paul makes in Galatians: "God sent forth His Son, born of a woman"—i.e. into the world; but God also "sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts." The principle is that God is sending forth His Son; and the principle applies to the macrocosm and the microcosm, to the great world and to the little soul.

If there was one thing that Paul was sure of, it was that the whole creation is moving to "some far-off divine event." The idea underlies and colors his thought, and it not infrequently finds articulate expression.\* To him history was not an aimless, fluctuating movement. It was a purposeful process, with a definite, determinate end. The life of humanity is not the sport of a blind, reckless fate, but the unfolding of a purpose, the working out of an intention. The direct and immediate agent of this process is Christ. He is God's emissary Who is at work in the affairs of men, Who will continue to work until He has subdued their confusion and won them into a perfect harmony.

But this philosophy of history was the reflex of Paul's own inner history; and the coming of Christ began an epoch of universal history as it had begun an epoch in Paul's own life. In his conversion he saw an event which, translated into terms of universal history, corresponded to that transformation of the course of the world which had been effected by the

\* E. g. in Eph. i. 9.

coming of Christ. What began to happen to Paul on the road to Damascus began to happen to the whole world in the manger at Bethlehem.

It is only necessary to recall the terms in which Paul describes the fact of his conversion and his subsequent experience, to realize that the analogy is deliberate and intentional. "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me," as it had pleased Him to reveal His Son in the world. He travails in pain until "Christ is formed within" his foolish Galatian children. He describes his own life as "Christ that liveth in me." This is entirely in keeping with the whole apostolic conviction that Christ was still in the world, finishing the things He had begun to do and to teach.\* The Spirit of Christ, Who was Paul's life, is also the life of the world. The thing that happened on a small scale in Paul's life at his conversion, happened on a large scale to the world in the appearance of Jesus Christ. In both cases the course of previous history was not continued, but reversed. The nature of the transformation must be appreciated if we are to discover the character of the impulse which effected it.

In order to grasp the whole extent of the transformation, we must interpret it in a wider light than Paul's own conversion. We can perhaps best do it by collating Paul's conversion with that of Augustine. The pre-Christian life of Paul was a struggle after righteousness. It was a stiff grim fight for a certain personal attainment in character and conduct. But he fought the fight with his own arm and his own weapons. He sought, to use words he applied to the Galatians, to become perfect through the flesh. It was the

\* Acts i. 1.

growing sense of failure, which he tried in vain to swamp by a vehemence of hate and a ferocity of persecution, that stood out as the one sure thing in his experience. Then when he was near despair, Christ came upon him and revolutionized his life, turned it upside down, and, instead of seeking perfection through the flesh, he surrendered to the Spirit; that indwelling Spirit which bound up his broken life again, became a new unifying vital principle within him, gathering up his whole life into the one obedience, and working out in him in increasing Christlikeness of moral character.

Augustine, unlike Paul, lived a life of vice, a life of carnal satisfaction. He lived "in the flesh" in the bad sense. Christ came upon him also, and transformed his life. There was a definite break with the past. A new tendency, a new moral impulse invaded his soul; and whereas he once had lived the fleshly carnal life, he henceforth lives a life of self-discipline, austerity, and of moral increase.

The past of Paul was as different as possible from the past of Augustine. The one lived a life of striving after goodness, the other a life of sensuality. But both lived by their own powers, subordinated in the one to clean, in the other to unclean ends; in the one given over to a striving after righteousness, in the other given over to a ministry of vice. In the case of both it was a quest for a personal, individual satisfaction—very different, of course, in kind; in both there was a transformation, and this transformation landed both alike in the same life, endowed them with the same ideals, bore in both the same fruit of service, self-abnegation, holiness, and love.

But in both cases the transformation was wrought by something from without. It may be that the demand and the necessity for the transformation developed from the internal conditions in either case—in the consciousness of moral failure in the one case; in a repletion, a satiety which did not satisfy, in the other case. But this alone would only produce a deadlock. The transformation could only be accomplished by the invasion of their lives by a force, a spirit, a principle from without.

Now, there was a side of the world's life which looked for the best things. The Greek had, according to Paul, long sought after God if haply he might find Him. But he sought Him by his own power, and therefore he sought Him vainly. "The world by wisdom found not God." It built its altars to an unknown God. In despair it was giving up the quest. By Paul's time Greek thought had declined into a thin and futile speculation, the mere ghost of the mighty, massive thinking of the past. Now it was merely arguing round in a vicious circle from which it could not escape. Side by side with it, the evidence of its failure, lay the practice of a polytheistic religion, the superstitions of which stultified the whole tradition of severe and strong intellectual discipline which had been the glory of Greece. Greek thought stopped on the threshold. The Jew sought diligently after personal righteousness, but he sought it by his own power. The fulfilment of the thousand and one requirements of the Law constituted for him the end of his existence. But the more he fulfilled it the more he despaired of ever fulfilling it, and he came little by little to substitute a ceremonial externalism for that

moral liability the sense of which was the high-water mark of his religious development. This failed to satisfy the best spirits of Israel, and we see them again and again breaking away from the outward in a passionate struggle for the inward, which only a few managed to realize, and they only partially. Both on the side of the spiritual and on the side of the moral requirements of the human soul, the long quest of the world had proved a failure. The world was settling down to a weariness and a despair of advance which expressed itself more and more in a degenerate speculation which got nowhere, and a ritual religiosity which exerted no moral discipline on its professors. The world had failed to find the best things.

There was, however, another side of the world's life which simply spent itself upon immediate material and physical satisfaction, and one need only turn to Paul's first chapter in the Epistle to the Romans to know what kind of world that was. It was steeped in carnality; soaked in an increasing bestiality; held in the grip of a moral "rot" which seemed to threaten some swift and overwhelming dissolution.

That is to say, we have a world of which Paul's life is the type, another of which Augustine's is the type. Both worlds needed, as Paul and Augustine needed, the same remedy. Both needed transformation. Neither could produce a new world out of its own resources. Both were bankrupt, both were exhausted, the note of both was degeneracy. The world, above all things, needed a conversion. It needed to be turned upside down, like Paul and Augustine. As some power from without was needed to do it for Paul

and Augustine, so some power from without was needed to do it for the world. It was in order to accomplish on the plane of history what was accomplished in the souls of Paul and Augustine, that in the fulness of the time God sent forth His Son, born of a woman. Jesus Christ was the force from without, the new power, the new principle sent to transform the world. Bethlehem was the beginning of the conversion, of the regeneration of the world. In the life of Christ the ordered course of history was broken, a new thing came into the world, a new work was begun in the world. Out of an intellectually and morally bankrupt world, by this new work, a new world was to arise—a new spiritual world, rich in abundant and increasing intellectual and moral satisfactions.

For the explanation of Jesus and all that He has meant to the world, we must still go back to Paul. The immense and inexhaustible spiritual impulse which entered the world with Jesus requires something to account for it far more radical than any theory of development can ever compass. There was an intrusion of something so vast, so incalculable in the world's life that, whether we grasp all its implications or not, whether it confounds our philosophical presuppositions or not, the only satisfying account of the matter is that "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."

## XVII

### LIFE AT THE CROSS

I. **I**T is difficult, in view of the surpassing uniqueness of the personality of Jesus and of the character and result of His impact upon the world, to escape from a doctrine of Incarnation. That there was something unusual, outside the ordinary natural and historical processes, in the circumstances which produced the Christ is evident from the early acceptance of the doctrine of the Virgin birth. It was impossible to regard Him as a normal product of the forces which were accountable for other individuals. He could not be fitted into any ordinary category; and even if the critical pruning-hook does cut away some of the unhistorical matter which has gathered round the historical Jesus, the episode in history of which He was the central figure, by reason of its consequences to the world, of the new impulse which it introduced and which is not yet exhausted, still prevents us from overthrowing His pedestal and ranking Him with our chosen heroes. He is only to be explained by postulating a unique and unparalleled irruption of the divine life into the world in His person and work. This was indeed not the only time the divine life broke through the crust of things. It had filtered through from the very beginning of time; and there were many occasions of swift and dazzling irruption in the course of

history. But the difference between Jesus and others is the difference between the perfect and the imperfect, between the complete and the partial. The difference between the perfect and the imperfect is not a difference of degree but a difference of category; and this is the difference between Jesus and the great leaders and teachers of mankind. It is not the relative difference of shades of light, for that is a thing that can be measured. The difference is the immeasurable and indefinable difference between perfect absolute light and light that is relative—a difference, in the last analysis, of kind—that is, between two classes of light.

It was inevitable, therefore, when men came to work out credal definitions of the Person of Christ, that they should put Him in the category of God, which is the only superhuman category we have any knowledge of. But it must always be remembered that when we speak of Jesus as God we are using a term of which with our limitations we cannot form a manageable conception. It presumes that we can define deity—which we cannot. Our confessional statements are at best no more than approximations. They are the best we can do. Words are, after all, only symbols; and to imagine that we can capture the whole mystery of Jesus' appearance in the world into a phrase or a collection of phrases is to have too great faith in the capacity of language. The theologian at the best can accomplish no more than splendid guesswork.

In divinity and love,  
What's best worth saying can't be said.

At the same time the theologian who struggles with words in order to compass the inwardness of Jesus is

far nearer reality than the critic who proceeds by writing off whatever transcends a purely human quality in Jesus. Even superstition is always on the whole nearer reality than scepticism. There is, perhaps, no more futile way out of the difficulty which the problem of Jesus presents than that which insists upon regarding Him primarily as a teacher. This certainly is a short and easy way out of many difficulties; but it does no sort of justice to the historical interpretations of Jesus, which have all, with one accord, contemplated Jesus first of all as a doer rather than as a teacher, and most of all in one supreme act.

The teaching of Jesus is hardly more than an incident in His life; and we are to treat it rather as a commentary upon Himself than as the point and substance of His mission to the world. There was, as a matter of fact, much that was not new in the teaching of Jesus. Endless points of contact have been discovered between it and the work of thinkers and moralists and religious teachers of surrounding ages and lands. But this does not in any very real sense impugn the uniqueness of Jesus even as a teacher. His teaching is related to that of those from whom He is said to have learnt or borrowed, just as a nugget of gold is related to the grains of gold in the sand of a river. But even if the originality of Jesus as a teacher were to be as heavily discounted as some of the critics would have us believe it ought to be, the problem of Jesus' impact on the world still remains. The solution of that problem must be discovered in the person of Jesus, for the unique power of His teaching (which is a vastly more important matter than the originality of its content) and His influence upon history derived from thence.

2. But the impact of a personality upon the world consists in its acts; and if we would understand the secret of a given personality and of its reaction upon the course of the world, we must study it in its characteristic activities. It generally happens that there are in a man's life one or two supreme acts in which his whole being is summed up. Luther is most of all Luther at Worms; and Jesus is supremely Jesus on the Cross. For the Cross is just Jesus in the whole inmost truth of His entire being, gathered up in one complete definitive act.

Quite apart from any doctrinal view of the person of Jesus Christ, human judgment has ascribed to the Cross an easy primacy among the greatest moral achievements of history. It shows us man at his highest. It is the ethical high-water mark. It is the fit summation of His way of life, the natural and inevitable climax of the native tendencies of His personality. Jesus could not have escaped the Cross, and He knew it. He knew He "*must* suffer many things and be crucified." There was no other goal in the world for the driving force which worked in Him.

3. As a matter of history, Jerusalem was the one city on earth where the perfect good and the supreme evil could meet face to face. There were cities of viler sin than Jerusalem; but none of greater. For Jerusalem's traditional sin had been the sin against the light: not merely was it sin in the face of the light; it was active opposition to the light. It killed the prophets and stoned those that were sent to it. Yet, because of the peculiar discipline of the Jewish nation, the supreme holiness appeared in the world in the habit

of Hebrew flesh. Salvation was of the Jews; they had been in the main and central line of religious development; and it was from the seed of David that "the Light of the world" emerged. Once more Jerusalem sinned against the light; and this time against the perfect light.

It is impossible to read the story of the closing episodes of our Lord's life without hearing the tramp of a thousand hidden forces. The crisp, almost bald narrative no more than suggests the terrible dimensions of the tragedy and the triumph which were enacted. During the Armenian atrocities of 1896, the Tompkins verses in the *Daily Chronicle* seemed to get nearer the heart of the matter than the prose accounts of the massacres; and one terrible line remains in the memory: "Hell's burning through in Turkey." That is the kind of impression which is made by the welter of passion and intrigue and bigotry and hate which seethed and surged around Jesus during His last hours. It seemed as though the whole power of evil had gathered itself up for one last assault upon the power of good, and had fallen upon Jesus. There is a strong cosmic overtone throughout the whole episode.

There can be little question that the cry of dereliction on the Cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" marks the climax of Jesus' passion. Already, in the garden, He had seen the approach of His loneliness; and it is the most probable explanation of the agony in Gethsemane that it was a prevision of the hiding of His Father's face which shook Him like a reed in a storm. He had lived in the most intimate fellowship with God, and He was about to suffer a rupture of that fellowship. He shrank from it in a

tempest of "strong crying and tears"; yet He came out of the struggle ready even for that. And on the Cross He endured it.

Now, it is significant that the martyrs of Christian history have been most keenly conscious of the divine presence in the supreme hour when Jesus felt that it was withdrawn. This immediately puts His death in a different category, and starts a question which must presently be answered, and which is indeed raised by other related circumstances. This in itself indicates an inward struggle of some unique kind in which the very faith of Jesus was being challenged. There were forces at work which seemed to aim at breaking His relation to God. But still, even in dereliction, the cry was "*My God, My God.*" Even the cry of dereliction was a cry of faith. In that awful hour the faith of Jesus could not be shaken. And if that means anything, it means that the power of evil broke itself when it broke upon the rock of Jesus' faith.

4. For consider who and what Jesus conceived Himself to be. It can hardly be doubted now, whatever apocalyptic associations the name originally possessed, that Jesus' assumption of the title "Son of Man" reflected a conception of Himself as the embodiment of manhood, as the representative man, a conception which is justified by such an inquiry into His personality as we engaged in in the previous chapter. He sees the race gathered up in Himself. He conceives Himself to be the incarnation of the immanent spirit of humanity, the centre of a great human movement, the starting-point of a new phase of human development. He was not a man, so much

as He was all men. The supreme distinction between Polycarp, say, and Jesus is that Polycarp died because he was loyal to Jesus, but Jesus died because He was loyal to all of us in Himself. It was not a local and temporary issue which was at stake; not a question of national or ecclesiastical or even of religious principle. It was the whole life of humanity. It was not the Cross of a man, or of a race, but of a world. It is this circumstance which invests the Cross with that quality of timelessness and universality which makes it still a living issue. Somehow or other we were all involved in it. We look back upon it and see it standing out like some lone alp above the hillocks round about it, towering far away above the highest peaks of historical happening. It speaks to us still with a personal immediacy and directness which no amount of rationalizing can qualify.

The background of the Cross is not Jerusalem, but the whole world; the date of the Cross is not a certain day, but all time.

5. We must, therefore, endeavor to interpret the Cross with reference to the life of the whole race, and particularly by way of its ethical implicates. But it should be remembered that the ethical aspects of the Cross must be considered in the light of the new ethical norm which Jesus taught and His life embodied.

Our interpretations of the Cross have been too largely dominated by the Jewish conception of sin, in forgetfulness of the fact that Jesus had already declared the traditional moral standards to be inadequate. For Jesus, what was good or evil was not determined by legislative enactments, however authoritative, but

by the necessities of the divine life in man. Whatsoever hindered the divine life in man, whether it be carnal vice or an outworn tradition, lay on the one side of the line; whatsoever helped the divine life lay on the other. His ethic covered the whole ground of the Mosaic code and extended far beyond it into regions which no external code could ever legislate for.

The doctrine of divine immanence makes obsolete the old notion of morality as a legislative requirement imposed by God. It can only be held in its undiluted form on the basis of the absolute alterity of the ultimate moral authority. The conception of immanence requires us to think of the moral demand of God upon us as being an element in the divine purpose of self-fulfilment. If we are going to conceive of the existence of a personal God at all, we are compelled to regard all His activity as the process of His self-fulfilment. The process of self-fulfilment must consist in one of two things: either an arbitrary æsthetic satisfaction in the mere business of getting things done (in which case human personality seems to have no particular use), or an intelligent fellowship (as the existence of human personality seems to indicate). But perfect fellowship implies a perfect *rapport* of spirits, and is therefore only possible under moral conditions. Just as water seeks and finds its own level, so the spiritual-moral impulse in man may be regarded as the endeavor of the moral nature of the Creator to find its own level in His creatures. On this view, "Be ye holy, as I am holy," is at bottom a pleading rather than a behest. It has not behind it the terror of the Law, but the hunger of Holy Love to find its own level in the beloved.

This is borne out by the fact that the moral sense in man is not a static thing, a mechanical and unchanging criterion. It has a certain dynamic quality. It is a living thing within us which grows, not only in extent, but in sensitiveness and authority—that is, on condition that we give it room to grow. To thwart it habitually is to strangle it. Persistent wrong-doing destroys it. To obey it is to confirm and to enlarge it. The more we obey, the more exigent it becomes. Its requirements grow higher and greater continually. It has behind it a *vis a tergo* which is for ever pushing it up higher; and this *vis a tergo* is wholly inexplicable unless we assume it to be the impulse of the divine righteousness operating in us. The moral sense in us is not merely the mirror of the divine moral nature; it is continuous with it. The moral life is the life grounded and deriving its driving power from the moral nature of God. The advance and ascent of the moral sense in the individual and in the race is simply the water of God's holy love forcing itself up to its own level in mankind.

It was as the result of the effort to systematize the varied demands of the moral sense amid the growing complexity of life that they became embodied in a code of legal requirements. The Mosaic law and the code of Hammurabi are alike the consequences of the God-guided endeavor of men to apply the light of the moral sense, so far as they then saw it, to the conditions of life at the time. But the imposition of a legal form upon the moral requirements of God led to what was primarily a thirst and a longing on the part of God being regarded as a legal liability on man's part, to be enforced by judicial means. The Law was not,

however, on this account a misinterpretation of God's moral demand upon us. The legal was the only category that was available; and had the legal form of the moral obligation been regarded as an approximation merely, possibly little harm would have accrued. But the legal form introduced a certain penal element into the statement of the divine moral ideal for man, which did not necessarily belong to it; and it is this penal quality (which a legislative statement of moral requirements cannot escape) that has clouded and vitiated much of our thinking about the Cross. Not that sin is not punished; but it is not punished by stated divine decree. It is punished by reason of what is in itself. The principle of retribution is immanent in all sin. There is a law of moral gravitation which secures that every transgression and disobedience shall receive due recompense of reward. The moral law is no more vindictive than what we call physical law. The breach of either brings its inevitable consequences, but there is no penal process involved.

Now, it is hardly open to question that if anything should have saved us from introducing penal considerations into our interpretation of the Cross, the whole tenor of Jesus' ethical teaching should have done so. In the fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel He shows with great elaboration the entire inadequacy of the traditional statements of moral obligation. He accepts the impulse which lay behind the Law as genuine and divinely originated, but shows in detail how that same impulse was applicable to a variety of circumstances and contingencies which the Law did not provide for. The spirit which forbade an adulterous act forbade equally an adulterous intention. The spirit which for-

bade murder equally forbade the anger which led to murder, and the offence which evoked the anger. The spirit which limited revenge to the precise dimensions of the offence, applied logically, forbade revenge altogether; and not only did it forbid revenge, but, in addition, it forbade resentment, and even at last enjoined service to the aggressor along the very lines of his aggression.

