The Effects of Religion

A SERIES OF SERMONS

BY

H. G. ENELOW

RABBI OF
TEMPLE EMANU-EL
NEW YORK

THE
BLOCH PUBLISHING COMPANY
NEW YORK
1917

1383

The Fruits of Judaism

By the same Author

ASPECTS OF THE BIBLE

THE JEWISH LIFE

THE SYNAGOGUE IN MODERN LIFE

THE VARIED BEAUTY OF THE PSALMS
(in press)

THE FAITH OF ISRAEL
(in press)

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To

Mr. JACOB H. SCHIFF

DEVOUT JEW, PATRIOT, AND PHILANTROPIST
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 70TH BIRTHDAY
JANUARY 10TH 1917
RESPECTFULLY AND GRATEFULLY
DEDICATED.

כל שרוח הבריות נוחה ממנו
רוח המקום נוחה הימנו

"For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven,
And returneth not thither,
Except it water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
And give seed to the sower and bread to the eater;
So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth:
It shall not return unto Me void,
Except it accomplish that which I please,
And make the thing whereto I sent it prosper."

Isaiah LV, 10-11.

"What holy sleights hath God, the Lord of all,
To bid us feel and see! we are not free
To say we see not, for the glory comes
Nightly and daily, like the flowing sea;
His lustre pierceth through the midnight glooms;
And, at prime hour, behold! He follows me
With golden shadows to my secret rooms!"

—*Turner.*

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I

A RELIGION WORTH HAVING

פלאורת עדותיך על כן נצרתם נפשי

"THY TESTIMONIES ARE WONDERFUL; THEREFORE DOTH MY SOUL KEEP THEM."—*Psalm* cxix, 129.

THIS utterance throws a wealth of light on the Psalmist's religion. Poet and devotee that he was, we may be sure that his religion was first of all spontaneous. It came straight from the mainsprings of his being. None the less he tells us that there was even more than that to his religion. He cherished it, he adhered to it, his soul kept it, not only because it was natural for him to do so, but also because there was something in the religion itself that inspired such devotion. The religion itself was wonderful, it meant a great deal to his happiness and to the conduct of his life, to the enrichment of his intelligence and his soul: that is what made it worth having, that made his soul

keep and treasure it. "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them."

Thoughtful people will agree that such an attitude is the only one to take to Religion.

We often hear of the universality of Religion. Most people are by nature given to Religion. The human soul generally inclines to it spontaneously, and has done so in the past. Students of the human race remind us that hardly anywhere do we find a group of people wholly devoid of Religion. It may be a crude and rudimentary sort of faith; but some kind of faith the anthropologist has found wherever his journey of investigation has led him.

Thus, Religion is universal; and not only for groups, but also for the individual. "We all ask sometime if there is divinity," says George Moore, "and if we are related to the divine, no matter however remotely. This thought is more intense in us than any other thought, and everybody who has tried to write at all has tried to find utterance for it." It is a feeling shared not only

by writers but by every thinking person.

People of this kind, however, will not be content with a mere rudimentary religion; with one that appears as the mere common, involuntary, natural heritage of mankind. They ought not to be content with such a religion. They will try to make sure that their religion is the kind that is really worth having—one that possesses such virtues as shall make it desirable, as shall commend it to the devotion and fealty of its possessors, and make the soul of its devotees truly treasure it. This is what makes the difference between a religion inherited mechanically from one's own ancestors, or from the common store of mankind's spiritual experience, and the religion of the intelligent person who is conscious of the worth and purpose of his spiritual life. Intelligent men and women will want to be sure that theirs is a religion really worth having, as was that of the Psalmist.

Now, what will be the nature of such a religion?

To begin with, it must be a religion that

one can love, and one does love. It is all very well to speak of the universal vogue of Religion. But no religion really counts that one does not love, that one does not give oneself to with one's own affection. "What you have inherited from your fathers," says Goethe, "you must acquire in order to possess." Inherited spiritual treasures must pass through the alembic of our own affections in order to become our own in reality. Long before Goethe, an oriental rabbi expressed this truth. *Ma sheatta kobhesh atta yoresh* —"What thou dost conquer," he said, "thou dost truly inherit." Only the religion we love is a religion worth having.