All this goes to show that for Jesus righteousness lay not in doing this or abstaining from that, but in the possession and expression of a certain spirit. For the law without He substituted the law within. The holiness and the love which constituted perfect righteousness, and which found their perfect human expression in His own life, are the natural attributes and expressions of a true inner spirit. Sin is that which opposes or suppresses this inner spirit.

6. This same inner spirit is the true human spirit. Nevertheless, it is also the Divine Spirit—or at least it is continuous with it. Neither here nor elsewhere can the line be drawn which parts the human from the divine.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
Is God our Father dear,  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
Is man His child and care.

Then every man in every clime  
Who prays in his distress  
Prays to the human form divine,  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

This Spirit is the *vis a tergo* which has caused the advance and the ascent of the moral sense in man. It

was the Spirit which worked in the prophets and the men of old when they challenged religious institutions which had ceased to exercise moral discipline and when they called men to repentance. It is the Spirit which in all ages has opposed the carnal instincts in men, and has delivered men from the tyranny of obsolete institutions.

It was this same Spirit which broke into the world and in one short episode of history revealed itself in its perfect complete expression in Jesus. No theory of historical development can account for its irruption at that particular moment. It appeared in a form which showed the absence of all normal human limitations. Jesus was not merely *primus inter pares*. His quality is unique and unshared. Nothing short of a doctrine of Incarnation is at all adequate in explanation of it. The historical Jesus was God-man.

This Spirit attained its climax on the Cross, and its triumph in the unconquerable faith of Jesus. But just because the Spirit was in Jesus rising to its height of perfection, the opposing forces mobilized themselves and gathered in battle array. And then there was that

Death-grapple in the darkness

'Twixt old systems and the Word.

It is not given to us to look upon the battle of which the inner soul of Christ was the field. But we can see its elements in its environment, and we know that the essence of it was the attempt to break the faith of Jesus, to make the Son of Man belie the Son of God, and thereby to separate God and man for ever. It was the Armageddon of flesh and spirit. So it is that the Cross makes right and wrong stand outright and clear

in their true colors. On the one hand Jesus, on the other the welter of intrigue and blindness which had always slain the prophets and had opposed the light. The perfection of Jesus had for its foil the saddest tale of human frailty and impiety that history records. On the one hand the perfect good, on the other the summation of the whole world's sin—there can be no mistake about them. And out of the battle, in the act and article of death, Jesus proclaimed His victory: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." His faith was unbroken and man was saved to God. It was the triumph of the Spirit, the defeat of the flesh; and it secured for good and all the primacy of the Spirit in the affairs of men.

7. The Cross embodies in the idiom of history the characteristic activity and experience of the Universal Spirit, and is therefore a revelation of the measure and way of the spiritual life in man. It becomes a criterion which cleaves humanity from top to bottom. It is indeed an "epitome of the world." On the one hand are those who have committed themselves to the way of the Cross; on the other, those who are sworn to a fleshly allegiance. The Cross comes to every man with a challenge; and there is no escape from the response. The late George Tyrrell, in a letter written before one of his controversies with his ecclesiastical superiors, said, "How glad one would be to get out of it all! but there is that strange Man on His Cross Who drives me back again and again." There is a brotherhood of the Cross in the world, which is made of men who have "been crucified with Christ," and who feel the constraint of the Cross as a present, immediate, and

irresistible reality. The Cross is not only to them a revelation of an ideal, but they are seeking to translate it into the terms of their own life. And the world is made up of just two classes—these and the rest. They are men in whom the Spirit is doing within the dimensions of their human nature His own perfect work, liberated from the qualifications and hindrances of the flesh, and who find in the Cross at once the secret and the goal of life. They live in “the fellowship of His sufferings,” to make up what is lacking in the afflictions of the Christ. By their life and work and sacrifice they perpetuate the Cross. The historical Calvary becomes super-historic and universal in their lives and work.

8. It would be idle to imagine that any single line of thought will enable us to wrest from the Cross its entire mystery; and the fact that it has challenged the best human thought from its own day to ours without yielding up a wholly satisfying interpretation of itself suggests that it contains a concentration of reality and experience which no other episode in history even remotely approaches. It is not proposed in these pages to essay a theological account of the Cross; rather, more modestly, is it proposed to suggest a mode of approach. When Mr. R. A. S. Macalister was exploring the mound of Gezer, he did not set out by uncovering the mound. He dug a deep trench across the mound, and as the trench sank down through successive layers of the débris which had been deposited during each stage of the city's existence he was able to gather materials for the reconstruction of the social and some of the political history of the place. At the very best we can never hope to do more than dig a trench here

and there across the area of reality which the Cross represents. But even before we start our digging there is one fundamental condition which must be observed.

This condition may be stated in this wise: that in order to understand the Cross we must endure it. We cannot grasp its significance until we have suffered upon it.

It belongs to the experience of the saints that the forgiveness of sins is somehow connected with the Cross. In some way the Cross represents the reaction of human sin upon God and what it costs God to forgive sin. It is a commonplace that forgiveness involves the payment of a price. For real forgiveness means that one accepts and endures all the consequences of an offence without any endeavor to avenge it. It always means a measure of self-limitation and of sacrifice. It must mean no less to God; but we can never appreciate what it does mean to God until we know what it means to us. That is why Jesus taught us to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." He who cannot and does not forgive can never understand the meaning of forgiveness. There can be no doctrine of the Atonement for an unforgiving soul, no understanding of the Cross except for him who endures the like cross in his own little life, and forgives and keeps on forgiving even as he hopes to be forgiven. It is only the man who shares the cost of forgiveness with God who can penetrate to a true understanding of the Divine forgiveness; only he who knows how to forgive who does not lose his way around the Cross.

But the fellowship of Christ's sufferings entails more than this. It is a pleasant and a glad thing to know

that we have the forgiveness of our sins through the Cross. But one may not receive forgiveness through the Cross without accepting the whole Cross in all its consequences. We cannot pick and choose; if we consent to receive the benefits of the Cross, we must take up the whole burden of life at the Cross. If the Cross reveals to us what it means to God to forgive sin, it no less reveals what it must mean to us if we are to conquer sin in ourselves and in the world. The price of our warfare is a Cross; and only they who thus fully enter into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, who share with Him the price of saving the world, who in their own bodies make up "what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ," possess the clue to the meaning of the Cross.

Prior, therefore, to the theological approach to the Cross must be the practical acceptance of it in all its implications. It is to be accepted not only as the means of our reconciliation to God, but as the badge and the livery of a life wholly and positively reconciled to God not only through the remission of sins, but in the perfect harmony of an obedient and surrendered will. It must be accepted as the symbol of the inevitable fortune of a thoroughgoing spiritual life in a world of sense. It is the certain lot of those who set out to overcome the world. It is not only a guarantee of pardon, but a principle, a law, and a consequence of a sound and radical Christian life. Perhaps it is due to the fact that we have neglected or overlooked this practical approach to the Cross that we have as yet reached no satisfying and complete doctrine of the Cross. At least it is true that we shall not enter into its inmost mystery until we come to it in this way.

## XVIII

### THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CROSS

I. **C**HRISTIAN folk have become so habituated to the thought of the Cross that it escapes them almost altogether what violence it did to the conventions and prejudices of the first century. It ran athwart all the orthodox idioms of religion and philosophy; it bewildered the Jew and provoked the Greek to scornful impatience.

Some time ago there were exhibited in London a number of paintings by men whom the art critics call Post-Impressionists. Art has its own traditions, its own conventional idioms, its own orthodoxy of symbol and device for producing its characteristic effects; and these may vary from age to age. In art, as elsewhere, the heresy of to-day becomes the orthodoxy of to-morrow. Each age becomes habituated to its own artistic idiom; and these constitute the measure of artistic truth for those of us who have or pretend to have a kind of acquaintance with art. In the placid confidence of my own artistic orthodoxy, I went to the Post-Impressionist exhibition, and found my whole universe turned upside down. I was first bewildered, then affronted. I felt that, if these pictures represented the real truth of art, I had hitherto been mad, living in a mad world; but if the world I lived in was sane, then these pictures were the work of madmen. Their

whole spirit and conception were violently and frankly opposed to anything I had ever learned to conceive of as the measure of truth in art. A little application helped to clear matters up somewhat, and I began to see that in their own particular fashion these men were endeavoring to realize a quite definable ideal. But the process by which I reached this conclusion was like learning a new language, a new idiom of thought. Just because I could not find a place all at once for Post-Impressionism in my scheme of ideas, my first impulse was to write it down as mere madness.

So the Greek and the Jew failed to fit the Cross into their accepted systems. It shocked the Jew and insulted the intelligence of the Greek. Before they could make head or tail of it they had to learn a new language, new idioms of thought and speech. Paul helped them in a measure by endeavoring to translate the Cross into the conventional speech of current religion and philosophy; but in the process he transformed or modified the connotation of the very words which he used. The Cross was a new thing in the world, and it had to create its own particular idiom, both of thought and speech. It was impossible to attach the Cross in a convincing and reasonable way to any system of thought or religion in the ancient world. It was a profound and thoroughgoing contradiction of all their characteristic tendencies. The Greek argued, "If I am in the succession of truth as the philosophers have taught, then this new teaching must be madness." The Jew added, "If this teaching represents the truth of God, then all the traditions of my people are so much illusion and error." It is not difficult to foresee what the next step in the argument would be in either

case. The Jew was not prepared to surrender his religious traditions, nor the Greek his philosophical inheritance; so the one ruled the Cross out of account as an offence to religion, and the other as an affront to reason.

Mr. Bernard Shaw, in his introduction to "Major Barbara," expresses the opinion that "the central superstition of Christianity is the salvation of the world by the gibbet." It is hard to say whether this is the judgment of a Greek or a Jew; but it is quite easy to see that it is the judgment of a man who has not learnt the idiom of the Cross, and who imagines that the Salvation Army dialect represents the prevailing speech of Evangelicalism. The misunderstanding of the Cross is due in great measure to the inadequate and frequently unethical way in which it has been presented; and the critic does not think it worth while to pause to make allowance for the inherent "old-fog-ism" of human nature which renders it a slow business to translate a principle into the broadening terminology of a world of increasing knowledge. Crude and partial statements of the Cross are not easily cast off, and it is no use impugning the adequacy of the Cross for to-day because there are still some people who present it in the speech of yesterday. The Cross is a revelation of an elemental, primitive human ideal. It carries us back beyond the beginnings of things, and shows us the original and predestined truth and law of human life. In the Cross, God began the world over again, lifted it out of the side tracks into which it had drifted, and put it on those lines of development which He had ordained for it from the very first.

2. It reveals a curious ignorance of modern theological tendencies that anyone should imagine the old penal and satisfaction theories of the Cross still hold the field; and it would reveal a still more curious ignorance of the nature of the reaction of the Cross upon individuals and upon the world were anyone to suppose that any single theory of the Cross would be an adequate interpretation of it. The Cross is as many-sided as life itself; but at the heart of it is the fundamental law that sacrifice is the supreme condition of peace and increase of life, that self-surrender is the secret of self-realization. It is implicit in the two positions which we have sought to establish in previous chapters—namely, the essential continuity of human with the divine life (which is only a thinner way of putting the old statement, that God made man in His own image), and the plain, primitive, undifferentiated and perfect manhood of Jesus, that the Cross is not only a revelation of a human ideal, but of the very life of God. The Cross was the affirmation of the principle that the very deepest truth of the life of God, translated into terms of history in the Crucifixion, was to become the very deepest truth of the life of man. This was a scandal to the Jew, for to him life was power, and his God a worker of signs; foolishness to the Greek, because to him life was thought, and his God the repository of ideas. In the same way the Cross is folly to the modern philosopher, because life is a process of natural selection, and his God a force of evolution. To the superior person it is an offence because his God is a genteel, cultured, æsthetic deity, and life is more or less art. To the average man the Cross is a conundrum, because his God does not count,

and life is or should be beer and skittles. The Cross cuts across all these modern philosophies and ways of life as sharply and as summarily as it does across the conventions of the religious Jew or the intellectual Greek, or of the mixed civilizations of the Mediterranean seaboard in the apostolic age. The Shaws and Nietzsches miss the point of the Cross because their philosophies are off the main line of life. They have not yet learnt that their "little systems" are local irrelevant froth upon the broad stream of life. Life has one deep law and one deep philosophy, and these are the law and the philosophy of the Cross. From age to age, amid lengthening vision, broadening outlook, deeper insight, the speech of the Cross changes its dialect; it makes itself plain and articulate at every stage and on every plane of life in such terms as each stage and plane can understand. Certainly it does not do so without a struggle; nor does it do so in a day. Nevertheless, sooner or later it does do so, and the Cross remains in every age a super-historic, never-ageing reality. For it is life—all life concentrated into one splendid act.

3. But it was not in the plan of Jesus that this act should stand alone as a beacon light. Rather did He intend it to be the beginning of a conflagration. The Cross was to be translated into men's lives—not singly alone, but in a community. The Church was the community founded by Christ for the projection and perpetuation of the achievement of the Cross into future ages. From the Cross the stream of living water was to flow into the world; and the Church was to be its channel. To the Church it was committed to carry

on the fight of the spirit against flesh, to complete that overcoming of the world of which the Cross is at once the triumphant beginning, the symbol and the promise.

The whole course of the discipline which the first group of disciples underwent points to a purpose larger than any which could be realized in a world whose whole course was suddenly to be turned upside down by an apocalyptic *coup*. It was not unnatural that the enormous strain of the last stages of our Lord's life should have caused the minds of His followers to swerve from the groove into which their training had led them; and the accumulation of apocalyptic matter in the Gospel records around the final stage of the history reflects very clearly the feeling of the disciples that they were coming to the end of all things. This coincides so well with the apocalyptic feeling then generally prevailing that it was a whole generation and more before the Christian community succeeded in outliving the twist which these circumstances had given to its conception of its own significance. When the Church began to settle down to live its characteristic life and to emerge from the confusion in which its mind had been involved, it saw more and more clearly, as is evident from the later Pauline teaching, what its function in the world was.

It would have spoken little for the foresight of Jesus if He had been content to leave the perpetuation of His mission to the precarious chances of a loosely bound company of followers; and it is impossible to resist the feeling in reading the Gospels, that after He had recognized the futility of attempting to bring in the kingdom of God through the channels of current

Judaism, and had in consequence broken definitely with the synagogue,\* His chief aim was to build up a community of disciples by whom His work could be carried on. It is as though one who had been carrying on some work of charity or public utility, and had foreseen his own end, should gather around him a company of like-minded men to whom he commits the business of perpetuating his work, and whom, meantime, he trains for it.

It would, however, be idle to suppose that in our Lord's mind this work of continuation was to be merely the promulgation of His teaching. On the contrary, the special emphasis which He lays upon His death from the time of Peter's confession shows that He was preparing the disciples for some direct redemptive activity. That constituted them straightway into a body of an entirely different character from any voluntary association of men joined together by a common interest and committed to some common purpose. The Church was all this; but it was a good deal besides. It is significant that when the Church began to emerge from the confusion of its early years it learnt to conceive of itself as "the body of Christ." It was more than the body of believers. It had some profound mystical connection with Christ which put it in an entirely different category from any other society or community of men in the world.

4. The expression "the body of Christ" needs some notice. When Paul uses the term Christ it is in a super-historic sense. It does not stand for Jesus, but

\* See Burkitt, "The Gospel History and its Transmission," pp. 80 ff.

for that of which Jesus was the perfect embodiment and manifestation in history. We may say (admitting the theological looseness of the statement) that Jesus was "the body of Christ," and in this sense Bishop Gore is right when he speaks of the Church as being the projection and the prolongation of the Incarnation into history. Indeed, no other conception of the Church does justice to the facts. Had the Church been merely a voluntary association of men bound together by a common interest, it would have endured the historic fate of all human societies—"They have their day, they cease to be"—but the Church has persisted through all the vicissitudes of history, has survived hostility without and unfaithfulness within, and still remains the great outstanding fact of Western life. No other proof of this is necessary than the circumstance that the first object of the reformer's criticism, the first object of sceptical attack or rationalist contempt, is the Church. The Church, despite its frailties, remains the institution the least negligible by the philosopher and the politician, by the critic and the iconoclast, by the reformer—whether of society or of faith; and though it has been beset behind and before by candid friends and overt and covert enemies, it is here still, and more than any other single institution has to be reckoned with.

Paul speaks of the Church as the "habitation of God by His Spirit." We are sufficiently accustomed to-day to the idea of the divine immanence, and it is likely that with changing and less mechanical views of evolution we shall become still more familiarized with it. God's "secret presence runs through all creation's veins." His presence sends the stars in their wide

sweeping courses, orders the sun-rising and the sun-setting, and breaks out in the multiform life of plant and animal. The student of history—when he is delivered from the bondage of mechanical theories of historical process—may trace His handiwork in the affairs of men. But God indwells the Church in a peculiar way. He is in the Church as He was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. His presence in the world is creative, His presence in the Church is redemptive. The Church is in the world the active organ of the redemptive purpose of God as it was revealed and wrought out in Jesus.

It is this same truth which underlies the conception of "the body of Christ." The expression is intended to convey the idea of a vital organic relation between Christ and the Church. The Church is His body—not His vicar or His plenipotentiary, but the organ of His activity, an inalienable part of Himself. The Church is, according to Paul, "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." The Church is to be on earth what Christ is; it is to be no less than Christ Himself still acting on the world through the collective Christian consciousness and energy. Its life is His life; its blood is His blood; its nerve and its muscle move at His dictation. It is to be nothing other or less than the prolongation and the projection of His own actual Self into time and into this world of living men.

One is quite aware that to a rigorous rationalism all this may seem obscurantist and reactionary; but one need not at this time of day be afraid of the contemptuous names that reason gives to things it cannot understand. The history of the Church is charged with episodes and its life equipped with powers which must

for ever lie outside the possibility of rational explanation or analysis. The Church cannot be argued out of existence by a process of *a priori* reasoning. Its history is known; and the one stupendous fact of its historical continuity is alone adequate to stultify that kind of argument. The Church is an organism which derives its vitality from a source as secret as the source of all life. Its life and existence do not depend on the voluntary interest of its members; it derives and descends from its living Head. It is true that the extent and vigor of the Church's life is contingent on the faith and faithfulness of the souls which are its cells; but the life itself does not originate in the cells—it only passes through them. The quality and health of the cells will determine the measure of the life that comes through them; but they do not form the springs of the life. The life of the Church is the indwelling Christ.

5. This life must express itself in an activity of redemption. It is not the business of the Church to control or to change the opinions of men, public or private; it is not primarily concerned with a philosophy or a view of the world. It is charged rather with a work of redemption; and by the inherent power which it possesses by reason of its organic connection with the living Christ, it constrains the wills and hearts of men into the faith and obedience of this same Christ. Not, mark, endeavoring to compel them first of all into its own fellowship, or to annex them to its own mass; but first of all and most of all seeking to constrain men into faith and obedience to Christ—which faith and obedience grafts them into the unity and fellowship

of those who are Christ's, which constitutes the body of Christ, the true Catholic Church.