And that is why the Jewish teachers have from the very outset laid such stress on the element of love in the religious life.

How little they know of the Jew's religion who maintain that love was foreign to its spirit, or occupied only a minor place in its doctrine, and that it was necessary to have a new and superior dispensation in order to give to love its rightful place! How can one maintain such a thesis and

claim to be familiar with the Jewish Scriptures? Where is the importance of love in the practice of religion affirmed more frequently than in the Jewish Bible and in later Jewish literature? Where do those two paramount commandments occur that Jesus laid down as the two fundamentals of all religion—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"? Where is Abraham called God's lover? Where is Israel called the bride of God? Where is Israel lovingly referred to as God's first-born child? In the Jewish Scriptures! And it is in the Talmud, so often painted as the avatar of rigid and mechanical religiosity, in the very Talmud of the Scribes and Pharisees, that time and again we are admonished against mere outward and vainglorious and egoistic religion, and exhorted to a religion of devoted and disinterested love, to a faith of filial affection, for the reason that "God wants the heart".

This note of love, as between Israel and

God, is struck time and again in the Jew's prayer-book, in his hymns, in his literature as well as in his life. This is what made his religion to the Jew one worth having. This is what made him say of it in the beautiful words of the old liturgy: "How goodly is our portion, how pleasant our lot, how beautiful our heritage!" And this is what must continue to characterize our religion to make it worth having: it must be a religion we love, one we consider worth loving.

In order to be such, it must be a religion we respect. We cannot love truly and lastingly a religion we do not respect, any more than a human being we do not respect. A young man, discussing an old teacher of his, remarked the other day: "I loved him, but I never respected him." Perhaps our love of human beings at times is such that it may continue without respect. In the case of a religion, however, it is certain that where there is no respect there will be no love. That is why the old Jewish teachers insisted on *Yirah* as well as *Ahabah* in faith, on the element of awe

and reverence and fear, as well as love, and why, in one of the most beautiful parts of our service, we still pray: "Unite our heart to love and to fear Thy Name!" Maudlin sentimentality makes but a poor creed.

The Jew has from of yore reverenced his religion. He has been proud of it. He has considered it the best religion, being the truest and the grandest. There have been those who have charged the Jew with arrogance and chauvinism and bigotry because of such pride in his faith. But, as a recent French author has written in regard to France, "pride is a fruitful virtue in a people." It was the Jew's perennial pride in his religion that made it fruitful for the Jewish people, that made it a safeguard and a solace, a tower and a treasure, that made it a religion worth having and holding.

Such a religion will naturally become part of our daily life. It will fill and fashion our life, as, indeed, it should in order to be worth while. The persons we love and respect cannot help influencing our life. Our friends become our patterns, unconscious-

ly. We quote them, we copy them, we follow them. That is why friendship means so much, for good or for ill. Religion does that in a supreme degree. It enters our life. It directs it. It determines it. "Religion," said an old English writer, "is not a divine science, it is a divine life." It is both, I should say. It is a divine science that makes for a divine life. "Whoever loves the Torah," said an old rabbi, "loves nothing so much as life."

"Religion's all or nothing; it's no mere smile
O' contentment, sigh of aspiration—
No quality o' the finelier-tempered clay
Like its whiteness or its lightness; rather, stuff
O' the very stuff, life of life, and self of self."

That is what the Jew's religion has meant for him. It has been part of his life. It has made his character and his history. It has gone with him through the struggle of the centuries. It has helped him battle, like Jacob of old, with gods and men. It has helped him to prevail. And only the religion that enters

thus into our own everyday life, because we want it there, is a religion worth having.

There is much discussion of Religion today. Many are returning to it who had strayed away. A father, bringing his twelve-year old child to our Religious School the other day, in order to have him confirmed after a while, said he had never before belonged to a congregation, having affiliated with another, non-religious society, but the roll of years and the growth of his child had brought him back to thoughts of Religion. "Religion," he said, "goes not by logic; it goes by the heart," thus repeating unconsciously what Pascal said long ago: "It is the heart that feels God and not reason. This is what faith is: God felt by the heart, not by reason."