If the Church, then, be the Body of Christ, its life should be a reproduction of the life of Christ; and as we find the real distinctiveness of the life of the Christ in the Cross, so the Cross must be reproduced in the life of the Church. The Church, that is, must wage increasing war upon the world round about it; and it must pay the price of that warfare. It must bear and endure the Cross. Upon Calvary Jesus made an effective breach in the ranks of the powers of this world, and the Church exists to push this breach farther, to make it wider, to spread its own frontiers by continuously invading the territory of the flesh. Calvary has become the centre of the fight, and the Spirit's line of battle grows in ever-widening circles around it; and it is the Church which mans the fighting line.

Hence the Cross is central to the Church. It is to be the theme and the *motif* of its life. The late Dr. Parker once said, truly, that "Jesus was never off the Cross"; and it should be true of the Church that it is never off the Cross. It is called to make up what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ. It is the fighting force of the Kingdom of the Spirit; and the cost of the warfare is a perpetual Cross. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," is a true principle; but it needs raising to larger dimensions—the blood of the Church is the seed of the Kingdom.

6. It was part of the foresight of Jesus that He provided a simple means of preserving the centrality of the Cross for the Church. That is the rite which we call the Lord's Supper.

Some time ago it was given to me to keep the Passover in the home of a rabbi in Jerusalem. I was naturally very much outside the little circle, but no man with the rudiments of an historical sense could miss the enormous significance of the observance. Here was this little family—one of innumerable groups that would that night, with the setting of the sun, settle down to recall that wonderful story of deliverance in which the life of Israel as a nation began. It was a great religious occasion, but it was supremely the sacrament of nationality; and all the past, with its strange, chequered story and its unrealized hopes, brought its own unutterable power into the observance. This is the secret of the national preservation of a homeless, scattered nation—that with one accord throughout their wide dispersion they come together in families to this simple rite of commemoration, to which the process of time has added incalculable momentum. When Jesus, foreseeing the days to come, desired so to provide that His death should remain as central to the life of the new Israel as the deliverance from Egypt was to the life of the old, He used the same simple expedient of associating His death with a common domestic act. The Lord's Supper is the Lord's wise provision for bringing His Church back again and again to its centre.

This is not to say that the Lord's Supper has no further significance. That would be to limit the meaning of the Cross itself. But it does indicate very plainly that Jesus intended the Cross to be central to the life of the Church, to be its constant theme, its all-pervading *motif*.

Nor does this mean merely that the Cross is to be

reproduced in the ritual or symbolical acts of the Church. It is to be reproduced in the whole life and experience of the Church as a whole; and the rite is simply the parable of the experience. The doctrine of the Sacrifice of the Mass is the terminal point of a by-path development of Christian theology; and the assumption that the Cross is perpetuated on the altar flies in the face of the plain intention of the upper room: "Do this in remembrance of Me." The Cross must be reproduced, not in this or that element of the Church's worship, but over the whole area of the Church's life; and what is needed is not a doctrine of transubstantiation, but a doctrine of perpetuation; not that the elements are changed on the altar, but that the Cross which they recall is, in the observance, assumed afresh as its burden and its hall-mark by the Church as a whole, and by all the individual souls which constitute it.

The Church is necessarily always the Church militant; there should be no pause in its warfare. And warfare means suffering. It is easy to see that over large periods and areas the Church has lost the militant spirit, and it is precisely at those times and places that the Church has become corrupt. The only condition on which it can escape suffering is by ceasing to fight or by acquiescing in the ways of the world, by lowering its own flag or by compromising with the enemy. The Church cannot have peace without, save by ceasing to be the Church; at least, it never has peace within when it has peace without. When the Church is occupied with internecine conflicts, as it is to-day, it simply means that it has ceased to use its weapons against its foes, and has turned them upon itself.

7. While we are thinking of the present life of the Church it is possible that we may overlook its ultimate purpose. We speak of it as having a redemptive purpose here and now; but the very word redemptive suggests some positive goal.

The function of the Church is to produce the superman. This is stated plainly by Paul. The intention of the whole various economy of the Church is that we should all come "to the full-grown man." The positive end of the Church's existence in time is the production of a manhood the type and pattern of which is the manhood of Jesus. The redemptive purpose has a great positive constructive content—the realization of a completely spiritual manhood. So it is that the Church, as Dr. Armitage Robinson has said, is "the nucleus of that regenerated human society which is to grow out of the recognition and realization of the true human constitution." It is the embodiment and organization in history of the immanent human-divine spirit for the purpose of its self-realization in time, of conquering the world and assimilating it to itself. It is the kingdom of the Spirit organized for work.

"Organized"—but from within, not from without. Its life has, like all organic life, to adapt itself to the business of growing in the world, and it has evolved from within itself a diversity of function and office. But new conditions demand new adaptations; and forms of Church government, which are the most external of the Church's furniture of adaptation, are transitory and contingent. Even when these are exalted into permanent sacramental elements, as they are in sacerdotalist thought, they will have to stand the ordinary racket of natural selection, which is for ever

discarding old and creating new forms; and so far as there has been operation of natural selection in Church history it has on the whole been away from monarchical theories of Church government, deeply entrenched though these may be behind subtle doctrines of historic continuity and apostolic succession. No form of Church government has finality. The living substance does not tie itself down for ever to a single form; and it may be that the next phase of the *form* may be one determined by the seeming tendency of the *substance* in our time towards unity. In any case, there can never be unity on the basis of an existing polity. But the living Spirit will in due time evolve its own form for the Catholic Church that is to be.

Meantime the one essential fact in the organization of the Church is that it is the communion of the saints. This is the corollary of the fact that all human development demands a social environment, and it is therefore supremely necessary on the highest plane of all. It is not usually recognized how essential an element in the New Testament conception of the Church is the idea of fellowship. When Paul prays that "we may be strong to apprehend with all the saints the love of Christ," he is indicating the fact that it is only possible to grasp the dimensions of the love of Christ on a basis of fellowship. It takes all of us, and all of us together, to compass the vastness of the love of Christ. It is only in fellowship, by making common stock of our Christian experience, that we can gain a real apprehension of its entire content; and it is therefore only in fellowship that we can realize a balanced wholesome individual Christian experience. It is one of the commonplaces of our observation that the solitary unat-

tached Christian invariably becomes a religious crank. Idiosyncrasies of doctrine are usually the products of isolation—for soundness of doctrine rests in the last resort upon soundness of experience. Sound doctrine is the child of a normal, balanced, all-round Christian experience.

8. For it must be remembered that we do not *think* out the truth so much as in the first instance we *work* it out. Our knowledge of the truth is the deposit which our experience and active contact with the real world leaves in our minds. We gain it not in the study armchair by processes of ratiocination. That has usually a critical and not a constructive tendency. Our knowledge of the truth is gained by work upon the broad spaces of the world. It is well that we should retire to the study and the council-chamber to beat the deposit of truth into manageable and communicable shape; but it comes to us first of all through our interaction with the world. When one subscribes to a creed one accepts a set of working postulates; and it usually happens that, when one begins to live by them, *most* of them are practically if not explicitly discarded. The burning spot of real belief by which a man lives is a comparatively small area in the continent of pious opinions to which he assents; and that burning spot of real belief is just the residue which one's experience has returned with, out of the stock of postulates with which it set out, having found the rest partly wrong, but for the most part irrelevant.

The faith of the Church is similarly that deposit of truth which its redemptive contact with the world has precipitated into its consciousness. It starts out not

with a creed, but with an impulse and a purpose, and it gains the materials of its creed as the by-products of the working out of its life. Its creed is being worked out on the line of battle; but it is not the primary aim of the battle. The history of the creeds constitutes a considerable portion of the history of the Church; and not yet has experience brought us a thoroughgoing sense of the strictly subordinate place of the creed in the economy of the Church. The substance of the truth is one thing, and we have it first of all as experience; the form of the truth, the creed, the formula is a local contingent affair. It is significant that the great creeds were forged out in the fires of controversy; they are polemic and therefore one-sided documents. They correspond to the necessity which evoked them. The Nicene Creed was the reply of the Church to the Arian heresy, and it did less than justice to the Arian position. The formula of Chalcedon was the Church's antidote to Eutychianism, and it did not make full allowance for the underlying truth of the Eutychian teaching. These great credal documents were temporary provisional adjustments of current thought in the exercise of a wisdom which, as Dr. Rainy once said, was always sincere but never perfect. One thing, however, is plain—that with all its creed-making, the Church has not yet defined the whole of its experience. Not that the truth which is latent in its experience is in any way vague or indefinite. It is the most definite thing possible. It breaks through language and escapes, but it is the central reality. The total impression of Christ upon the human spirit, the whole human sense of Jesus, is too big a thing to be formulated in a set of propositions. A creed just tells as much of

Christ as a chart of the solar system tells of the solar system itself; and just as the Copernican chart has superseded the Ptolemaic, so the creeds of the Church supersede one another as time goes on. For since the Church is a living thing, its experience is not a static but a progressive thing; and its creeds must broaden out with its experience, though they can never broaden out sufficiently to cover it all or dig deep enough to capture the whole of its vital core.

The truth is maintained and gained when the whole life of the Church throughout its diverse offices is gathered up into the one ministry. The true Christian apologetic is the redemptive work of the Church, and it is never the argument of the doctor or the dialectic of the casuist that wins the battles of the Christian faith, but the work in which the life of the Church expresses itself and makes itself articulate in the world. And the whole life of the Church culminates in the utterance of a *Word*. It is not easy to fix the precise significance of this term. It is that which, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews, "pierces to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit," liberates, that is, the spiritual life from the psychical and natural. It is a power, an energy; and it may be mediated in many ways. That it is called a *Word* implies that it has a reasoned and expressible content, and that is why the chief vehicle by which it is mediated is the preaching of the Gospel. But the *Word* may be made articulate in other ways—through music and painting, through the conduct and the charity of Christian souls.

But the supreme quality of the *Word* is that it is a *Word* of Reconciliation, a *Word* of Atonement, a *Word* which bids men return to God in the harmony

of an obedient will. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; and He is in the Church for the same purpose. And so it is that the whole life of the Church becomes vocal in the Word, "Be ye reconciled to God."

We shall consider presently what this Word implies and how it is to be interpreted to our own time. Meantime let it be pointed out that in the utterance of this quickening Word the Church has the instrument for the liberation of the spiritual life in man; and in the co-operative fellowship which it is it provides the appropriate social environment for the development of the spiritual life. The life of the Church is directed to the production of the superman. The ordinary physical processes of the universe have produced the natural man; the Church is that super-physical universe the life of which is to culminate in the superman, the full-grown man of the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

9. It is not easy for the Church always to steer its course rightly in the world of men. With the growing complexity of civilization, its problems multiply indefinitely; and its divisions are born of a diversity of opinion as to the way it should go through the labyrinth of the world. Here, the Church has allied itself with the State, only later on to have to fight for its very life by detaching itself from an association which fettered it. There, the Church has under pressure of sudden contingencies or immediate problems deviated from its main track into by-paths of seemingly necessary service which have in changed circumstances been a hindrance to it. On the whole, the tendency of the

Church has been to step down from its own plane and to take too low a view of itself and too restricted a view of its place in the world. When Paul says that God gave Christ to be head over all things to the Church, he meant more than that Christ was to be head of the Church. He meant that the Church was to exercise the moral sovereignty of Jesus upon the earth; and there is a great deal of truth in the criticism that it has abdicated this function and has become a kind of buttress to the existing order. Mr. Bernard Shaw in his preface to "Major Barbara" says truly that there are times when "it becomes the duty of the churches to evoke all the powers of destruction against the existing order. But if they do this," he continues, "the existing order must suppress them. Churches are suffered to exist only on condition that they preach submission to the State as at present capitalistically organized." Some allowance must be made for Mr. Shaw's highly private point of view, but his charge is, in the main, true; and he is also right when he says that the false position in which the churches find themselves can only be escaped by a reconstitution of society. So long as Christian enterprise and philanthropy depend so largely upon the largess of the rich, the Church must stand for the social organization which creates the rich at the expense of leaving in its train a large by-product of poverty. But it is not the function of the Church nor its place to go cap in hand to the opulent for the where-withal of its enterprises; it has a higher office which it can and may discharge. It may be, if and when it chooses, the most powerful creator of public opinion, and it may assume a sovereignty over the State and every other institution which shall compel them to con-

form themselves to its purpose, to become subordinate and tributary to its supreme ministry of making manhood. I do not mean that the Church should become a formal dictator to the rulers of men, nor that it should have a political status as a temporal power or as a State Church, but that it should hold such a place in the regard of men that, when it speaks, it shall speak with a power which compels a hearing, so that no man, be he monarch or peasant, and no community, shall do or permit unrighteousness, for fear of its censure. The Church must not be content to be a mere element in the life of the world, one among the multitude of the world's interests and concerns. There is no ideal for us of the Church which is true or valid save that implicit in the New Testament: that it is to become a world-power, not, indeed, by the formal decree of the kings of the earth, but by reason of its own overwhelming inner mightiness.

It was a bad day for the Church when it made terms with the State. It was the mating of incongruities; and the Church has involved itself thereby in endless trouble. There is a certain plausibility in the claim that the religious life of a nation should become vocal in the Church; and it is no doubt desirable that there should be means whereby the conscience of a nation may discharge itself. But a State connection entails the danger that that conscience may be for ever silenced along one definite line—namely, the doings of the State itself. For the State is not the nation—it is simply the police organization which the nation has set up for its own defence and preservation. It is the machinery of national life and not the life itself; and it reflects, not an ideal, but the average ethical level of

the nation at the time. A nation's religious life may rise, has often risen, above the average ethical level which the State embodies; but if its religious organization is in treaty with the State, it can never effectually make articulate the uprisings of its religious life. An Established Church inevitably becomes the bulwark of the *status quo*, with the result that it absorbs almost always a particular political color, and at the same time cramps the development of religious life within itself.

Moreover, where an Established Church exists side by side with other religious organizations, the general tendency is towards intolerance and persecution. It is tempted (and sometimes falls into the temptation) to use its political connections to confirm and increase its own privileges, with the result that other religious organizations become in self-defence involved in a political *mêlée* which is altogether detrimental to their spirituality. We have heard a great deal latterly of the relation of the Church to politics. It is only on the basis of separation and absolute toleration that Church and State can exist side by side and thrive. Rome, says Dante:—

Was wont to boast two suns, whose several beams  
Cast light on either way, the world's and God's.  
One since hath quenched the other: and the sword  
Is grafted on the crook: and so conjoin'd  
Each must perforce decline to worse.\*

Where the Church and the State are linked together the spiritual development of the one and the moral elevation of the other are arrested. It becomes an unholy alliance in defence of the *status quo*, and in the

\*Purg., xvi., 109-15.

end it is the Church that suffers most. For it can only remain loyal to the State by compromising on its own principles. The modern State rests upon force, whereas if the Church has any political mission in the world it is the development of a State which needs no physical force to hold it together. It is a far cry to such a State, but its day is not hastened by the alliance of the Church with, and its endorsement of, a State which depends upon the very thing that it is the business of the Church to make superfluous.

To restore the Church its liberty is a very much more difficult matter than one may suppose. The present situation has its roots away in the past, and a mere summary severance of Church and State is not the remedy. Lord Acton speaks of "the undiscovered country where Church and State are parted," and it will need much patience to explore it. Disestablishment is easy to speak of, but at best it is a purely negative thing. It is a process of equalization among religious organizations. But more than disestablishment is necessary. What is really needed is a resurgence in all the churches of a larger, more radical spirituality, which will lift the whole Church to a plane of life in which a State connection would be a pure irrelevancy, and from which the Church would be able to work upon the State and increasingly raise its ethical level. But before the Church can do that, it must be free from the control of and from obligation to the State.

## XIX

### THE NEW EVANGELISM

**T**HE fact that the whole life of the Church makes itself vocal in a "Word" suggests that its genius is essentially propagandist. It is a herald, a witness; and it mediates its message to the world through "the foolishness of preaching." But what it does not always see clearly is that its preaching is to have a sharp propagandist edge; that its intention primarily is to win partisans for Christ. The Church does its work by the preaching of the Gospel; it misses the point when it preaches about the Gospel. It is to face the world with a challenge and an invitation, not to propound a thesis and to elaborate it in a dissertation.

Let it be said, however, that in practice preaching has a twofold purpose—the one educational, the other evangelistic. The one refers to those already in the Church, and aims at the enlargement and deepening of their experience and the quickening of their conscience; the other refers to those who are outside the Church, and aims at bringing them into a definite personal connection with Christ.

It is part of the disorder that has befallen the Church that the latter office is usually regarded as the peculiar prerogative of specially endowed men, who therefore are supposed to circulate around the churches to complete the preaching function of the Church. The ordi-

nary minister is regarded as, on the whole, incapable of doing this work, and has by now accepted the theory of his incapacity for it, at the same time regarding the brother specially fitted for it as belonging to an order somewhat inferior to his own. But it is, perhaps, the most perplexing element in the whole situation, that while the ordinary minister is required to satisfy certain educational requirements, the circulating evangelist is, on the whole, regarded as being better without a special education. He is not unoften contemptuous of ministerial education. There are some outstanding exceptions, it is true; but, speaking generally, this is how matters stand.

In addition to this, there has appeared a tendency to think that evangelistic work is most successfully conducted away from the ordinary church buildings, and that in particular it is necessary to success that evangelistic campaigns should be organized on a large scale, without any special denominational affiliation. Now, I should hardly venture to deny that evangelism carried on in this way does a certain amount of good; but I do venture to say that this whole conception of it is from top to bottom fallacious.

I know that it may be argued that in the early Christian organization there were "evangelists, pastors, and teachers," and that it is a sign of retrogression that to-day one person is expected to discharge the three offices, and that, therefore, the special evangelist is justified. But the truth surely is that the minister is the modern representative of the evangelist in the first instance; and that his discharge of the teaching and pastoral offices should be secondary to his evangelistic function. The minister should be first and most of

all an evangelist. It is certainly sometimes useful that the preacher's evangelistic ministry should be brought to a head and its harvest reaped by the introduction of a fresh accent and a fresh point of view through the aid of some other minister; but that minister who is not looking for conversions all the way through is missing the most vital point of his whole ministry. There will be some who are more gifted than others in achieving such results; but no man who assumes the preaching office is exempt from the endeavor, in his own measure, to achieve them.

What is, however, of more consequence than the method used or the functionary concerned in proclaiming the Christian message is the content of the message itself. Even this is, indeed, not the ultimate thing, for the power of the Christian message lies in the combination of its content with the personality of the individual who declares it. The Word, the living thing which awakens the spiritual life in men, is a distinctly personal thing, and no proclamation of a message avails anything except it have passed through the crucible of a personal experience. The true preacher communicates something of himself; and it is his own living self that vitalizes the message. How it comes to pass that the impact of a message thus delivered does quicken the spiritual life is a psychological problem which, in the present stage of our knowledge, is not amenable to analysis. But that it does so is beyond question; and that the personal factor is essential is demonstrated by the fact that two men may deliver the same message with the most complete difference of results. The one may achieve conversions and the other may not.

True preaching is surely itself a communication of

the spiritual life, and its momentum is the entire push of the Universal Spirit which is for ever seeking to express itself in a quickening Word. But this does not imply that the content of the message is immaterial. On the contrary, a "form of sound words" must be found as a vehicle for the Word. The Word reinforces and is reinforced by a faithful, sincere statement of the Christian message in a way which commends itself to the mind, and which finds an echo in the conscience of the hearer. The Word must have its own appropriate idiom of thought and speech in order to make itself articulate in the world.

That is to say, there can be no real preaching of the Gospel without a theology. It may not be a complete theology; it may not be even a conscious theology—that is, the preacher may not be conscious of it as a theology. But any kind of formal statement of a spiritual experience not merely involves but inevitably *is* a theology. It may be crude, and it may be innocent of the stock phrases of theology (and be none the worse for that), but it is a real theology nevertheless. No man will go very far except he have a more or less systematic account in his mind of the experience which he is seeking to awaken in those who hear him.

Indeed, in modern evangelism there is no great room for a complaint of lack of theology. The doctrine of the circulating evangelist is always most dogmatically definite; and this affords him the additional advantage of being able to give what in certain circles is called "definite teaching." There can be no doubt at all that with the average man definiteness of teaching is a strong recommendation. He is only irritated by vague, nebulous, and highly qualified statements of

Christian truth. This is certainly one element in the strength of the evangelist; but it is in some respects the cause of his greatest weakness. For with his assured definiteness of doctrine he feels no need to co-ordinate his message to the increasing knowledge of the time, and consequently, when a young convert puts the system to the proof, it breaks down in the face of the realities which he must, soon or late, encounter. Current evangelism is conservative in its theology; and while this circumstance gives it certain elements of strength it nevertheless stands in jeopardy every hour in a world which is not conservative, but is for ever changing.

Let it be said, however, that the preservation of the evangelistic note in modern Christianity is mostly due to the conservative evangelist. Liberal theologians have generally shown little disposition towards aggressive evangelism; and this, more than any other factor, explains the dubiety of ordinary Christian folk concerning new movements in theology. After all, the test of a theology is whether it represents a religious consciousness which is essentially aggressive, and can make itself vocal in terms that are intelligible to the average person. Fashions in theology which carry with them no compulsion to witness are condemned already, for they have departed from Christianity. It has been said that a church which ceases to be evangelistic soon ceases to be evangelical. More than this may be said. Such a church ceases also to be Christian. Unless the church feels the necessity of evangelism laid upon it as an irresistible constraint, it should at once proceed to examine itself.

It may seem ungracious, seeing that this essential

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element of Christianity has been preserved by the loyalty of the traditional evangelistic school, to embark upon a criticism of it; but if Christianity is not to fail to commend and justify itself to the world to-day, such criticism is inevitable. For instance, much of the force of this type of evangelism rests in the confidence with which it appeals to the letter of Scripture. But we are passing away rapidly from the doctrine of Inspiration which makes such an appeal possible, and we are involved in a process of public education which will inevitably breed a more critical and exacting intellectual temper than that which has in the past accepted the validity of such an appeal. The evangelism of the future must find a new authority if it wishes to retain its power undiminished.

The evangelism which we are now passing in review comes to a point in the idea of salvation or conversion. These two are regarded rightly as two aspects of the same personal experience; and the evangelist properly conceives the achievement of this personal experience in others as the point which he is particularly to aim at. But he has not usually given these two terms their full value. In his hands they are almost altogether of a negative connotation, and have reference to a deliverance from sin; and sin is interpreted exclusively in Jewish fashion.

Now the word "salvation" and its relatives in the New Testament have a very elastic meaning. It is only necessary to point to the uses of the word in Phil. i. 19 and 28, and ii. 12, to show how its connotation varies. The root idea seems to be that of *welfare*, as it is in such expressions as "God *save* the King," in which there is almost a complete absence of negative

elements. When the Philippian jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" it is impossible to believe that he had been shocked into a particular concern for the salvation of his soul in the evangelistic sense. It was the question of a man thrown into a panic by an earthquake; and Paul's answer, that he should believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, presented to him a way whereby under all circumstances it would be well with him. So far as the notion of saving from sin was present, it was only as a part of the larger process of establishing the welfare of the whole man. But in a current evangelistic usage the word is definitely polarized, and has the unvarying reference to a deliverance from sin.

But its conception of sin is Jewish—that is to say, it is legal; and consequently its conception of the Atonement is charged with penal ideas. It pins its faith wholly to a single theory of substitution; and salvation becomes very largely a deliverance from the retribution which sin brings in its train. It is salvation supremely from hell. Now, it would be gratuitous folly to deny that there is truth in all this; but it would be sheer blindness to imagine that this is the whole Gospel. All this, at the best, is purely preliminary—a clearing of the decks for action—and it is not even complete at that. A true evangelism must insist upon giving their full value to the great evangelical terms, Repentance, Salvation, Conversion. They do not refer exclusively to ethical changes. The change they imply has definite ethical consequences; and the consistent linking of the idea of salvation to sin has tended to obscure what this crisis in life stands for as a whole. It is not merely a reversal of moral tendency. That is

one and the chief of its consequences. It is primarily the change from the natural to the spiritual life; and it is no less a revolution, whether the natural life has been spent in the pursuit of vicious satisfactions or in an endeavor after a certain standard of moral attainment.

The prominence of the negative elements of the Gospel message is mostly derived from our peculiar theological inheritance from the Reformation. Justification by Faith belongs to the negative side of the Gospel; it conveys the fact that a man is declared by God to be and treated as righteous, that his guilt is written off, and that he has attained this condition by exercising faith. The positive elements of the Christian message are implied in the idea of Justification by Faith rightly understood; for no definition of faith covers the ground save that which regards it as a definite, permanent God-ward posture of the soul. This, however, is not its connotation in the current speech of the prevailing evangelism. One act of faith evokes God's declaration of justification, and that secures the believer for good and all from condemnation. He is saved. So far, good; but it does not carry us sufficiently far. For in the Book of Acts on one occasion it is declared that there were added daily to the Church such as *were being saved*—wherein salvation is regarded not as a single act but as a process. Paul bids his Philippian correspondents work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; and here salvation is regarded as a process which the believer himself has to work out. But he immediately adds, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to work." This statement indicates to us what the positive impulse of salvation is. It is the divine life, the life of the Spirit in us.

We have, therefore, to push on from the principle of Justification by Faith to the positive principle of which it is the initial negative movement. We have to do more. The principle of Justification by Faith regards the ethical implicates of salvation as the ultimate ones, whereas they are derivative and secondary. We have to move on from Justification, therefore, to something super-ethical from which the ethical derives. And as we have seen that the characteristic Christian ethic is a derivative from the Christian metaphysic, from its peculiar emphasis upon the supremacy and primacy of the spiritual life, we must find an expression of a formula for the embodiment of this ultimate principle of spirituality if we are to convert it into an intelligible message to our time.

Now, it may be plausibly argued that Christianity was brought into the world in order to enable the average man to lay hold of God. It reduced God, as it were, into terms of flesh and blood, into a concrete, intelligible form; and it has endeavored to translate this accessibility into its characteristic speech. It makes the thought of God accessible to the average intelligence by presenting the person of Jesus; and while the average man would only be irritated by vague invitations to appropriate the divine life, the New Testament comes to the same point and achieves the same result by speaking of the Indwelling Christ. The doctrine of the Indwelling Christ is the crown and climax of the Christian teaching; it is the supreme positive element from which everything else in Christian experience derives, and to which everything else leads up. In Paul's mind, when he is liberated from Jewish preconceptions (as seemingly he is in an in-

creasing degree with the passing of time), this particular doctrine becomes the natural expression of his spiritual experience, and it becomes also more and more the determining factor of the form of his later theological constructions. The Christ in Whom the whole heart and mind of God is gathered up in one outgoing towards man becomes the life principle of the man who permits Him to inhabit his soul. His life is fused into the life of God, and henceforth it is God Who worketh in him.

This, then, we believe, must be the burden of the evangelism of the future. Its whole theology and the form of its message must be determined by the necessity of presenting the Indwelling Christ as the one thing needful. It will probably have to cast off some elements of its present theological background, and in any case will have to revise the relative emphasis upon its several parts. But, whatever happens, its aim must be to enable men to gain the supreme Pauline experience, and to say, "To me to live is Christ."

But it will be at once seen that one element in the equipment of the current evangelism—which probably lent more force to its message than any other element—must inevitably be regarded as, if not irrelevant, at least strictly subordinate—that is, the appeal to fear. Whether for good or evil, the Jewish conception of sin is no longer tenable—at least in its crude, unqualified form; and, in any case, it is true that agnosticism has so far done its work as to extract all terror from hell. It is questionable whether we shall ever see again as a normal experience the kind of conviction of sin under which our fathers labored; and, so far as my

observation goes, the terror of the law is not to-day generally an efficient accessory to the persuading of men. The appeal to fear is becoming less and less forcible; and though this involves the loss of a very mighty leverage in the hands of the evangelist, it must be acquiesced in.

This, however, does not mean that the new evangelism is to have no leverage of the emotional kind. Indeed, it must have a point of contact with men in this region if it is to touch them to any purpose. I believe, as a matter of fact, that the kind of appeal which is implicit in the doctrine of the Indwelling Christ is mightier and more wholesome than the appeal to fear could possibly be.

For, if the spiritual life be the true predestined life of man, Christianity comes and says the plainest, most obvious thing that could be said to a man—namely, “Be a man.” And it points out the way to the achievement of this manhood. The idea is implicit in Tennyson’s quatrain:—

Though truths in manhood darkly join  
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,  
We yield all blessing to the name  
Of Him Who made them current coin.

What Tennyson means is that there are within us tendencies and instincts and intimations of a larger life than that of nature—slumbering, maybe, and suppressed, but there, awaiting their emancipation. Christianity offers this emancipation—offers to lead these instinctive tendencies into that spiritual universe which is their proper environment, and in which alone they can attain their perfect development. But because a

man himself is the arbiter of his destiny, and it depends upon himself whether these spiritual tendencies shall be liberated, and because, further, he has lived the natural life which tends more and more to suppress and obliterate them, the call of the Gospel must forever become articulate in a call to repentance, in a demand for a complete reversal of the direction of life.

This call finds us. When we hear it in our soul we know that it is meant for us. It evokes an immediate response from those suppressed spiritual possibilities in our hearts. We go out to it because we know that it is what we need—and what we owe. With greater truth than the writer of Deuteronomy could Paul say, "The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart." If the old Jewish law found its justification in the conscience of the Jew, the Christian law much more finds its justification in the soul of a man. For the law which was justified by the Jew's conscience was an external code; while the ideal which is justified by the response of the human soul is embodied in a human life. It is not only a man's conscience that attests the validity of the Christian appeal, but his entire manhood. He sees, in Jesus, himself as he ought to be: the highest, holiest Manhood; and the strength of the Gospel lies in the irresistible appeal which it makes to all that is deepest in manhood.

The Gospel does not leave it at that. It not only provides an ideal of manhood and reveals the chasm which yawns between the natural and the ideal manhood, but it offers the means whereby the ideal may be realized. It tells the man that if he will break with the flesh, Christ will dwell in his heart—the very Christ Who became incarnate in the perfect manhood of Jesus

will re-incarnate Himself in him, and bring him into conformity with the same image.

It is an appeal to the reverence of manhood which the Gospel brings—it bids a man rise to the highest possibilities latent in him, to unite the suppressed and dwarfed spiritual inner instincts in a new synthesis in Christ, and thereby to inaugurate a new development on a higher plane. It appeals to a better form of an instinct which is very active in our day and which embodies itself in the passion for physical culture, mind power, and so forth. It comes with the promise and the power of a higher—which is the only true—manhood.

But that is not the only appeal it makes. The very nature of the Christian life, because it is a witness and a service, appeals to one particular spot in us where more than anywhere else it is good for us and it is pleasing to us to be appealed to—it appeals to what is chivalrous and heroic in us. It is a commonplace how inviting the prospect of hardship and of danger is to sound manhood. The rock-climber, the Alpine climber, invite danger and hardship. We know the readiness with which men and women have volunteered for posts of danger in plague-stricken areas; and the competition between soldiers to be sent upon arduous and perilous missions. The older evangelism appealed to our fear; the evangelism of the future will appeal, and more effectively, to our courage. William James once wrote an article on "A Moral Equivalent for War." He need not have looked far afield. The enterprises of Christianity in the world are more than an equivalent for war. It was said of Charles Kingsley that he could be heroic without romance; and it is a

heroism which derives but very occasional stimulus from romance that the Christian enterprise calls for in the business of world-redemption. It calls every man to a life of sustained simplicity and self-discipline— itself no light undertaking; but it calls every man also to a life of sacrifice and self-denial and endurance. For its call is to fellowship in the greatest, vastest enterprise in the world—that of winning the world and its kingdoms to the obedience of Christ. It invites every man to a personal share in that wide co-operation by which the world will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

## XX

### THE IMPERIALISM OF THE SPIRIT

**T**HERE are no geographical limits to the Christian propaganda. Because the aim and end of the Gospel in the world is the production of the superman of the New Testament, the missionary enterprise is inherent in the substance and marrow of it.

The time has passed when it was necessary to make an apology for Christian missions—that is, an apology separate from and additional to an apology for Christianity. To justify Christianity is to justify missions. We cannot to-day conceive of a Christianity which is not missionary.

There has been a great deal of criticism of the missionary enterprise in recent years, but a multitude of circumstances have combined to reduce this criticism to its proper dimensions. Much of it was discredited from the start by its origin. The ignorant gibes of superior persons who have “travelled,” the small talk from the smoke-rooms of East-bound steamers, the superficial judgments of people whose acquaintance with the mission field penetrates no farther than the wharves of big seaports—these could be written off as irrelevant and negligible all along. In addition to this, however, there has been a good deal of misgiving upon the part of serious men who doubted whether it was right to obtrude a Western religion

upon the Eastern mind, and whether current missionary methods are adapted to the needs of the non-Christian world. But we have by now abundant evidence that these misgivings are groundless. Doubtless there have been mistakes of policy and practice—and of these not a few. There have been also missionaries who were unworthy of their calling. Nevertheless, when independent first-hand inquiry into the work of foreign missionaries has been made in the light of full knowledge, it has been invariably in favor of the missionary. It is hardly necessary now to cite the evidence. To mention the names of travellers like Mrs. Bishop, of journalists like Dr. Morrison of Peking, and Mr. F. A. McKenzie, of administrators like Sir Andrew Fraser, and to recall their testimony, is adequate demonstration that the missionary enterprise is endorsed by the judgment of men who by reason of the extent and intimacy of their knowledge are entitled to sit in judgment. It may be confidently asserted that the personnel and proceedings of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1911 does establish, for good and all, not only the validity, but the urgency, of the missionary enterprise.

The present time, moreover, presents missionary opportunities unparalleled in history. The opening of the world to missionary enterprise, the unique situation produced by the awakening of China, and that wonderful succession of national renaissances in the East, near and far, the missionary revival of Islam, with its fierce challenge to Christianity in Africa—all these have combined to create a situation which is altogether unique, the potentialities of which are immeasurable, and which, grasped and utilized in a prompt and states-

manlike way, may bring the evangelization of the world in this generation within the scope of practical politics.

The case for Christian missions rests in the last analysis upon the circumstance that Christianity alone provides for the production of the highest type of manhood. Time was when the missionary appeal was enforced by the argument that every day, every hour, so many heathen souls passed into a dark eternity; but we have outgrown—or are, at least, in process of outgrowing—the cogency of that consideration, and are replacing it by the conviction that God, for His own gracious and wise purpose, made all things, and in the fulness of the time sent His Son into the world in order that man might be raised to that pitch of perfectness at which he would be adequate to the fulfilment of that purpose. The missionary enterprise is part of the process of the divine self-fulfilment.

Nevertheless, Christianity can have no claim to be regarded as a universal religion except it demonstrate that it has points of contact with universal humanity; nay, even more than that. The Divine Spirit has not at any time confined its self-manifestation within historical or geographical limits. God has never left Himself wholly without witness anywhere.

He has sent the world through a various moral and spiritual discipline in order to prepare it for His perfect self-manifestation in Jesus Christ. Judaism was a part—the central part—of that discipline; Greek philosophy, Buddhism, Confucianism, were parts of it. Even Islam, though subsequent in date to the coming of Christ, with its fierce protest against polytheism and idolatry, must be regarded as a part of the age-long

historical discipline of the world in preparation for the revelation in Christ. This discipline has in all cases fitted the variations of temperament and outlook which have arisen in the race by historical and geographical circumstances. Just as in Jewry the Law had been the pedagogue to lead to Christ, so also God sent to other peoples other but related words to lead them along the same road. Christianity can only commend itself to the world as a universal religion by demonstrating that the coming of Christ was the natural historical sequel of this discipline; and that the preaching of Christ coheres with and completes those other words which God has uttered to men at many times and in many places; and that it is the inevitable corollary of the historical appearance of Jesus Christ and the perpetuation of the process whereby God's purpose in the world shall be achieved in the making of that ultimate perfected manhood which is the goal of this æon.

What this amounts to, therefore, is a demand for the demonstration of the genuine solidarity of humanity—not merely in the physical region, but also in the primordial mental and spiritual tendencies of universal man. We may, of course, say straightway that the universal distribution of ethical ideas demonstrates this; and while there may be minor variations of moral perspective, the moral sense, taken as a whole, works along similar lines all the world over; which means, that at bottom there is throughout the world a fundamental general agreement as to the meaning and purpose of manhood and life.

It is to-day a scientific commonplace that all the nations of men sprang from the same common stock, and that the variation which we discern among races

is the inevitable result of certain historical and geographical conditions. It is the fashion nowadays to insist upon the influence of physical surroundings upon national character, and this is hardly to be doubted. As men multiplied, the play of physical forces on the one hand, and the action and reaction of tendencies and affinities within the race itself, produced and accentuated those differences of physical character, of intellectual outlook, and of emotional sensibility which mark off the nations from one another. But when we have surveyed the whole range of differences, we come back from the four corners of the earth to that old conclusion of Greek philosophy which Paul recorded in his speech at Athens, and to the same old presupposition in Genesis, that God had made of one all nations of the earth. To-day no one questions the fundamental solidarity of the human race. It is proved by the obvious fact that we can learn each other's language. At bottom, human nature is always and everywhere the same.

But it is not in mental and physical character alone that we may perceive this essential solidarity. The substantial identity of the ethical ideas of the nations proves that they incline naturally to a like view of the ultimate meaning of life. At least the very universality of a moral sense proves the real continuity of the underlying spiritual life. It is impossible to travel beyond the distribution of moral ideas. It may be true that the relative urgency of moral duties varies in different places and at different times; but this is a variation due to difference of moral education. It is an altogether shallow view that, since some things are done openly and commonly in Peking which are taboo

in London, there is a fundamental divergence of ethical norm or of moral ideas. There is a story told of the reading of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans at a street meeting in a Chinese city; and as that awful indictment of the heathen world, written nearly nineteen centuries ago, was being read, a man in the crowd cried out, "He is reading about us." The sense of sin is universal. The feeling of its sinfulness varies with the distribution of moral light.

Some years back an attempt was made to prove that there were nations on earth who possessed no religion. The attempt failed. One may, of course, succeed in demonstrating this thesis by adopting a private and arbitrary definition of religion. But there can be no question as to the universal distribution of religious feeling. It may express itself in crude and rudimentary forms; but there is no place on earth—not even amongst the most degraded savages—where one does not come upon the sense of relationship to some hidden superior powers. That is the essence of religious feeling. Differences in the quality and expression of religious feeling are due to differences of light, differences of education. The religious sense is universal; the purity and elevation of its observances vary with the measure of spiritual light.