Yet, it is not enough to return. True religion requires understanding, for full comprehension. It is as with the appreciation of Art, of which Hazlitt has well said that where there is no conscious apprehension, there can be no conscious plea-

sure; "real admiration and permanent delight are the growth of taste and knowledge."

At such a time as ours, with its renewed interest in Religion, it is well to think of what Religion really is, and with what benefits it abounds, it is well to think of its beauty and riches, and its varied effect on human life. Thus only will Religion mean to us more than a surface thing; thus only will it touch our inner being, our soul. Let us try to realize the wonders of Religion, and its many advantages, and we shall be eager to keep it. Let us earn the right to say with the Psalmist:

> "Thy testimonies are wonderful;
> therefore doth my soul keep
> them!"

II

THE BROADENING INFLUENCE OF RELIGION

דרך מצותיך ארוץ כי תרחיב לבי

"I WILL RUN THE WAY OF THY COMMANDMENTS, FOR THOU DOST BROADEN MY HEART."
—*Psalm* cxix, 32.

IN this striking utterance of the Psalmist, we find a noble appreciation of Religion. The poet proclaims his eagerness to follow the Divine way, the way of Religion, because of the effect it is sure to have upon him. It is sure to enlarge, to broaden, his heart. It is certain to make him a more sympathetic, a more brotherly and helpful, being. That is why he is zealous for God's commandments. "I will run the way of Thy commandments," he says, "for Thou dost broaden my heart."

We can well believe the Psalmist. For Religion would not have been Religion if it had not had this kind of effect on every one that has professed it.

We often think of civilization in material terms: as the accumulation of wealth, as the upbuilding of outward monuments, as the amassing of mechanical facilities and conveniences of life. Civilized nations compete with one another in the acquisition of these external things, and glory in their achievement. But the calm, unbiased student of history realizes that such outward civilization is never sure of permanence. It is fragile. One knows this from the fate of the ancient civilizations that disappeared in spite of their magnitude and magnificence. True civilization has meant one thing above all others—the growth of sympathy among men; the gradual rise of humanity above narrow provincialism, above the mutual suspicion and hatred of tribes and races and peoples, and the attainment of a broad view of human relationship, of human inter-dependence and obligation, of human kinship and kindness.

The growth of sympathy among men has formed the measure of true civilization. Various agencies have contrib-

uted to it, and insofar as they have done so, they have been factors in the progress of civilization. Literature and art, at their best, have been such factors. In their purest and noblest parts, they have served to unify, to consolidate, mankind—to plant the seeds of sympathy in human hearts—to broaden human hearts by making them understand one another better, read more deeply and truly their common passions, sorrows, dreams, and sufferings. But the greatest of all these factors in the broadening of the human heart has been Religion.

There is a story in the Talmud that well illustrates this point. It happened at the time of the crossing of the Red Sea. When the ministering angels, runs the story, saw that the Israelites had passed safely and their Egyptian foes were drowning, they began to sing for joy. But the Holy One silenced them. "Cease your singing," He said, "my children are dying, and will you sing?"

In such a story we find the true spirit of Religion. Israelite and Egyptian—both are children of the same God, and when

one or the other people is in distress, it is no time for song. By permeating humanity with such a spirit, Religion has helped to build up the fabric of civilization.

Mr. Benjamin Kidd, who died a short time ago, wrote a book, called Social Evolution, to demonstrate how much human progress has owed to Religion, and particularly to Religion's emphasis on sympathy and self-sacrifice for the common good. When Mr. Kidd died, it was pointed out that his book, which about twenty years ago made a sensation, had been wellnigh forgotten. Be that as it may, however, the thesis of the book is as true today as when it attracted world-wide attention: civilization has owed its growth to the increase of human sympathy and the willingness of men to sacrifice themselves for the common good; and there is nothing that has so effectively inspired men with such sentiments and quickened them to such conduct as the voice of Religion.