The germinal things in humanity the world over are one; and if one would know how true this is, one need only consider the fundamental likeness of children everywhere. On a journey I once undertook I had the opportunity of watching the children of many nationalities—French, Italian, Greek, Turkish, Syrian, Jewish, Arab, Egyptian—and everywhere I saw the same innocent frankness, the same responsiveness to kindness,

even the same kinds of play under local forms. In infancy and childhood there is neither Jew nor Greek, nor barbarian nor Scythian, but one common humanity. In the deeper things of life the rule holds good in maturity and old age. The love-songs and the love-stories of the whole world have an undeniable kinship. Men mourn their dead in far Cathay as we do in England. We joy and sorrow and hope and despair all the world over. There is no difference between us in these things.

And just because of this world-wide solidarity of mankind, and of the pervasive and complete human quality of the Gospel, Christianity has in it the potentiality of a world-wide empire. It is the religion of Man, and therefore the religion for all men. Islam, in spite of its wide distribution, stands only partly upon the universal characters of humanity, and for the rest upon local variations; and so it never has, nor can it ever, become a universal religion. The same is true of Buddhism. It fits the passive tendencies of the Oriental. It has no affinity with the strenuous life of the Western world; while Christianity offers a genuine satisfaction to all the mystical and contemplative elements of the human soul. Christianity appeals not to local characters but to the deep essence of humanity; it makes a universal appeal; more, it appropriates and assimilates to itself all that is true and genuine in the thought and religious life of every nation. In the development of Judaism, Persian and Babylonian elements found a place; and all this was gathered up in the truth of the Gospel. And as the Gospel made its way westward, it appropriated the best of the culture and thought of the Greek world. Stoicism, which is

the high-water mark of the moral philosophy of Greece, found its fulfilment—the satisfaction of its deepest demands—in Christianity. And long after, when the simplicity of Christianity had been obscured by a desiccated scholasticism, its discovery and reassertion in the Reformation were hastened by the Renaissance, which was itself just the rediscovery of the best long-forgotten learning of the ancient world. The spirit of the Renaissance was called Humanism; it was out of this Humanism that the greatest triumphs of Christian art emerged, and it was according to the fitness of things that the Humanists should pave the way for the Reformers.

It has already been pointed out how the Gospel adapts itself to differences of temperament. The strenuous and the contemplative temperaments find their inspiration and their food in Christianity. Thomas à Kempis and John Wesley, Madame Guyon and Catherine Howard, all alike drank at the same well-springs. A difference of temperament is an accidental thing; it does not belong to the substance of our life. The faith of Christ enters into the substance and adapts itself in every man to what is accidental. Differences of temperament, of racial outlook, of emotional sensibility—Christianity develops them all along their true lines. This is the reason why the inevitable tendency of Christianity is towards the preservation of national life. Its empire is not to be a world-wide uniformity. It would be false to all that we know of the tendency of the energy of life, for that makes for variation and diversity. Christianity does not obliterate but confirms nationality; and the unity it aims at is a “unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.”

Japan, in the unthinking eagerness of its passion for empire, made a deliberate attempt to suppress Korean nationality; but Christianity has foiled Japanese statesmanship, and has preserved the Korean people. But while Christianity does thus develop whatever is true and sound in the accidentals of human nature, it nevertheless induces a profound sense of unity. The strenuous Luther loved the pensive Tauler, and fed on him; and any ordinary hymn-book will show how Christians find a meeting-place beneath their differences in the praise of Christ. We sing His praise in the words of Romanists, Lutherans, Anglicans, High Calvinists, Arminians, Baptists, and Presbyterians; of ancient Greeks and Romans, mediæval Germans and modern Frenchmen. It is in Jesus that we realize our profound human unity.

We have endeavored to show in a previous chapter that the humanity of Jesus was a universal humanity: that He belonged to no race but to mankind. Even the Mohammedans cannot do without Him. They tell to-day a wonderful tale of how Issa will one day come again. The Brahma-Somaj and similar movements show how intelligent Hinduism feels that it must make terms with Him. Jesus is the one human being who can find a home anywhere in the world.

It is only in the solidarity of the world-wide humanity that our manhood will come to its true fruition. It will take a Christian world to produce the superman; and it is the business of the Church to make the world Christian, to achieve the supreme manhood through a world bound up in a spiritual unity in Christ. The Church has no meaning unless it be here to establish that world-wide unity in and through

which we shall come to the full-grown man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is to capture the strenuousness of the Teuton, the imagination of the Celt, the vivacity of the Roman races, the religious genius of the Semitic peoples, the mysticism and passivity of the Hindu, the filial piety of the Chinaman, the ambition of the Japanese, and lay them all under tribute to the purpose of God.

This is an enterprise "worthy a man's endeavor," and an enterprise the urgency of which is multiplied beyond computation in our own day. Were it China alone that had awakened from the torpor of ages in these latter days, we should have before us in its evangelization a task involving such tremendous issues for the world that it would behove us to move heaven and earth to capture it for Christ. One man in five of the population of the whole world is a Chinaman. The newly opened eyes of old China are discovering the possibilities of a great future; and in its bewilderment it is looking to the West for the guiding light. What is the West going to give to China? Will it be the sterilizing blight of a greedy materialism, the mother of militarism, with all that this contains of menace to the future welfare of the world? Or will it be the gift of spiritual idealism and of moral energy which will lead that ancient race with its vast, almost unexplored, resources and its enormous potentialities into a place of leadership in the things that make a true manhood? These questions are relevant for the other nations of the Orient also. In Africa the menace of Islam grows daily. From the whole world comes the same challenge to the Christian Church.

The Church will have less excuse to-day than ever

it had for failing to accept the challenge. The Edinburgh Missionary Conference has changed the whole aspect of the problem. We are evolving a science of missions; we know as we never did before the extent and the character of the world's need; we never had such opportunities of going forth to satisfy the need. What we need to-day is a resurgence of the heroic daring temper of the apostolic age. There was a little Christian community then which dared to look with calm, aspiring eyes abroad over the whole wild welter of the Western world, and to dream the impossible dream of capturing it all for the empire of Christ, and then dared to set out to make the dream come true. That was at Antioch; and there issued from it the first missionary venture. In the mind of one of the missionaries, Paul, the dream became a passion, and he pursued it with statesmanship and enthusiasm until the name of Christ was blazed abroad even to the "regions beyond." Sir W. M. Ramsay, in his illuminating work upon Paul, shows how his missionary work was carried out on a definite plan. He planned his journeys, as it were, with a map of the Roman Empire before him, and it is not perilous to conjecture that his ideal was to use the machinery of the empire to found a church co-extensive with the empire. Paul thought "imperially"; but the shrinkage of the world through improved means of intercommunication has made the conquest of the world for Christ to-day a far less ambitious adventure than the winning of an empire was to Paul. It was said in the previous chapter that the appeal of the new evangelism would be to the heroism and the chivalry of men; and here is an enterprise which will need all the courage and the compassion

that the Church can evoke. Such an opportunity as offers itself to it to-day will not return for many a decade. It is the Church's hour of trial. Well might the Edinburgh Missionary Conference say in the address to the Christian churches already referred to, that God is calling us "to a new order of life of a more arduous and self-sacrificing nature than the old"; and if the Church fail in this hour, it must mean that it will become a lifeless shell, and that Christ will find for Himself elsewhere a home, and fashion for Himself another instrument, another true Church that is adequate to the need and the challenge of the world.

## XXI

### SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

**T**HE impulse that is adequate to the business of Christianizing the world is also the impulse—and the only impulse—which is sufficient for the solution of the problems which vex us at home; and, indeed, the very presence of our peculiar domestic troubles is one of the greatest hindrances to the evangelization of the world. When foreign observers see the acres of squalid poverty which exist in all our populous centres, they argue that if this is all we can show, after centuries of Christianity, our Christianity is not quite good enough for them. It is inherent in a true imperialism of the Spirit that it will begin in Jerusalem, and, so far as it may, remove the reproach that it has been a failure in Jerusalem.

That the Church has something to say in respect of obviously necessary social and economic readjustments in these islands is beyond question. It is hardly to be argued that one reason why the Gospel makes so little headway in England is that the cruel stringency of the economic conditions which govern the life of large masses of our population makes it practically impossible for the Gospel to find foothold among them. There is a well-known witty saying to the effect that no man was ever saved with his feet cold; and it is undoubtedly true that physical distress or discomfort

does disable a man from giving a fair hearing to the claims of Christ. We all know how acute physical pain makes rank materialists of us, and shuts up all the avenues by means of which spiritual impressions might reach us. It is said that the converts to Christianity in Judea in times of famine are smaller in number than in times of comparative plenty. A writer in "East and West" \* reports a conversation in which a native woman was asked whether she could account for this; and her answer virtually was that while their children were dying of hunger and they were themselves starving they had no heart to think of these things. I think that, while exceptions should be made of individuals who have heard and obeyed the call of Christ despite the most cruel adverse physical circumstances, it is, nevertheless, true that a measure of security and ease of life is productive of, if not actually necessary to, fair hearing and undistracted thought concerning the claims of God; and this is in itself adequate reason and justification for the Church's concern for social reform and economic readjustment.

I think, indeed, that this reason may be further reinforced by a related consideration. Even if one does get so far as kindling a spark of spiritual life under the conditions that prevail in the slum, it is hard put to it to keep up a semblance of life. When our Lord was here on earth, He had to do with people living in the neighborhood of the poverty line, who were in a state of chronic anxiety concerning the necessities of their daily life. The exactions of tax-farmers, the extortion of the ecclesiastical authorities, and other circumstances made for a great precariousness in the

\* Volume IV. Art. "Mass Movements to Christ in India."

supply of common daily needs; and these people had been crushed down by generations of stringent economic and political conditions into a mute and limp despair. They had no heart left in them. He knew that He could make nothing of people in that condition. It is the same problem that meets us in the London slum to-day—men who by the sheer pressure of depressing conditions have become incapable of action, of initiative, of decision, who live in a vicious circle of dark, hopeless days, and have not the pluck and heart to extricate themselves. The problem of the London slum is often not so much poverty as a kind of chronic incurable despair, a loss of heart, a paralysis of the will—a hopelessness which has become sheer helplessness. That was Jesus' problem among the common folk of His day—a social and personal depression which put men out of action in the economic struggle and made them incapable of responding to spiritual appeals.

But there is a profound difference between the conditions that Jesus faced and those which challenge us—namely, the enormously increased complexity of the modern situation. After all, in the simple social organization of our Lord's day there was enough room left for a man to stand fighting his own battle if only he could be inoculated with the pluck and the will to do so. There were avenues of escape; there were loopholes in the social economy through which a man with grit might pass into self-respect and independence, even to wealth, at least to ease and sufficiency of life. But in a complex civilization like ours the meshes are much finer and the opportunities of the individual to fight for recovery and independence are much fewer. Even though you inoculate strength and courage into a man,

he may yet find himself beaten in the struggle for sufficiency and respectability of life. There are a few who do win through; but one has known men delivered from the toils of drunkenness who have made a brave fight to extricate themselves from the tangle of poverty and depression into which they have fallen, yet who have been foiled again and again by scarcity of work, by their own lack of a definite trade, by their inability to meet the increased financial demands of living in a more wholesome neighborhood, and other related circumstances. So the problem of the Church to-day, which was the problem of Jesus in His day, is complicated by this further factor—this necessity for social and economic readjustments which will at least make possible a moderate sufficiency and security of the means of independent and self-respecting life. We must secure such measure of social reorganization as will make it possible for the man who has the grit and the will to do it, to recover a place as a respectable member of society, to extricate himself from the meshes of that social maladjustment which is responsible for the misery and the squalor and the poverty and the slumdom of the great city.

But we have not in saying so much exhausted the grounds of the Church's legitimate concern for social reform. The very fact that the Church stands for a human ideal implies that it stands also for a social ideal. No one does indeed deny that; but there are those who hold that the social ideal can only be realized indirectly through the regeneration of individuals. That, however, is only half the truth. The regenerated individual, no doubt, does modify his social environment; but we cannot possibly achieve a transformed

society without transforming the influences which produce the modern social chaos. No doubt the ideal commonwealth will be a commonwealth of ideal men; but one can no more have ideal men without an ideal commonwealth than an ideal commonwealth without ideal men. The foundations of society must be changed *pari passu* with the character of the individual. Social regeneration must go hand in hand with personal regeneration. The Church has not only a message for the individual; it has also something to say to the whole society in which the individual lives. It is underestimating the demoralizing influence of evil and unjust external conditions to imagine otherwise.

No one who reads the Scriptures understandingly can fail to realize how quick the social consciousness of their outstanding figures was. In Israel our very knowledge of social conditions arises from the denunciation by the prophets of social abuses and oppression. Drunkenness, land-grabbing, corners in food, unjust weights and measures—these and many more things existed in Israel, and we know how the prophets spoke of them. It is true that in the New Testament there is less denunciation of such abuses. But the sufficient reason for this lay in the fact that there was little use in denouncing oppression to those who were suffering oppression. The Gospel was preached to the poor, and brought life and faith and hope back to hearts out of which these things had been crushed by political oppression and ecclesiastical tyranny. What Jesus aimed first of all at doing was to induce self-respect and self-confidence in the oppressed and heavy-laden populace of Palestine; and He did this to such real purpose that out of that hopeless mass He

raised men who defied the world. His mission was to redeem and re-create manhood; and that is admittedly the first step always in the solution of any human problem. The clear social implicates of His teaching may be gathered from the fact that the first community of disciples, already held together by a common spiritual bond, endeavored to strengthen their organization by giving it an economic basis. The attempt was a failure. Isolated communisms from the very nature of things must fail, as they have always done. And in any case, persecution dissolved the little Jerusalem community with deadly effect. But this did not prevent the Church from realizing and endeavoring to discharge its social obligations. Its organization of philanthropy became very wide and effective; so much so, indeed, that one of the Roman emperors set up a rival relief agency, so that the Romans should not be put to shame by the Christians. It is from the early Christian Church that we have inherited the hospital and orphanage, and though the last word has yet to be spoken on hospital and orphanage policy and management, yet they have served mankind with splendid and signal distinction. If we come down to more recent times, we have the spectacle of the Church leading the State in the matter of social reform. Our English Poor Law is a very poor thing, and wants that reform which we are all hoping it may soon have. But it embodies the principle that it is the duty of the State as a collective body to care for its helpless poor; and the State learnt that lesson from the Church. Elementary education was first of all taken up by the Church, and the Church has passed it on to the State. Other instances might be given; but these are sufficient to show

that the Church has exercised a vast social reaction during its history.

The Church has of late years been greatly criticised because it has ceased to exercise any perceptible influence upon social progress, and the criticism is not without much justification. But there are sufficient explanations of this inactivity, even if they do not excuse it. The reaction from the latitudinarian lethargy of the early seventeenth century was one of the aftermaths of the Protestant Reformation. There, it was the rights of the individual in the sphere of religion and the conscience that were established; and the individualistic principle was in the ascendant, giving its color to men's religious conceptions, and finally receiving its political expression in the French Revolution. The swing of the historical pendulum is exceedingly slow, and it was not until a half-century after the French Revolution that both in Church and State in England the individualistic emphasis began to be balanced by a growing social conscience. But during this period British industry had been conducted on a basis of unqualified individualism, with the result that a great mass of poverty and distress had been created. Good men thought that all this might be adequately dealt with by means of philanthropic activity; but it could not. In spite of the great increase of philanthropic agencies, there are still men, women, and children dying of starvation in our midst. But the historical pendulum has swung so far by to-day that there is no church in this country, I believe, which has not its society or guild for social service and the study of social problems. In America there is, under the auspices of the Home Mission Committee of the Presby-

terian Church, what is called a Department of Church and Labor. The aim of this institution is to interpret working men to the Church and the Church to working men; and it endeavors to spread information upon social problems among its own members and to create a real sympathy between Christian leaders and the leaders of social reform; at the same time it seeks to present the Church and its mission in the true light to those who are outside it and misunderstand it. I do not think that there is any doubt at all that the Church to-day is recovering its social conscience, if not in a very extensive fashion as yet, nevertheless in a very real and intelligent and increasing way.

It should be said here that the Church, whatsoever its passion for social progress may be, has no right, except under very exceptional circumstances, to take political action—that is, in a party sense. Whenever the Church has obtruded itself into the political arena as a partisan, it has always hurt itself, and its influence has not been good. Here we are not so much independent of political parties as above them. Our main business is to make our common social conscience as Christian men and women articulate and clear; to create and foster a public opinion in its favor, and insist upon its recognition in the organization of our social life on every side. Our great and immediate need is to do some clear thinking upon the constituent elements of this social conscience so that we may know what we are about.

Let us take one instance. We recognize it as a Christian duty to relieve poverty. We have done so through the ages; and it is right that we should. And we have and shall have the poor with us always. There

will always—or at any rate for a long time—be a proportion of people whose poverty is the legitimate subject of Christian charity. But it is our duty to help to limit this proportion to the lowest possible dimensions. That is to say, because we conceive it our duty to relieve poverty, logically it is our duty also to remove the causes of poverty. A doctor is not merely content with relieving pain. He tries to remove the causes of pain. It is the reasonable thing to do. So that our function in relation to poverty extends not merely to the charity which relieves it, but also to an inquiry into the causes of poverty, and the demand that, where those causes are remediable or removable, that remedy or removal shall be resorted to.

With the ways and means whereby this end can best be attained the Church has only a secondary concern. That is a question for political scientists, and economists. What the Church is first of all concerned with is to apply the test of its own ethical principles to the conditions and circumstances out of which this removable poverty arises, and demand that they shall be reformed and readjusted conformably with those principles; to create and evoke a body of enlightened public opinion in favor of this amelioration that will compel politician and economist to set up the necessary machinery to secure it.

Now, as we have seen, there can be no doubt that the Church is moving with increasing momentum in this direction, and to a great extent is beginning to outlive the suspicion that its main concern was to defend and preserve the existing conditions. But it is hardly to be asserted yet that the Church has discovered or uttered the entire word which it is its right and re-

sponsibility to utter in this connection. It is still, to a great extent, in the bondage of vested interests, and is fearful of stating in clear, round, plain terms the primacy of humanity over property. But it will overcome this timidity as there comes to it a renewed sense of its distinct mission in the world. It will have to pay the price of plain utterance; it will alienate a large proportion of the wealthier classes. It may find it—and probably will find it—its duty to impugn frankly and without qualification the basis of our social organization, and declare that the industrial and commercial individualism which has created present conditions is a contradiction and a violation of Christian principle and of the law of God. Not that it will embrace economic socialism—for an economic socialism may be as far removed from its ideal as an economic individualism. Socialism may be and frequently is as materialistic as individualism. The controversy between socialism and individualism may be no more than the conflict of rival theories of the distribution of wealth—a conflict of personal individualism and class individualism. Both alike are the denial of the fundamental Christian ethic. Economics is a division of the science of human relationships, a department of ethics; and the character of economic doctrine will be first determined by its background of ethical postulates. If these ethical postulates are consistent with the spiritual mission of the Church, if they embody the ethical standpoint of Christianity, then the Church has no more to say to the economic doctrines which may be formulated nor even to the differences of opinion which may arise concerning them. But if these ethical postulates are those of materialism, then the Church can give no quarter to

the doctrines which may be evolved nor to the schools of economic thought which may arise out of different views concerning them. What the Church is concerned with is that the economic doctrines which are accepted as authoritative should be consistent with that view of humanity and human development for which it stands.