There are those who will maintain the

contrary. They will remind us of the many crimes that have been committed in the name of Religion. They will tell us of the many acts of bigotry and hatred and "man's inhumanity to man" that have had the sanction of one or the other religious sect. How numerous the religious wars, how frequent the persecutions and expulsions, how multitudinous the martyrs that we encounter in the history of Religion! All this is true, and pity 'tis 'tis true; yet, the fact remains that it is not this sort of thing that it has been the aim and the toil of Religion to bring into the world. Excrescences of religion, all these; aberrations, falsifications: opposed to its true spirit. It is notwithstanding these temporary interruptions and deflections that the stream of Religion has continued to flood the soil of mankind with the waters of sympathy—that its beauty has continued to broaden the human heart.

If we would gauge the character of true Religion in this respect, we need but think of some of its most devoted representatives in ancient or modern times.

As we think of the Prophets, we have before us men who, while addressing primarily Israel, thought in terms of humanity. Their message, their vision, their final hope, embraced all the peoples, and their gaze was fixed upon the day when God shall be One and His name shall be One, and when God's house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.

When we think of a rabbi such as Hillel of old, we see a religious teacher whose heart went out to all alike, Jew and non-Jew, to whom to love one's fellow-man and not to do to another what was hateful to oneself expressed the essence of Religion, and who shared, no doubt, the great rabbinic teaching that the righteous of all nations shall partake of the treasures of the world to come.

Again, among moderns we need but think of such men as Leo Tolstoy, on the one hand, and the Italian rabbi Elia Benamozegh, on the other. All the world knows Tolstoy; the learned and devout rabbi of Leghorn is known to but few. But in their purpose and their in-

terpretation of the chief aim of Religion there was unanimity between the two. The aim of Religion, taught the Russian Christian mystic, is to unify mankind, to broaden human hearts. And the Italian Jewish mystic made a similar propaganda, in the name of the Jewish religion, the chief aim of his life and the substance of his numerous works, crowned by that great work of his on "Israel and Humanity", which, written in French in order to reach the largest number of readers, was published after his death by a Christian disciple, and which well deserves to be universally known.

There is nothing men discuss today so much as the effects of the war. One of the paradoxes of the war has been that while it has intensified antagonisms, it has, on the other hand, also engendered that most precious of qualities, sympathy. It has had a broadening effect. Men have gotten to know one another better, to admire one another's heroism, and to share one another's sorrows, and that not only within the borders of the same country, but also beyond

them. I shouldn't be surprised if even the foes, in spite of themselves, began to sympathize with one another, as in stray instances has happened already. Such are the beautiful passion-flowers springing up in the blood-soaked fields of combat. *Tzaroth hirhibu naphshi* "Miseries have broadened my soul!"—humanity may well say today.

We have read the little story, called "The Three Things", of the American lad —a young snob—who went to the war, and there, amid the common strife and suffering, learnt the threefold lesson of human kinship which cured him of the bigotry of class, race, and creed. And the case of that lad is typical. It is one of the gains of the war. "One of the great effects of the war," says René Bazin, "will be that it will make many men know themselves and their fellow-men." It has already filled French letters, he says, with numerous signs of that "first virtue—sympathy of man for man."

What forms the paradox of war, is the normal purpose of Religion: to increase

sympathy, to broaden the heart of man.

"Where rests religion but in sympathy?
The wider this the greater is our race;
The claims of others never to deny,
The love of others never to efface!"

To such purpose the masters of the Jew's religion have addressed themselves from of yore. It is such age-long teaching that has made the Jewish people what they have been—a compassionate race; what all true-blue Jews are— *rahmanim bne rahmanim:* compassionate sons of compassionate sires; and that has made the Jewish heart a synonym for tenderness, compassion, and sympathy.

And such we may well wish the effect of Religion to be in our own lives. We might well try to have it broaden our hearts—to make our hearts the abode of sympathy. Robert Burns has taught us to pray for the gift to see ourselves as others see us; but how much finer even than this it is to pray for the gift to see others as they see themselves—for the gift of sympathy! There is nothing like it as a means

of beauty and happiness in life. It is the secret even of outward success. Mrs. Burnett illustrates it in her fine story: "T. Tembaron." The hero of that story goes through all kinds of struggles and trials, and is thrown in all sorts of strange situations; but in them all he is helped by one leading quality: he tries to understand others, to put himself into their places, to read their souls and to help them. That is what helps him through all kinds of difficult situations and gains for him in the end his own advancement and happiness.

What need for such sympathy there is in the world—in our own environment—in our own practice!

If our religion is deep and true, it will fill us increasingly with this quality! And the love of this quality will make us the more eager for the faith that teaches it.

> "I will run the way of Thy commandments, for Thou dost—it does—broaden my heart!"

III

THE MORAL WORTH OF RELIGION

מפקודיך אתבונן על כן שנאתי כל ארח שקר

"THROUGH THY PRECEPTS I GET UNDERSTANDING: THEREFORE, I HATE EVERY FALSE WAY."
—*Psalm* cxix, 104.

VERY pithily the poet here tells us what a debt he owes to Religion in the ethical conduct of his life. It is from the Divine precepts that he derives the sort of intelligence that makes of him a moral being, that leads him in the right path, that keeps him from every false way. "Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore, I hate every false way!"

Morality to the Psalmist means a deliberate and enlightened choice, it implies the hatred of one sort of way and the love of another, it means a struggle against the false and in behalf of the right: and in all this strife and ascent he proudly confesses that he is helped by the Divine pre-

cepts, by his religious convictions and faith.

It is one of the chief merits of Religion that it has rendered a similar service to all its true adherents, that it has helped men and women in their ethical struggle, in their fight for a moral formation of their life. "The end of Religion," Coleridge has said, "is the improvement of our Nature and Faculties." More particularly this applies to the promotion of our moral nature and the triumph of our ethical faculties.

There is nothing that matters so much to the character of our life as the triumph of morality—as the victorious issue of our ethical struggle. For, no one can be said really to understand the nature of true morality who does not know that it represents a struggle—a conflict between opposed tendencies within us, a fight between different, contradictory aspects of our nature. We sometimes speak of certain people as unmoral. We mean by it people that have no idea of any level of conduct higher or better than the one they occupy—that are not familiar with the sort of aspiration and

struggle within the bosom of a man that spurs him to ethical heights. Where there is no such struggle, no triumphant rejection of the worse and choice of the better, there is no morality of the highest sort.

And Religion has time and again proven of tremendous worth to human beings by coming to their aid in the course of just such struggle, while engaged in the combat for moral triumph.

Perhaps no philosophic theory in recent years has gained such a widespread following as that propounded by Dr. Sigmund Freud, and commonly known as psychoanalysis. According to this theory of Dr. Freud's, the fundamental unit of our human consciousness is not sensation, but wish, and our whole psychical life is the result and the expression of our wishes. Some of our wishes are conscious, and others unconscious; but they are all important to the molding of our life, whether normal or abnormal, and in the direction of our conduct.

According to this teaching, we all have two kinds of wishes, good ones and

bad ones, rational ones and morbid ones, and character lies in the suppression of our morbid wishes, and in the enlightened pursuit and realization of the higher and more rational ones. There is within us a psychic censor, we are taught, which in our waking hours prevents the morbid wishes from playing havoc with our life. It is when this psychic censor is off guard, inactive, —as when we are asleep or forget ourselves—that our morbid wishes come to the fore and disclose what manner of man we are inwardly. The psychic censor, thus, is our ethical guide and benefactor.

This theory, I say, of late has found many adherents; and no doubt, its application has done some good. I know people who have really been helped by it. But what it is hard to understand is that people actually should consider it something entirely new. If morality is a struggle between the upper wishes and the lower wishes, and ethical triumph means the victory of the psychic censor within us, then it is something that the world surely has been taught time and time again, and by

none so clearly and emphatically as by the leading Jewish teachers of all ages. One of the master-poems of the world, Goethe's Faust, is based on this very theme—the struggle between the higher and the lower wish in the breast of Faust: we witness the hero's temporary defeat and downfall, and later on his purification through a higher love. The great poet, however, has here dealt with an idea frequently dwelt upon by Jewish teachers in their depiction of the two wills—or wishes—found in the human heart: the good wish and the bad wish—*yetzer ha-tob* and *yetzer hara*, and of the struggle ever going on between them. "Sin lieth at the door," says the poet of Genesis,—at the door of thy heart—"and unto thee shall be its desire: but thou shalt rule over it!" Wherever the good wish triumphs over the evil wish, there we have morality. Perhaps the fact that Dr. Freud is a Jew may account for the similarity of his ethical theory to the ancient rabbinic teaching.