This is indeed the way in which it should regard all the questions which are entailed in the conduct of a nation's affairs. The implicit assumption of politics is that there is somewhere an ideal commonwealth; and our political conduct, our political opinions, will be determined by the kind of character we may ascribe to this ideal commonwealth. When we differ about the character of the ideal commonwealth, we shall differ also in political opinion and political conduct. But while we may agree about the ideal commonwealth, the kind of nation that we want to make, we may differ about the way of realizing it; and so we shall differ again in our political opinions and our political conduct. What we all agree about is that we want our commonwealth to be the best possible; but beyond that we differ endlessly.

I think that a good deal of our trouble in this direction arises from the fact that we do not carry our thinking far enough back. We accept the traditional political distinctions as fundamental things, as a constant variable; and I am perfectly sure that a man who will carry his thinking far enough back will sit thereafter far more loosely to his existing partisanship than he did before. The first necessity in political reconstruction is to settle in our minds what the ideal commonwealth really is. Until we have fixed that we

shall go on fighting in the dark. I do not say that we are to formulate a Utopia in which every detail is already planned and fixed, but we must reach a definite conception of the general character of the national life which we want to build up.

It is at this point that the Church's point of view comes in. For, broadly speaking, there are just two kinds of political ideal—materialistic and spiritual. The one will regard the end of national life in terms of power; the other in terms of manhood. The imperialism of the one will be commercial; of the other, humanitarian. The one will seek territorial expansion for the sake of what it can get out of it; the other, for the sake of what it can do for it. The one counts the wealth of the nation in its reserves of gold; the other, in its resources of manhood. The one regards the end of national life as the making of the money and the security of property; the other, as the making of men and the safeguarding of manhood. Now, let it be at once said that we must have reserves of gold as well as resources of manhood. The question is, which is to come first—which is to be the dominating and controlling interest? I do not hesitate to say that all the political parties of this country and of the West generally put the wrong thing first. Though some of us may ostensibly put manhood in the forefront, all it comes to is a demand for the reorganization of the resources of wealth so as to raise the general average of material comfort. We are all frankly political materialists—with possibly here and there a few accessory ideals of a more spiritual sort tacked on. We all virtually want the same kind of commonwealth, and it is the wrong kind.

I know, of course, the answer that will be proposed to this view. It will be said that a nation, like a man, must live before it can live well. It is true that a man must begin to live in order to live well, but he can only keep on living by living well. It is the same with nations. They must exist before they can exist for the right ends, but they will not exist for long unless they do exist for the right ends. We have national existence. The question is, How are we to preserve and develop it? Is it by spending our chief energies upon material ends? Is it by organizing our life so as to increase our stock of material wealth? The nation which deliberately does that is signing its own death-warrant. It is staking its life upon a perishable and transitory thing. That is what the great empires of history staked their lives upon, and they have disappeared. So long as we allow the conduct of our affairs to be dominated by commercial, or territorial, or any other kind of material ambition, we stand in jeopardy every hour.

And more than this: so long as our interest in manhood works out in no more than a demand for a more even distribution of wealth in order to raise the general average of comfort, we are still off the main track. It is a good thing, no doubt, to secure this; but it is a side issue. We are not out in order to make a nation of healthy and vigorous human animals, though we should have that in view as one of our by-products. If that be all that we are seeking, we merely conceive of man as having a certain economic value; and the healthier and stronger he is, the more valuable he is from an economic standpoint. The tendency of our time is even worse than this; the value that we attach

to the improvement of physical conditions is that it makes a man a more efficient fighting machine. But has a man no other value than an economic or a fighting value? Is he no more than that? The aim of national life is the making of manhood, of real manhood, which is a spiritual manhood, a moral manhood; and this is the thing which should dominate our political criticism and our political action. We want to make a manhood which will express itself and find its satisfactions, not in materialistic achievements, but in the immortality of a noble literature, a worthy art, in high social conduct, and in an exalted national character, and we must be prepared to subordinate everything to that—yes, and to sacrifice some things altogether to it. What we want is, not an empire that girdles the earth in order to provide us with an expanding market, but an empire which shall enable us to produce a higher type of manhood in the world. We need to transfigure our political aims by baptizing them in a spiritual idealism; for this is the only way of securing political opinions and political conduct which will make for the stability and permanence and growth of a true national life. We can only secure the future of England by throwing overboard our present bread-and-butter politics and approaching the problems of our national life with the spiritual mind, which is the mind of Christ. We require a new spirit in our politics—this spiritual idealism; and when we have achieved that, the acrimony and bitterness which disfigure our political controversies will be lost in the sense that beneath all our differences of opinion and conduct we are seeking a common aim—that we are involved, not in a mere partisan joust, but in the most

fruitful of all co-operation, the hearty conflict of opinions sincerely held.

It is, therefore, the business of the Church to stand over above the conflict of political doctrines and to insist without compromise upon imposing its own ideals upon them. When the Church or any part of it makes itself a partisan of any political group, it is lowering its flag and coming down from its proper place. So long as our politics and economics are dominated by materialistic views of life and ways of thought, the Church must not merely stand aloof, but must come into the arena and fight them all, giving them no quarter. If need be, it must carry the spiritual banner into the very legislatures. The doctrine that national existence depends upon physical force may be true in the present state of the world; but that is no reason why the Church should acquiesce in it. History should have taught us by now how utterly perishable is the empire which rests upon force; but we are very loth to learn the lesson, and it is part of the mission of the Church in the world to maintain a continuous protest against this doctrine, to declare that it is true to-day as it was of old that nations live, "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord," and to seek to inoculate the nation with this spirit. In the inner life of the nation it will insist that all reform shall be regarded as preliminary to the development of the spiritual life. It will bless Old Age Pensions, Insurance schemes against invalidity and unemployment, not merely because they add security and ease and comfort to the lives of large multitudes of men, not merely because they indicate a spirit of collective philanthropy in the State, but because by bringing security and larger ease

of life they deliver men from those distractions which prevent them from giving ear to the quickening Word of God, and from those physical limitations which hinder their spiritual development, and because, therefore, they help in the process of evolving the real superman and all his works, the ascending effort of art and love, and the enlarging peace and joy of life.

## THE SPIRITUAL MIND AT WORK

**T**HE present generation would owe an immeasurable debt to Rudolf Eucken were it only for the fact that he has recalled it to its duty to look behind the philosophies and the fashions of thought which it has inherited and which it is still evolving, and to inquire concerning their origin—as it were to turn their own methods upon themselves and to examine them in their own light.

What is philosophy? It is simply the attempt of the mind to answer certain primitive and unchanging questions. When man found himself in the world, there were some questions which immediately challenged him. What was he? What was the world he found around him? What is the meaning of it, of himself? Is there anything beyond what he can see and feel? This whole scheme of things—what does it signify? Philosophy arose out of the endeavor to answer these questions. The first philosopher answered them in one way. Then another came along and said that the first philosopher's answer was wrong—that he had gone about the matter in the wrong way. Then a third came and criticised the other two, and propounded his own answer. It was only the answers that differed. Beneath all the fashions of thinking, and the differences of answer, there was some-

thing which kept on asking the same old questions. And it is asking them still, and philosophy is still trying to discover the answer. Let me point out in passing that what appears on the outside to be the conflict of schools of thought is really not a conflict, but a succession of minds engaged in the same pursuit, seeking to answer the same questions. The history of philosophy is not the history of age-long controversy. It is the history—when we read it deeply enough—of age-long co-operation. Not a fruitless co-operation in some senses, but fruitless so far as the main quest is concerned. For there are to-day being propounded as many different kinds of answers as there ever were. There are as many schools of philosophy as at any previous period of history. So far as philosophy is concerned, the critic is entitled to say that we are as far away from the final answer to our questioning as we ever were.

Which means that we must give up our hope, if ever we cherished it, that philosophy will solve our problems and furnish us with that synthesis which we require. And if philosophy fails, still more must physical science fail. For, whatever discoveries science may yet make, it can do no more than furnish a certain number of the additional data; and it must pass on the business of drawing the ultimate inferences to the philosopher. As a matter of fact, science has made the task of the philosopher much more difficult. It has made it infinitely more complicated; it presented the philosopher, it is true, with a theory of evolution, but that only multiplied and accentuated the challenge and left the philosopher as far away as ever from a way out of the last puzzling stages of his labyrinth.

He guessed more vigorously for a time—that was all. He certainly guessed no more successfully so far as the deep old ultimate questions are concerned. Indeed, Bergson's subtle and remorseless analysis is showing how utterly inadequate all mechanistic and finalistic explanations are, even of phenomena that lie much nearer home to the scientific mind than the great ultimate problems.

Neither speculative nor scientific thought promises us any relief. Does it not appear, then, that they give way by default to the spiritual interpretation of things—to that point of view which we gain when we permit that something within us which enshrines our ultimate problem, and from which these age-long questions start, to become something more than a topic for thinking—to become, that is, our very life? For that something is continuous with the universal spirit, suppressed and cramped by the environment of flesh, but capable of emancipation and of becoming our real self-hood. What we want is, not a new kind of thought that shall start us on a new way of life, but a new way of life which shall make us capable of a new kind of thought. We want, that is, a new angle for our thinking, and that can only come through the triumphant resurgence in us of a genuine spiritual life, through the emancipation of that germinal spirituality which we all possess and its enthronement over the whole kingdom of life.

The spiritual life brings with it the spiritual mind, or, as Paul calls it, the mind of Christ; and it is clear, from what Paul says in 1 Corinthians, that he regards it as the counterpart in us of the mind of God. The spiritual point of view which comes to us with the

spiritual life is the divine and therefore the ultimate point of view. It gives a new angle for our thinking, a new standard of criticism, a new method of analysis and construction. As we have already seen, it furnishes a distinctive mode of approach to our political and social problems; it does the same thing in respect of literature, art, music, education, and the whole range of our intellectual and æsthetic activities. There is little, as we have seen, that our own time is more urgently in need of than this single sustained point of view in all the departments of life. Mr. Alfred Noyes (whose poems more than those of any recent poet, except perhaps Francis Thompson, reflect in a thoroughgoing way the spiritual mind) in a recent article has some searching things to say upon this point:—

“The old completeness of view, the old single-hearted synthesis which saw the complex world in its essential unity, saw it steadily and saw it whole, man as a soul and a body, life and death as a march to immortality, and the universe as a miracle with a single meaning, all that white light of vision has been broken up into a thousand prismatic and shifting reflections. We are in danger of losing the white light, not because it is no longer there, but because the age has grown so vast that we cannot co-ordinate its multifarious and multi-colored rays. Analysis has gone so far that we are in danger of intellectual disintegration. It is time to make some synthesis, or we shall find ourselves wandering through a world without meaning.”\*

It is not difficult to trace the origin of this con-

\* *Fortnightly Review*, July, 1911.

fusion. It is to be discovered in the development of scientific thought and the breaking up of the old traditional syntheses—for which science has been powerless to provide substitutes. It is not, of course, on the scientific side alone that this breaking away from the traditional views has taken place; but the scientific revolt has been taken as a justification for breaking away on the other sides as well; and in consequence we are involved to-day in an individualism and an anarchy of thought which makes the kingdom of the intellect a vast wilderness. It is probably true that this has been inevitable; but it is also true that it cannot be allowed to continue. Intellectual disintegration means, in the long run, the disintegration of the nation, the dissolution of civilization: for intellectual disintegration is a symptom of a lost vision, and where there is no vision the people perish. The mind must be recalled to the base, and it must be made impossible for it to embark on independent and eccentric adventures, without reference to a steady, sustained ideal. The only way in which this can be done is to preach and to accept and to insist upon a spiritual idealism which shall be pervasive and persuasive enough to lead all life into its obedience. But before this can be done we must frankly get back to that primordial thing which underlies all our intellectual processes, which is deeper than all the schemes and all the philosophies, to the spiritual core of life, and find in that a new principle of synthesis and unification, a new base for our thinking, a new key for our music, and a new spirit for our art.

It may not be possible to define in an abstract way the modes of analysis and criticism by which the

spiritual mind operates; but we may, I think, see clearly enough what they are when they are at work. Take *Literature*, for instance. The first question of the spiritual mind concerning a given piece of literature will be, What is its net tendency? It will lay on one side for the moment considerations of style, artistic effectiveness, and the other subordinate factors in literature. It will regard a book as having a certain definite kind of reaction, and it will judge the value of its style and other accessories by their comparative effectiveness in helping or hindering this distinctive reaction. It will then inquire what the reaction is—is it true or false, good or evil? Is it a stimulus to a better mode of life, or is it merely an endeavor to gratify the baser cravings of the natural man? Does it leave a man just where he was, only more confirmed in his condition, or does it convey to him another ideal of life and make articulate a quickening Word? It does not of necessity mean that a book must have a definitely didactic purpose. It is enough if the book reflects and suggests some part of the ultimate total truth of life. It need have no stated moral, but it should have a definite spiritual reaction.

Therefore, a spiritual idealism will condemn all kinds of descriptive realism which endeavors to point the thing as it sees it without reference to the broad tendencies and the ultimate goal of life. There is a true realism which deals with the things of the gutter but does not forget the heaven above. The realism which does not rise out of the gutter is a constructive lie, because it deliberately obscures the greater part of the truth. The spiritual point of view does not make a man prudish or squeamish, but it enables him to look

at the unsavory things of life without declining to cynicism, and though he knows that the gutter is there, he knows that the gutter is not the last word upon the sum of things. What it does ask of literature is that it should have a vision: that it should be lit up by the gleam, and that its impact upon men should induce a tendency in them to go in the same direction. It demands that the literary adventure, whatever the country it proposes to traverse, whatsoever vehicle it proposes to use for the journey, verse or prose, shall start from a spiritual base—shall start, that is, from the inmost core of life and not from some arbitrary point on its fringe, and that it shall keep all the way in touch with the base. It requires that all literature shall be informed with a single spirit, that it shall be fully charged throughout with the mind of Christ, and that it shall steadily back on to the spiritual and the ultimate.

The criticism of the spiritual idealist will for this reason condemn all "art for art's sake." It cannot ascribe any significance to *Art* save only as art does make articulate some facet of eternal truth, save only as it conveys to men the challenge of the spiritual. The realistic trivialities of a Meissonier it will regard as sheer irrelevancies, and it will even demand that art which is simply decorative shall have a spiritual reaction. Its criticism of a new school will not primarily be of its idiom, its devices, the machinery by which it will produce its characteristic effects, but a criticism of the effect. This does not mean that all art should be allegorical any more than it means that all literature should be didactic; but it does mean that it should add some true tints to the sky of life.

It turns away from the twisted paganism of the Post-Impressionists with resentment and weariness, and finds itself more at home in the blue skies and the idyllic simplicity of a Corot. Not, indeed, that it turns its face away from all but blue skies. Its demand is not for a certain kind of subject, but for a certain kind of spirit in the treatment of the subject, even though the subject be found in the gutter. It requires that art, like literature, shall have a definite spiritual reaction.

But this presupposes that both literature and art should have a spiritual origin and a spiritual driving force, for men do not gather figs from thistles. The natural man cannot produce, any more than he can judge, spiritual things. It is true that all literature and art which are permanently vital had a spiritual origin; for the mark of a spiritual origin and the spiritual energy in literature and art is a certain creative quality. That free creative energy which Bergson discerns in nature is for ever producing new things, and the same energy in art and literature does the same thing. It creates new things out of old materials, but it adds something to them which binds them in a new, living synthesis. Shakespeare could take an old story and touch it with the alchemy of a spiritual energy and re-create it into a new, living thing. Indeed, Shakespeare may be taken as the outstanding demonstration of this thesis. For though we may not ascribe equal value to his various writings, yet in most of them it is possible to trace the spiritual impulse, and in the best it expresses itself as a creative energy of the highest order. Shakespeare's insistence "upon the divinity of forgiveness, of perpetual mercy,

of constant patience, of everlasting gentleness, the stainless purity of thought and motive, the clear-sighted perception of a soul of goodness in things evil, the unfailing sense of the equal providence of justice, the royalty of witness to sovereign truth,"\* proves him to have been a man with a true pervasive vision, whose pen moved at the impulse of a deep spiritual apprehension of this scheme of things. The last thing one would say of Shakespeare is that he had a reasoned philosophy of life; but "he saw life steadily and he saw it whole"—saw it, that is, from a spiritual point of view, and interpreted it with a spiritual mind. From the day of the Greek dramatists to this, the men who stand out in art and letters as masters and prophets are men in whom there was a spiritual energy which created living and abiding things. That great resurgence of spiritual life which we call the Renaissance was a creative period; it was the period that produced Dante, Petrarch, and Langland in literature; Giotto, Cimabue, Fra Angelico, Van Eyck, Michelangelo, Titian, Raphael, Correggio, and Da Vinci in art; and there is not one of these whose spiritual energy does not still remain and make itself articulate in the works which he has bequeathed to us. The world is waiting for another irruption of spiritual life which will bring another creative period into its literary and artistic life, and deliver us from the confused triviality of an age without vision.

There are few departments of our life in which the need of the spiritual point of view is so pressing as in *Education*. It is true that we are making great advance, and are evolving some kind of educational ideal.

\* Stubbs, "The Christ of English Poetry," p. 126.

For a long time education had little more behind it than the conviction that ignorance is a bad thing, and that some measure of knowledge was necessary in order to give a man a fair chance in life. But little by little we have come to see that, if we are going to educate at all, we should educate sufficiently to make a man a good citizen. This is, of course, no new thing in the world. Vittorino, the famous schoolmaster of Padua (A.D. 1420), and Alberti, another pedagogue of the same period, both alike in the succession of the Renaissance, held the view that the aim of education was a much greater thing than the communication of knowledge. "Not every man," said Vittorino, "is called to be a lawyer, a physician, a philosopher, to live in the public eye, nor has everyone outstanding gifts of natural capacity, but all of us are created for the life of social duty, all are responsible for the personal influence that goes forth from us." No education was adequate, he held, which did not start from this assumption. We have in theory reached that point. Indeed, we may claim to have gone beyond it. In the introduction to the 1904 Code of the Board of Education these passages occur:—

"And though their opportunities are but brief, the teachers can yet do much to lay the foundations of conduct. They can endeavor, by example and influence, aided by the sense of discipline which should pervade the school, to implant in the children habits of industry, self-control, and courageous perseverance in the face of difficulties; they can teach them to reverence what is noble, to be ready for self-sacrifice, and to strive their utmost after purity and truth; they can foster a strong respect for duty, and that consideration

and respect for others which must be the foundation of unselfishness and the true basis of all good manners; while the corporate life of the school, especially in the playground, should develop that instinct for fair play and for loyalty to one another which is the germ of a wider sense of honor in later life.

“In all these endeavors the school should enlist, as far as possible, the interest and co-operation of the parents and the home in a united effort to enable the children not merely to reach their full development as individuals, but also to become upright and useful members of the community in which they live, and worthy sons and daughters of the country to which they belong.”