The great factor in his ethical scheme, however, is the psychic censor. It is the

psychic censor that prevents the bad wishes from coming to the fore, and promotes the cause of the good wishes. May we not, however, ask this question: Who shall take care of the psychic censor within us? Who or what shall guard it? And who or what shall supervise or direct its decisions? And whence came it in itself, and whence derived it its intuitions or propensities? It is just here that Religion comes into play. Call it psychic censor, if you will,—this power within us that struggles toward the good and makes for morality: whatever it is, it has been shaped and directed by the force of Religion, it has been refined by the influence of Religion, and its very existence within our hearts is due to that process of religious training and moral enlightenment which has formed—in Lessing's phrase —the Divine education of the human race.

The moral struggle itself is the most superb part of human life. No one is exempt from it. It determines the worth of a man. The ancient rabbis were wont to say that the greater the man, the more fierce the

war of passions within him. No idle conceit, this! The autobiography of every great man illumines it. Some of the world's greatest saints have gone through storms of wildest passion ere they reached the heights of holiness. And even then they were not secure from renewal of the combat. It is one of the beauties, and of the human touches, of the Jewish Bible that it gives us a peep into this storm-centre of the human heart by revealing the moral struggle of such men as Moses and David and Solomon, and all the rest: they all had their temptations, they all had their struggles, they all had their failures: it was the battle-field of their character, the laboratory of their moral nature. Nor, is there any one of us, however exalted and mighty, that is free from such struggle. It is this very struggle, however, that marks our worth, our moral magnitude, our ethical growth.

> "When the fight begins within himself,
> A man's worth something.
> The soul awakes and grows!"

And Religion has been a blessing to men,

because very often, if not always, it has come to their aid in this struggle, and helped them win it.

We cannot help admitting that Religion has meant restraint—the sort of restraint which is the first step in morality. We all know the old story of Joseph's temptation—old but ever new. What was Joseph's attitude in his hour of moral peril? "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" It was a case of Religion coming to a man's help in the form of restraint. And those who think that the day for such help at the hands of Religion is gone, who fancy that twentieth century men and women have risen to a height where it is possible for them to carry on the ethical life without the aid of restraint, such, I say, live in a fools' paradise. Often do I hear men spurn the ascetical phase of Religion. It is not Jewish, we are told. There would be little worth to our Jewish religion if it did not teach us some degree of asceticism; and it is false to say that it did not teach it in the past. Asceticism means self-discipline, it means self-

mastery, it means self-restraint for moral ends, for spiritual ends; and it is precisely because Religion has stood for a rational asceticism that it has helped the moral life of men and women. Moreover, it is because we have cast asceticism to the winds that our own ethical fibre has weakened.

Yet, restraint is chiefly negative. There is a more positive way in which Religion has been of worth to morality. It is by the ideal it has held up before men. I think of the Jewish religion when I say that this ideal has been holiness. Think of what it means to demand of men and women that they shall be holy even as God is holy! Still, this is what our religion has ever demanded. And our teachers have kept on explaining that this means an imitation of the Divine qualities—of goodness, of purity, of justice, of compassion. How, we may ask, is it possible for man to grow as holy as God? That is just it—respond our teachers—we cannot approach the holiness of God, but we may strive toward it; and it is in such striving that lies our worth and nobility. It is impossible for men and

women to have such an ideal before them, without being stimulated in their moral ascent.

Unfortunately, ascent often means fall. Without numerous slips and failures, no one can climb a high mountain. The climbing of the mountain of morality means frequent slips. Who has not sinned? "There is not a righteous man upon earth," says the Bible sage, "that doeth good, and sinneth not." It is the very man engaged in the pursuit of goodness that is apt to slip, to fail, to miss the mark. To aspire means to err. "There never was a saint so great as to be immovable," says Master Eckhart, the great medieval mystic. Here again Religion has helped by teaching the possibilities and powers of penitence.