All this, of course, is excellent so far as it goes, but it does not explicitly recognize the spiritual ground of all adequate moral conduct, and does not therefore provide directly for the awakening and the development of the spiritual life. That is the primary and fundamental necessity of such education as the 1904 Code desiderates; and in view of the unique and critical quality of the adolescent period at the time when the spiritual life is most easily and readily emancipated, it is a grave defect in the existing educational policy that no stress is laid upon the opportunity which the teacher has in that period of achieving that without which all education is little more than a superficial veneer. It is, indeed, true that sectarian bitterness in this country prevents educationists from looking at this aspect of the problem with the frankness and thoroughness which it requires. As it is, they have to steer their way very gingerly through the religious factiousness which surrounds the problem of education. So long as sec-

tarian passion is allowed to obtrude itself upon education, so long must our educational methods fall short of achieving the one thing which would give to education its full value. The ecclesiastical rivalries which compel the process of education to stop just as it reaches its vital point are suicidal to the rivals themselves. For it is beyond question that while distinctive denominational teaching may produce an affinity to a particular denomination, it cannot and never does produce a vital relation between the individual and the Church. The only thing that can kindle a spiritual life is the communication of a spirit; and it is this very spirit that sectarian rivalry chokes up. There are hundreds of teachers in the country from whom a spiritual impulse escapes, despite the limitations which are placed upon them; but education cannot generally achieve the awakening of the spiritual life until the sectaries learn that their peculiar brand of piety has no monopoly of spiritual truth, and that spiritual power inheres only in the spiritual life, of which credal statements are at best only partial and provisional interpretations. Education should be the function of persons with a vision; and it should not be required of them that they should hide their vision under a bushel because they look at it at a different angle from people who have an ecclesiastical axe to grind.

But, quite apart from this, we have not yet outgrown a utilitarian conception of education. Our emphasis upon technical education is all to the good so long as we keep it in the proper place; but we are too apt to look upon it as a kind of finishing process by means of which we turn out individuals capable of earning their own bread and butter. Our education

throughout should reflect a conception of life in which the bread and butter problem is strictly subordinate. It is certain that no scheme of elementary education can ever breed a race of artists or *littérateurs*; but it can at least suggest and communicate a view of life that shall find its satisfaction and realization in the ready and willing discharge of social responsibilities, and find its joy and its gladness in contributing to the joy and gladness of others. Nay, it can do more than that—it can communicate a life which will freely and spontaneously express itself in that public spirit and selfless service which constitute the very essence of good citizenship. If we could only impose the spiritual point of view with sufficient strength upon the average man, he would rise up in his wrath and sweep away the blind sectaries whose quarrels block the way, and would emancipate education so that it may follow out freely that spiritual impulse which is implicit in it, and which, as the 1904 Code quite clearly shows, is struggling to emerge into freedom.

## XXIII

### THE PERFECT LAW—THE LAW OF LIBERTY

**I**T is one of the great tragedies of scholarship that Lord Acton never wrote his "History of Liberty," for this is the one and only adequate standpoint for an historical survey which is more than a mere chronicle of events, and which aims at a truly scientific interpretation of the facts. The craving for liberty has made more effectual history than any other human tendency, and historical movements may be regarded as successive stages in the assertion of the perfect law, the law of liberty.

But what is liberty? In our ordinary daily thought we regard it as the antithesis of bondage, as the absence of restriction, as something which is contingent on certain external conditions. But a moment's thinking is sufficient to show that this is not an adequate definition of liberty. Freed slaves have been known to elect to live on under the same conditions as they lived under before their liberation; and we know as a matter of fact that it is an absolute impossibility to live independently of all external restrictions. Liberty is not the absence of restrictions; it is the power to choose under what restrictions we will live. Liberty, that is, is the power of self-determination; and real bondage is the absence of it.

Since we are organized in societies we must accept certain restrictions. There are certain concessions

which we must make, certain limitations which we must submit to. If a man says, "I shall not make any concessions; I shall not submit to any limitations; I will live my own life in my own way, whatever happens," he is not claiming liberty, but embracing license. License is liberty run amok—the power of self-determination asserted to the detriment of others; and in this case society has to protect itself by enforcing the necessary limitations upon a licentious individual. Society has embodied in its laws the limitations on conduct which are essential to its life; and it says to the individual, "So long as you accept and observe these laws, you can, for the rest, do as you choose. So long as you keep within the area thus marked out, you have liberty." These are, of course, not the only limitations which a self-respecting person will observe; but they represent the minimum which a given society regards as being necessary to its well-being. Most of us accept these laws as embodying the conditions upon which we can live happily together and make the best of each other. Partly by inherited tendency, partly by early discipline, but mostly by our free choice, we have set our lives at the angle of that social justice which is embodied in our laws. We have voluntarily accommodated ourselves to the conditions. We only feel the laws as restrictions when we depart from the spirit of that law which we have accepted as our own guide, and which we have recognized as embodying the conditions of a fair social existence.

Liberty may therefore be defined provisionally as consisting in a willing harmony of inner disposition with external conditions. This is liberty even for a man on a desert island. For if he does not harmonize

his life, say in the matter of food and clothing, with the physical conditions of his island, he will immediately be sensible of certain restrictions. He will pay for the lack of harmony with his physical surroundings in a lower physical vitality, in a diminution of his power of self-determination.

But this is not to have said all that should be said. There are circumstances when the lack of harmony with external conditions is due to something in the character of the conditions; and there can be no liberty until these conditions are changed—if, that is, they are changeable. The man on the desert island has to submit to physical conditions which cannot be changed. But suppose there are also hostile wild animals on the island. He will either have to domesticate or to exterminate these if he is to be free. He will need to change the character of the conditions. In the circumstances of human life there are very few external conditions which cannot be changed, and which are not, in fact, always changing. The struggle for liberty has just been the struggle to modify external conditions.

So far as many of these conditions are concerned, harmony with them has involved no hardship. But there have been and still are some conditions to which certain primordial elements of human nature cannot adapt themselves without doing violence to themselves, perhaps even without suppressing themselves out of existence altogether. Indeed, where the insistence upon established external conditions has been rigorously enforced, these human tendencies have often been utterly strangled. One of these is a man's self-respect. He may regard himself as beholden to the State, but he knows that no individual or institution

other than the State has any power over him; even, indeed though the State acknowledge and endorse the claims of such individuals or institutions. The struggle for civil liberty has been the struggle to impose that view on the civil constitution. It has in turn broken up slavery and feudalism, autocracy and the divine right of kings; and it will probably break up some other things before it is done. Here, then, is a case where some inner element in human nature has compelled, and is compelling, the external conditions to bring themselves into harmony with it.

The religious instinct has done the same thing. It is a feeling inherent in man that his relations to God and his dealings with God are not to be interfered with by any mundane authority, whether it be claimed by an individual or an institution. He has the power to choose how he will approach God—whether directly or through a priest or a church. Whenever an attempt has been made to coerce a man to approach God in one particular way, it has always been resented, and it has always been in the long run foiled. The Roman Church tried to do so, and the West threw it overboard in consequence; and it has never been able to enforce its claim on a large scale except under conditions of ignorance and mental lethargy. The State has also tried to constrain the individual to conform to a uniform type of religious observance; but the State was taught to know better. The religion of men as individuals and communities is a thing which the State has learnt (though even yet not quite fully) to keep its hands off. A great deal of the suspicion with which the Roman Church is regarded in England arises from the conviction that it still would not be unwilling to

use the power of the State to constrain men to conform to it; and so long as this suspicion remains, so long must Romanism stand outside the main current of national life.

Here, again, we have an instance of a human instinct constraining external conditions into harmony with itself; and while we still define liberty as a willing harmony of inner disposition and outer conditions, it is with the addition that this harmony is achieved in two ways—first by adapting the inner disposition to the outer conditions, secondly by changing the outer conditions into harmony with inner disposition. And history is essentially the history of liberty because it is the history of the working out of these two parallel processes.

But social liberty, religious liberty, civil liberty are the achievements of an inner spirit which demands a still larger liberty than any or all of them. There is such a thing as spiritual liberty; and spiritual liberty must conform to our general definition of liberty. That does not mean that we can give a general account of it, save only that it is to our entire life what religious liberty is to our religious instincts and civil liberty is to our self-respect; it is a condition wherein our whole being is emancipated and made free to develop and move along its own lines. But as we are as yet unacquainted with our whole being, as there may be undiscovered powers and faculties latent in us that have not yet come into the daylight, we can do no more than speculate about this liberty as a whole. But there are two aspects of our life in which we may trace with tolerable certainty what a spiritual liberty will do for us—namely, in thought and in conduct.

We shall best appreciate the nature of the emanci-

pation which the emergence of the spiritual life brings with it—for this is what I mean by spiritual liberty—by considering it in a specific case. The case that will immediately spring to one's mind is that of the Apostle Paul, in whom the emancipation of thought and conduct was perhaps the outstanding quality of his new experience. The idea of liberty pervades his thought, and the word and its cognates are for ever on his lips. This liberty had reference to a twofold previous experience, the intellectual bondage of Judaism and the moral bondage of Pharisaic legalism. From this double bondage he was emancipated by one and the same act.

I. What I have called intellectual bondage was what Paul called a bondage to "the letter"; which is a bondage to traditional statements of truth and modes of thought. The Jew had his own peculiar set of categories, and that which could not be fitted into any of these had of necessity to be extruded. This, of course, is not peculiar to the Jews. It is a commonplace of every man's experience that traditional ideas do succeed in binding the mind so that when a new idea comes along the first impulse is to send it about its business. When Darwin announced the evolution theory, it was shown to the door summarily, and not always politely, by traditionalists of all kinds. But there are some ideas that will not be turned away. They insist upon coming in, and we are compelled at last to modify the old arrangement of ideas in our minds so as to provide the necessary accommodation for the intruder.

Let it be said that up to a certain point this tardiness to welcome new ideas is a wholesome and useful instinct. It is possible to be over-ready and over-facile

in our reception of new ideas; and there are men whose minds are in a state of perpetual flux. It is a good thing to challenge a new idea, even to keep it at arm's length until some presumption of its truth is apparent. We challenge every piece of food that we put into our mouths; it has to run the gauntlet of smell and sight before it is admitted; and it is not well to admit new ideas without equally vigorous scrutiny. Otherwise, one may find that the whole trouble and discomfort involved in shifting the existing furniture of the mind to make room for the new-comer has been spent in vain, because the credentials of the new-comer turned out to be bogus. A certain hesitancy in the reception of the new makes for mental stability.

At the same time one should preserve sufficient mobility in one's mind to make room for new ideas when that becomes inevitable. The tendency is to close our system prematurely, so that we become impenetrable to new truth. This is what William James calls, in a passage already quoted, "old-fogyism," and we encounter it on all hands. But when old-fogyism develops in the region of religious thought, it is reinforced by fear. A man who has inherited certain doctrinal traditions, and thinks that these traditions embody the final wisdom, is naturally scared when a new idea comes along and challenges them. One of the great obstacles to the development of religious thought is the great multitude of people who think that

God's world will fall apart

Because we tear a parchment more or less,

and who, when they think the parchment is in danger, fall straightway into a panic.

It would be ungracious and ungenerous to fit this cap on any existing schools of religious teachers. For our purpose, it is enough to remember that this was the kind of tradition and view in which Paul had been brought up. He was not the only one at that time who accepted this position. There were even among the early Christians those who held that Christianity was a development within the circle of Judaism, and that a man had to pass through the gateway of the Law into the discipleship of Christ. We know how this view failed to impose itself upon the early Church; and it was in a large measure due to Paul's clear-sighted understanding of the truth of the situation that this failure was due. How Paul arrived at his apprehension of the meaning of the Gospel and its liberty would require a psychological analysis which is beyond our powers. All that is certain is that it was precipitated by the direct impact of Christ upon his soul. He had been chafing in the bondage of Judaism, and this impact set him free. Jesus Christ would not stand outside Paul's scheme of things. The new truth forced itself in and Paul had to cast out the old traditional arrangement which could find no room for Him. He was compelled to look on Jesus "with open face," and the issue was that Jesus remained and the old traditional scheme was thrown on the scrap-heap.

But it was not merely with reference to Jesus that Paul found himself free. The new truth had so broken up the previous synthesis of ideas that Paul found himself in a new universe. He no longer went about the world with the thought that the wisdom of the Jew contained all the truth of God; and the way in which he regarded Greek thought and the religious ideas of

the field of his apostolate shows that he was prepared to recognize truth wherever he found it. The large, liberal temper, especially of the later epistles, marks the complete emancipation of the apostle's mind from the rigid and inelastic bonds of his early Pharisaism. In nothing does the revolution which his conversion effected show itself more manifestly than in his attitude to the Greek world. Not only does he confess his own indebtedness to the Greeks, but during his apostolate he was careful that the churches should not lose "anything of the excellencies of the Greek spirit. His extreme fondness for the word *χάρις* can hardly be quite separated in the minds of his numerous Hellenic hearers from the Greek *χάρις*, the grace and the charm which is of the essence of Hellenism." \* "He never adopted that antagonism to philosophy which became customary in the second century. On the contrary, he says, 'Regulate with wisdom your conduct towards the outside world, making your market to the full of the opportunity of this life. Let your conversation be seasoned with the salt and refinement of delicacy so as to know the suitable reply to make to every individual.' . . . He advises his pupils to learn from the surrounding world everything that was worthy of it . . . but it is in Phil. iv. 8 that this spirit is expressed in its fullest and most exquisite and graceful form: 'Whatsoever is true, whatsoever is courteous, whatsoever is of fine expression, all excellence, all merit, take account of these.' † Where-

\* Ramsay in Hastings' Dic. Bible, Ext. 151. Notice also in this connection the Hellenic emphasis upon liberty, especially in Galatians. See Ramsay, "Cities of St. Paul," p. 36.

† Ramsay, "St. Paul the Traveller," pp. 148, 149.

ever you find these qualities, notice them, consider them, imitate them."

This is true intellectual liberty; and it is a curious paradox that, with Paul's example before their eyes, Christian folk should fall so readily into the bondage of creeds and confessions. For a hardened, inelastic Christian tradition is no better than a Jewish one; and the man who approaches the Scriptures and Jesus Christ with a set of antecedent dogmatic assumptions will inevitably miss the significance both of the Scriptures and of Jesus Himself, because he will inevitably try to fit both alike into his existing scheme. It is, no doubt, necessary to formulate creeds; but it is an entire fallacy to treat them as final and authoritative statements of Christian truth. They are not *termini ad quem* but *termini a quo*. They register the advance of Christian truth; they are the finger-posts by which we trace the growth of certain types and tendencies of Christian doctrine; and the Nicene Creed and the Westminster Confession are no more to be taken as definitive statements of Christian truth than an eighteenth century map of Africa is to be taken as a final account of the interior of that continent. This does not mean that we are to throw the creeds overboard, but simply that we have to keep them in their proper place and to remember their limitations.

The spiritual life enables us to do this, for it knows that the spirit which lies beneath the creed is a greater thing than, and has never been captured into, the letter of it. It accepts the creeds as genuine endeavors to compass and define the truth in the light of the ages which produced them; but it does not regard them as authoritative for itself. It claims and knows it has

the right to look at Truth in the face; and the spiritual man is not afraid to believe that in a world of growing light he will be able to see the Truth better than his fathers did. He claims and knows that he has the right to look upon the Scriptures and the creeds, even upon Christ, with his own eyes, and that he is not compelled to use the eyes of his ancestors for the purpose.

This, however, does not mean that such liberty is to be arbitrarily exercised, for then it becomes intellectual license. The spiritual life does impose a definite point of view, does provide a base for the intellect; indeed, it is that base itself. Put in another way, the spiritual life introduces the individual into a new universe of thought, which is the spiritual universe itself. True intellectual liberty is that which comes from the harmony of the inner spiritual life with the spiritual universe without, from the mind of Christ operating in the universe of Christ; and that is a universe spacious and enlarged enough to give plenty of room for all the independent and creative thought of which the mind of man is capable. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The emergence of the spiritual life is the true enfranchisement of thought, is the gift to the mind of the freedom of the City of God.

2. But Paul's emancipation from the bondage of the letter in thought was concurrent with his liberation from an analogous bondage in conduct. Paul, like every other Jew, was brought up to believe that the end of life lay in the punctilious observance of a code of laws, or rather in the achievement of a righteousness which was defined by the code. It is probable that most Jews found this mode of life more or less against the

grain, for it entailed the abandonment of every manner of interest or inclination which impeded the fulfilment of the routine of the law. A man might by continuous rigorous self-discipline shut everything else out of his life and limit himself to this endeavor, from an unquestioning sense of its rightness. But it is difficult to believe that a man who paused to think about the matter would not see that this robbed life of spontaneity, of initiative, of independence, of all that makes up the experience of real life. Every man knows something of the bondage of routine, knows how irksome it speedily becomes; and he comes sooner or later to feel that he really lives only when he breaks away from it. Paul, no doubt, felt this; he was not finding his true life, nor finding anything that a successful performance of the whole range of legal obligations should *ex hypothesi* have brought with it; the external conditions were not spacious enough for his spiritual vitality. The impact of Christ upon him enabled him to break through the hedge of the law and set his spirit free to work out its own characteristic morality in the open world.

We shall, I think, best appreciate the situation in which Paul found himself by considering the difference between the two ideals of life which were current in the world at that time. The Jewish ideal, which was his own, regarded the end of life as consisting in—or at least as being reached through—successful moral endeavor. The Greek ideal, on the other hand, speaking broadly, regarded the end of life as being realized in full and spontaneous self-expression. In neither case was life conceived of as consisting merely in *being*, whether in a contemplative passivity or in mere ex-

perience. In both cases, the end of life was found in action. But in the one case the action consisted in the concentrated endeavor of the will to reach a particular mark outside itself; and in the other, in working out freely and spontaneously what was already within. In the one case the goal was everything; in the other the base was everything. In the one, the action demanded a concentration of life upon one point; in the other, it meant the broadening out of life from a point. The Jew narrowed life down to a single aim. The Greek believed in a full and unfettered expression of every part of life. The one wanted holiness of life; the other, fulness of life.

One may trace the consequences of these divergent views in the kind of heritage which the world has received from the Jew and the Greek respectively. From the Jew it has inherited a body of literature which is charged with one aim and makes throughout for the same goal—the great classical literature of righteousness. From the Greek it has received a wide and diversified literature of poetry, rhetoric, and drama; a rich inheritance of speculative and ethical thought, of sculpture and architecture; and the Greek achievements in almost all these departments have never been surpassed.

This, however, does not imply that the Greek had an unqualified superiority over the Jew. For, side by side with the great literary and artistic achievements of Greece, there often went an unspeakable foulness of moral corruption. The New Testament descriptions of the life of the pagan world of the day tell us something of this. When the Greek thought of fulness of life, of complete self-expression (I do not mean, of

course, that he thought of it in these terms, but that he thought of the thing), he did not discriminate; and carnal self-indulgence was frequently as much a part of his practical philosophy as was the literary and artistic self-expression which produced Greek classical literature and art. The Jew stood at the other extreme and tended to repress everything save only the one thing, and to turn all his vital energy into the one channel. He constrained himself by a rigorous self-discipline to the exclusive pursuit of righteousness. The Greek was not ignorant in his best moments of the need of self-discipline; but in practice it never became more than a partial and loosely attached accessory to his general theory of life. And Greece paid the penalty in the evaporation of her genius in literature and art and in the passing away of her golden age.

It should be added that the "Wisdom" teaching of the Jews promised to add breadth to the Hebrew view of life; but it hardly became more than a bypath of Jewish religious thought. Through a farther and more thoroughgoing development of the Wisdom idea, the Jew might have reached a greater breadth of culture than he actually did.

The Jew was right when he made righteousness an essential and indispensable quality of the true ideal. No less was the Greek right in his emphasis upon fullness of life. The complete view of life is the one that effects a synthesis of both ideals; and such a synthesis is found in the Christian ideal.

For the Christian ideal starts from its characteristic doctrine of the spiritual life. What the Greek ideal did not do, the Christian does. It discriminates. It does not regard life as one undifferentiated whole. It

ascribes different values to different planes of life, and regards everything as subordinate and tributary to the real ultimate life, which is the spiritual life. Of course, in theory, the Greek also differentiated; for Plato, Aristotle, and Xenophon recognized an inner division and an antagonism of principle in the soul; but it is questionable whether they carried their analysis far enough. Certainly in practice the Greek ascribed the same rights to the natural and the spiritual life because he did not distinguish between them. But this is precisely what Christianity does. It says that the "natural" life is a thing to be repressed rather than expressed, that it must decrease and be hedged around on every side—and this as the very condition of the emancipation and the development of the true, the spiritual life; but that the spiritual should be permitted free, unhampered expression. The self-discipline which the Jew imposed upon his whole life so as to concentrate it all into the one channel of righteousness is properly imposed on the natural man; but when it is imposed upon the whole life it equally suppresses and at last extinguishes the spiritual man. The full self-expression which the Greek permitted to the whole life is properly permitted only to the spiritual man; and when it was permitted to the natural man it equally there also extinguished the spiritual man and that spiritual impulse which had expressed itself in the immortality of classical literature and art. The Jew erred by making a religion of self-discipline. The Greek erred by making nothing of self-discipline. The Christian ideal imposes self-discipline where self-discipline is necessary; it permits full and free self-expression where

that is proper; and it marks off the two fields by its principle that the true ultimate life of man is that spiritual life which is the negation of the natural.

It follows that the natural man is under law, and must for ever be under law, as the necessary condition of the emancipation and development of the spiritual life. The need of self-discipline is never outgrown; but when the spiritual life does get a real chance it exercises a discipline upon the flesh spontaneously and instinctively. Indeed, the exercise of self-discipline is a mark of the real presence of a spiritual life from the start. It is one of its weapons of self-defence; it holds the animal life at bay, and compels it to keep its distance. The "old man" must be steadily kept under the law. To give him any length of rope is to put the spiritual life in jeopardy. To relax our self-discipline is to run the risk of finding ourselves cast away. The day will come when the natural man will cease to trouble us; but until then we can never afford to be off our guard or to be remiss in buffeting him and keeping him in subjection.

The corollary of this is that the spiritual life must be permitted free and unfettered expression. It will work itself out in many ways—in new conceptions and modes of daily business, in great vital literature, in pictures and sculptures that will enrich life. In every man it will work out in a certain kind of conduct, in a certain quality of relationship to our fellow-men. That is what Paul means when he speaks of moral goodness as the "fruit of the Spirit." It is the spontaneous self-expression of the spiritual life.

The spiritual life creates its own morality. It is a law to itself; it has the whole law within itself; and

this kind of morality is free. Morality for the spiritual man consists not in doing this or not doing that, but in being and living out his own true self. This it is that gives soundness to Polonius' advice to Laertes:—

To thine own self be true,  
 And it must follow, as the night the day,  
 Thou canst not then be false to any man.

It is certain, of course, that the strength of the flesh and the weakness of the spirit will prevent a man from rising to this plane in a day. He does not learn to stand on his own feet immediately his eyes are opened. He must have a guide-post to walk by, and that is given. For he has before his eyes the perfect expression of the spiritual life in the life of Jesus; he can bring his hesitations and doubts and failures into that light, and by so doing will learn to see things more clearly and to tread more surely. For the Spirit in us is the Spirit Who dwelt fully and perfectly in Jesus, and Who will invest our lives more fully and perfectly as the days go by.

The spiritual life is creative in its moral self-expression as it is elsewhere. It does not conform to a given type, though it moves within a distinctive universe. We know in our domestic lives something of the wonderful ingenuity and resourcefulness of love, how it transcends routine and is for ever revealing new powers, creating new situations, and laying itself out to improve upon itself. The moral life of the spiritual man has no terminus; there is no known point at which he can say, "I have attained." It is never finished, never complete. It is constantly cutting out

new paths, devising and inventing new modes of action. We sometimes say of a man that he has a genius for friendship; he is a friend as no other friends are—warm, faithful, constant as many other friends are, but with something more—for ever springing on us some surprise of affection, for ever astonishing us by the versatility and the ingenuity of his love. There is, speaking strictly, no such thing as perfect friendship; for perfection implies some kind of limitation. The true friendship is one that is for ever trying to go one better on itself. That is also the true morality. It is never perfect, never finished; for it has within it that restless, creative impulse which is constantly constraining it to step out beyond itself, to devise and invent new heights to climb—never satisfied, never filled—yet always at peace, because it knows itself to be in the true line of life and in perfect tune with the universe, which is the mind and heart of God.

## XXIV

### THE SPIRITUAL LIFE AT WORK

WE are making no arbitrary jump when we identify the spiritual life as we have conceived it in these pages with what Jesus called "the kingdom of heaven." That expression stood for two things—first, an inner manner of life in the individual; second, a divine society. It is, of course, impossible to dissociate these two ideas. For since men do naturally and instinctively fall into groups and societies, the possession of a distinctive way of life in the individuals of a group will work out in a distinctive social life. The kingdom of heaven is primarily within us, but when it becomes established in two or more of us it assumes a social form, and becomes the nucleus of the divine commonwealth. The inner life which the idea of the kingdom of heaven represents is essentially the spiritual life, and Jesus regards it as the real predestined life of man.

1. In one of His parables Jesus compares the propagation of the kingdom to the action of leaven. It is not necessary to suppose that our Lord gave a thought to the inwardness of the process of fermentation which the leaven sets afoot; but it is interesting to notice that all that modern science has to say upon the biological and chemical aspects of the process gives

additional point to our Lord's illustration. What Jesus was thinking about was merely that the leaven must be put into the meal and then, given certain simple well-understood conditions, the leaven would do its work and gradually assimilate the moist mass of meal to itself. Which, being interpreted in one word, is that the spiritual life is propagated by contagion.

This, however, is an explanation which raises a number of questions. So far as it goes it is valid, and for all practical purposes it is adequate. But beneath it lies perhaps the most obstinate and least explored of the problems of human life—the nature of the processes by which men influence one another. It is well known how husband and wife or two friends will affect each other sometimes even to the point of developing likeness of countenance and physical characteristics; nor is this done by interchange of speech or thought. No man who has been in love or has had a friend will fail to realize that there are means of interchange and communion which are wholly independent of sense-communications. The interaction of two or more personalities takes place in large measure at a depth to which our powers of analysis cannot penetrate. Even if we could represent the total effect of two personalities by two separate mathematical symbols, we could not then formulate the equation of the total effect of two personalities in conflict or in cooperation. There remains still an unknown elusive quantity which has to be reckoned with. It is this that makes the psychology of the crowd so interesting a study. Though one knew every person in a crowd and could form a shrewd guess of what each would do separately under given circumstances, one could form no

likely conjecture of what, under the same circumstances, they would do together, of what they would do as a crowd. We know some of the channels by which personal influence is transmitted; but it is not improbable that most of them are hidden from us. We are, indeed, as yet only beginning to discover ourselves; and the self which a man knows is in all likelihood no more than a fraction of his total self.

The fact remains, however, that we do affect one another—that there are means of communication between soul and soul. The contact is real and effective though it baffles explanation; and it is the existence of this contact that makes the transmission of the spiritual life a possibility.

But so far as the spiritual life is concerned, this contact is no automatic thing, independent of intention. The leaven must be put in the meal. No man ever kindled a spiritual life in another unless a real contact had been established by the will of one or other or both. It may be said that no man ever started a spiritual life in another who did not set himself deliberately to do it. This does not necessarily mean that he fixed upon a given individual and turned his battery of spirituality upon him; but it does mean that he has deliberately set himself to the business of producing a spiritual reaction, so that when he has come into contact—even unconscious contact—with another individual, his spiritual energy has told upon him. It is, however, certain that a man must come—or at least must suffer himself to be brought—within the range of a direct spiritual influence, that is, he must consent to the contact, if the spiritual life is to be awakened in him. The contact is the essential thing, however it is

secured; and it is secured when this man feels a real craving for the spiritual life, and that man is possessed with a passion to communicate it.

It has been part of the purpose of the foregoing chapters to indicate the probability that the time is not far off when men will again on a large scale feel the desire for the spiritual life, when there will be "a famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord"—a time when men will be sick and weary of living for bread and by bread alone, and will be hungry for the Word that comes forth from the mouth of God. It is a precarious business to prophesy, but the dominion of materialistic ways of life and modes of thought has lasted a long time, and is showing signs of exhaustion. The tide cannot be far from the turn. The materialistic way of life has failed to satisfy; and naturalistic modes of thought are bankrupt. Men will begin one of these days to inquire earnestly about the true life.

I am especially concerned to emphasize the fact that this prospect casts a great responsibility on Christian folk. The Church has suffered much criticism in the course of these pages, and there is no need to retract or qualify any of it. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Church is the only organization in the world which still holds to a practical and adequate doctrine of the spiritual life. It needs to be emancipated, it is true, from much superfluous lumber in the shape of obsolete theological traditions, and even more from the entangling bondage of a materialism that has invaded even this holy ground. The Church, nevertheless, still has the root of the matter in it; and alone among the institutions of the time professes,

be it never so languidly and never so huskily, a gospel of spiritual idealism. It is to the Church, which they have despised and trodden underfoot, that men will turn with their new hunger for the living bread.

It is hardly necessary to say that the situation will not be met by the promulgation of a new philosophy or a new theology. Intellectual movements in the top layers of society do not percolate in any very effective way to the lower strata. All that the intellectual unrest of the present time will do for the average man is to accentuate his hunger, for he will at least, sooner or later, hear of it. The materialism of the past century helped to confirm the man in the street in hard, materialistic ways of living; and the current dissolution of materialism will, no doubt, in some measure relax the hold upon him of the life he has lived. But it is not by rejecting an old philosophy or by accepting a new one that the man in the street will find the food that will satisfy his hunger; for the philosophy of the matter has never troubled him. The only power that can touch the man in the street is a power that can come down into the street; and the only power that can come down in an effectual way to the street is the life itself—not a philosophy of it, nor a theology of it, but the spiritual life in actual being in the souls of men.

It is essential not to overlook the fact that the general revival of spiritual life and the social and national reconstruction that would follow from it must begin at this level. It has already been pointed out that recent research into early Christian history establishes the truth of the belief that Christian influence grew

from the bottom upwards. The Gospel did not start by capturing the powerful and the wealthy, assuming that its influence would descend, percolating through the various social stratifications downwards. On the contrary, it first went into mean streets; it began its operations among what we call "the masses," the multitude of lowly, obscure, undistinguished folk who are, after all, the very foundation of society. In India to-day, true to its genius, the Gospel is working upwards from the low castes and the outcasts; and in China its growth is proceeding similarly. If there is to be a revival of spiritual life in England, it must begin as a contagion among ordinary folk and work upwards from them. If this was so in the old time when the common people were dumb and inarticulate, it is immeasurably truer in these days of democracy, when the man in the street has discovered himself and found his voice.

The revival of spiritual life must start through personal contact; the leaven and the meal must come together. It is a question of the first importance whether modern Christian people possess the leaven virtue in such measure as to be really effective. That is the very heart of the problem. It is not a question of theological restatement or of ecclesiastical reorganization; these are subordinate things; they are even irrelevancies except they go side by side with such a recovery of individual spirituality as may, by its impact upon others, reproduce itself in them. There must be sufficient spiritual energy in individual men and women to produce *conversion* in those with whom they have to do.

Conversion—for the spiritual life must start in a

conversion. The Church must learn to familiarize itself afresh with the idea and the truth of conversion. It has been too ready to make concessions to respectability and to relegate conversion—the idea and the thing—to the Salvation Army and others who go down into the dismal wastes of our towns and cities. The Church must, however, were it only to preserve its self-respect as an institution of some intelligence, recover the word and the fact. For even the philosophers are now preaching it. It is in some ways the pivot of Eucken's teaching, and Bergson's characteristic doctrine of "new beginnings" interpreted religiously comes to much the same thing. The truth of conversion is coming to its own again, and the Church must habituate itself to it, and learn that it exists in the first instance in order to produce this very thing. Moreover, it has to learn that it refers not only to the drunkard and the harlot, but to respectable folk living in respectable neighborhoods; that it implies not only conversion from vice, but from the love of gold, the love of pleasure, the love of fame, the pride of birth and the pride of place, and from every manner of self-esteem and worldliness. It is not to be regarded as a renunciation of one or two or more sins and vices, but as a turning of the whole life through and through in one comprehensive act from the world to God. It is only a life thus converted that has the leaven virtue and can by its impact produce the conversion of other lives.

It should not be forgotten that there is a contagion of the spiritual life not only from those who have it to those who have it not, but also from one to another among those who have it. The fermentation of spirit-

uality is not only extensive but intensive. As iron sharpeneth iron, so is the spiritual life among men. We must live the spiritual life together if it is to reach its full strength. A spiritual fellowship alone can produce strong effectual spiritual lives. A Christian congregation should be such a fellowship—not a mere concourse of people brought together by varying kinds and degrees of interest in religion and its accessories, but a body of men and women each severally sworn to live out the spiritual life fearlessly in all its fulness. It does not exist merely to afford opportunities of social worship; nor certainly does it exist for the diffusion of a vague general Christian sentiment round about it. It was brought into being for something far more concrete and aggressive than that. Its end is to be a burning centre of spiritual energy which will effect a revolution within the area of its influence. The members of a congregation are brought together that they may pour their spiritual life into the common stock, and that the spiritual life of the whole may return and react upon them, deepening and strengthening their own; so that, by the continual passing of spiritual life to and from a common centre, the light and the heat of the whole may grow from more to more until it becomes a passionate fire which shall set up a great conflagration round about it. It is impossible to calculate the consequences that would ensue from the realization of such a corporate spiritual life, even in the smallest community. The story of Antioch still remains on record.

2. A good deal has been said concerning the outlook and the possibilities of the spiritual life in the

course of the preceding pages; but much more might be said without going beyond the bounds of truth. Emphasis has been laid upon the "creative" character of the spiritually driven moral impulse; but what is true of the spiritual life on the moral side is true of it on other sides. Just as we can fix no terminus to its moral achievements, so we can fix no limit to its achievements in other directions. This was the view of Jesus. "Nothing," He said on one occasion, "shall be impossible to you." And this saying is paralleled by another more explicit in the Fourth Gospel (xiv. 12): "The works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do."

Our gradual but sure deliverance from mechanistic conceptions of the processes of organic nature is following naturally upon the expansion of biological science. We are seeing more and more clearly that it is impossible to reduce living nature to rule, to fixed laws. There is a creative energy behind it which is for ever producing new types, new forms of life; and we can never tell beforehand what Nature's next exploit will be. Every step it takes is a new departure that cannot be anticipated by the most extensive knowledge of data; and we are being slowly but irresistibly compelled to the doctrine that behind natural processes there is a free independent creative power at work, which is constantly expressing and embodying itself in new forms of life, constantly creating new vehicles for its self-fulfilment.

The type of life which we call human is a product of this vital energy, but it is distinguished from all other life by its attribute of personality. Personality is a vehicle, and at the present stage the supreme vehicle

which the Power of Life has fashioned for the purpose of fulfilling itself. If the divine life is a creative energy in nature, how much more must it be so when it invests personality? God does not, of course, work through any personality against its will, but when a personality suffers itself, or causes itself by its own choice, to be invaded and invested by God, when the divine life enters and becomes a personal spiritual life in the individual, then it is become the perfect instrument of God's purpose of self-fulfilment. It would be ignorance and presumption to assign limits to the achievements of a God-invested personality. One can set no limits upon it which are not at the same time limits upon God. "It is God," says Paul, "that worketh in us," and it is the inevitable corollary of that that we should do "the greater works" of Jesus' promise.

Greater power than Jesus we cannot possess, for He supplies us with the instance of a personality completely invested by God. The possibility of the "greater works" lies in our greater opportunities. Before we consider this point, however, it may be well to point out that the word "works" is to be interpreted in the most comprehensive sense. We need not shirk the conclusion that it includes miracles.

The denial of miracles rested upon a mechanistic conception of nature which, as I have said, we are perforce leaving behind us. We know nowadays how human intelligence can direct the living processes of nature and produce most wonderful results. Mendelism, Luther Burbank's successful experiments with fruit, Poulton's experiments upon butterflies, J. T. Cunningham's experiments upon flounders—all this

and a good deal more points to the pliability of natural law and its amenability to modification by human intelligence. Well, then, if ordinary human intelligence can so modify and direct the operation of natural forces, how much more is the energy of the divine life working in personality likely to do so?

As a matter of fact, it does do so. Missionary history supplies frequent examples of modern miracles, and many for which the evidence is well authenticated. The records of miraculous happenings in Christian history are too numerous, and in times of great spiritual uprising too consistent, to be written off as mere illusions. In any case, a physical miracle is a small thing by the side of those spiritual miracles which are manifest in the conversion of evil men, and in the great renaissances of individual and corporate life which are the great characteristic facts of Christian history.

The "greater works" are possible to us just because of our larger opportunities. For one thing, we live in an age of larger knowledge, and a wider range of things is accessible to us and amenable to our operation upon them. The level of human intelligence is raised, and we can approach our problems without the handicap of prejudice and ignorance which Jesus encountered. We have, moreover, a practical acquaintance with forms of physical energy that Jesus did not possess. We have, for instance, harnessed electricity to our uses; we have learnt to manage and to handle it. Our knowledge is constantly growing, and consequently we start farther on than Jesus did. Modern achievements like wireless telegraphy, which are common-places to us, would have seemed miraculous to our

grandfathers; and so we have gone on from age to age. So it comes to pass that we set out upon our work in the world with many antecedent advantages. Nevertheless, we owe it all to the spirit of Jesus. If we have larger opportunities than He in the days of His flesh, they are of His making; and when we do "greater works," they are at the last His works.

Our opportunities are larger in another way. Jesus lived the whole of His life in one little corner of the world, and the area of His work was in consequence narrow and circumscribed. But nowadays we all live in the whole world—the round earth is but a big parish. The world is hardly larger to us than Palestine was to Jesus. So we can work on a larger scale, on a wider stage. We can mobilize our resources more swiftly and cover more ground. Our materials are much greater in extent, yet no less accessible. Nevertheless, all this, too, we must trace at last to the ever-present spirit of Jesus Who is with us always, "even unto the end of the world."

Yet it is true that, despite our larger opportunities, we are not accomplishing the greater works, and the defect is due to the inadequate character of our faith. We require a new quality of faith in order to realize the power of the "greater works"—a faith which consists in more than a general sympathy, a vague spirit of assent—a faith which consists in the appropriation, as the deepest truth of our life, of the very deepest truth of the life of Jesus—a faith which consists in a thoroughgoing renunciation of selfish ambitions and of a worldliness which ministers to the flesh, in an apprehension of and an investment by the Spirit of God. To such a faith the "greater works" are still possible.

It is such a faith only that can restore romance and miracle to our lives, that can produce that "supermanhood" which "will stand upon the earth as one stands upon a footstool, and shall laugh and reach out its hands amidst the stars."

THE END





make good - no more  
o. lab. damn water hole!