There is nothing that has meant more to man on the ethical side than the opportunity of penitence. For it is through penitence that men and women have recovered a life of worth and dignity who otherwise would have perished in sin and despair. It is this moral worth of penitence that Verhaeren depicts so powerfully in

his greatest drama, *The Cloister*. In penitence, not claustral concealment, lies moral salvation. Penitence is beneficent, it betokens ethical energy, and augments our moral capacity. "Greater is the penitent," teach the rabbis, "than the person wholly unacquainted with sin." Insofar as Religion has held out a helping hand to penitents, and still does so, it has been of incalculable worth to the ethical life of the world.

Every now and then people have thought that they might get along in their moral life without the aid of Religion. But invariably they have realized their folly and returned to Religion for ethical assistance. It is such a phenomenon we observe at present, for instance, in France. One great problem there today is the increase of families—the cessation of race suicide, the stoppage of birth control (though among us there are at this moment even religious teachers who proclaim the teaching of a knowledge of birth control the great ethical problem of the day!) And it is remarkable with what unanimity the writers of

France now invoke the help of Religion in the conduct of their propaganda for the moral resuscitation of their country. "Natural morality," says Henri Lavedan, "is today less sufficient than ever to form a perfect school of the best human conduct: Religion alone teaches a morality of the first order and has the force to prescribe it, the power and the gift to quicken it, to enflame it, to render it alive and glorious, to make it a necessity, a commandment."

And this is true everywhere. The worth of our manhood, of our womanhood, lies in our moral achievements; and to that end, we need the help of Religion. It is the glory of Religion that it wields such an effect. Hence, let us seek it!

> "Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore, I hate every false way!"

IV

THE JOYOUS EFFECT OF RELIGION

זמרות היו לי חקיך בבית מנורי

"THY STATUTES HAVE BEEN MY SONGS IN THE HOUSE OF MY PILGRIMAGE."—*Psalm* cxix, 54.

THERE is a world of beauty and meaning in this verse. In a few words it expresses what men time and again have tried to say about the effect of Religion, and what certain men have particularly tried to say in recent years.

It is Mathew Arnold who declared some years ago that the best part of Religion is its poetry, and since his day this has been re-affirmed a number of times. Poetry makes for exhilaration, for enthusiasm, for the joy of life. Poetry is the true joy of life. Just this is what the Psalmist tells us about the part of Religion in his life: it is the joy, the gladness, the poetry of his life. Uncertain though his life be, full of

trials and vicissitudes, transient and wearisome though it be, his faith makes it full of joy. "Thy statues have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."

It is no sheer accident that there should be agreement on this subject between poets as remote from each other as the Psalmist and Mathew Arnold and poets even more recent than the latter. Rather is it due to the fact that it lies in the very nature of Religion to fill life with joy—to permeate it with a true and enduring gladness; and all genuinely religious men and women have experienced and confessed it. There is no verse more beautiful, none more true, in the Psalter than the one which says: "Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart"—and both the beauty and the truth of it have frequently been verified by people living a genuine religious life.

There are good reasons why this fact should prove of particular interest to us of today. If there is anything we are asked nowadays to cultivate most assiduously it is the habit of gladness, a joyous disposi-

tion and attitude of mind. There is no cult so popular at present as that of happiness. Happiness is said to be—and perhaps it is —the chief object and purpose of life, and as a means to happiness people are urged constantly to be glad, to be joyous, to smile. There is no end to the treatises and plays and magazine articles that of late have been devoted to this theme, discussing it from every possible angle. We have had all kinds of new doctrines of late; but one of the most popular seems to be this gospel of gladness, the doctrine of salvation by smiles.

It is for this reason, I say, that the old poet's reference to the joyous effect of Religion upon his life ought to interest us particularly. No doubt, joy is one of the greatest factors in life, and the possession of it an important part of happiness. And, no doubt, it is right that we should try to be joyous. It is well to remember, however, that only that kind of joy is worth anything that comes from a true and trustworthy source, that is a genuine part and offspring of one's life. Joy that is a mere

pretense—gladness that is merely put on, because it has become the common fashion to be glad and to smile—such joy, one need hardly be told, is worthless, it is an empty show, the laughter of fools, sure to leave the heart more hollow and doleful than ever, and life much more poor in happiness.

If we are conscious of the futility and wrongness of life, if we are oppressed with diverse sorrows and troubles, if things make us doubtful of the very value of existence, and then, without being offered any remedy for all these ills or any solution of our doubts, we are asked to smile and be glad, is it not like singing songs to a sorrowing heart? Moreover, is not gladness displayed, or even cultivated, under such conditions apt to be a mere form of hysteria and hyprocisy? True joy can be found on one condition only—and that is where the heart is right and ripe for it, where the inward fountains of felicity cast up the waters of joy. "Light is sown for the righteous," says the Psalmist, and *le-yishre leb simha* "joy for those whose heart is right."

It is at this point that Religion's true worth comes in—that Religion enters with its tidings of joy and gift of gladness. What Religion tries to do is to keep the fountains of joy open in the human heart —to fashion human life in such wise and to fill human hearts with such faith as will make gladness inevitable, the ultimate and supreme experience. Religion does not mean to blind us to actual conditions; it does not mean to shut out from our vision what is harsh and dreary and cruel; but it means to direct us to such conduct and to fortify us with such convictions as will make the sense of joy transcend and outlast conditions, be they never so hard and trying.

It is of this fact that the finest illustration is offered by the Prophets of Israel. The Prophets were men who were not blind to actual conditions; who could have seen more clearly than they the shortcomings and wrongs of life? They were not men who went about smiling continually; indeed, some would have us believe, with George Moore, that they did nothing but

"howl": they did complain. Yet, they were the very men capable of the deepest joy, of the most unshakable spirit of hope and gladness, and no poets nor visionaries have surpassed them in the depiction of future happiness for the human race. It is one of them that wrote those most optimistic lines in literature:

> "Though the fig tree shall not blossom,
> Neither shall fruit be in the vines;
> The labor of the olives shall fail,
> And the fields shall yield no meat;
> The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
> And there shall be no herd in the stalls:
> *Yet will I rejoice in the Lord,*
> *I will joy in the God of my salvation!"*

It was Religion that wrought, in the face of danger and dreary want, such a miracle of joy.

And such joy we get from Religion, because it inspires us with sentiments, dowers us with convictions, which, above all else, form the sources of joy.

First of all, Religion means Righteousness. "Ye that love the Lord," says the Psalmist, "hate evil!" It is the Jewish defi-

nition of the first essential of Religion. Religion means righteous conduct—and there is nothing that is so certain to make for gladness as the feeling that one is on the right side of things—that one has been trying to do the right and act aright. To this rule there is no exception. It applies alike to the messenger-boy and the millionaire, the merchant and the minister, the scrub-woman and the social leader. All the operas and orchestras in the world cannot give you gladness if the canker of wrong-doing is gnawing at your heart. It is when you begin to right the wrong you have done, that the sun of joy begins to shine again in your heart, no matter who you are —whether the monk-hero of Verhaeren's poetic drama or a miserable criminal brought to book in the courts of New York. Joy resides in the right. We may have to endure trials, face all forms of hardships, fight and die: yet, if we feel it is for the right, and we are in the right, there is joy in the doing of it.

Perhaps nothing has illustrated this more unforgettably than the ancient Jew-

ish struggle that gave birth to the feast of Hanukkah.

M. Maeterlinck, in his book on the Wrack of the War, speaks with great, and proper, admiration of the heroism displayed in the present war, and especially by Belgium. Never before, he says, has such heroism been shown, not even in the most famous feats of former wars. Besides, he says, in the old wars, it was professional soldiers that were engaged. It was not the whole nation that fought, but a delegation, a military selection. And he winds up by asking, "Can you find a people, even among the greatest, at the end of six months of a war compared to which all others look like child's play, of a war that threatened and absorbed all its life and all its possessions, can you find in history, not an example—for there is none—but some resemblance to all this that would permit you to assume that that people would not have bent, would not at least, though but for a moment, have lowered its look toward an inglorious peace?"

In his survey and surmise, written

half a year after the outbreak of the war, the great Belgian poet overlooked the Maccabees and their war. They were not professional soldiers; theirs was the case of a whole nation fighting, and not solely a military delegation; and they fought not only for months, but for years, against the greatest military power of their age, in a war that threatened and absorbed all their life and all their wealth, and never for a moment did they lower their eye to an inglorious peace. It is of them that the old chronicler says that "they fought with gladness the battle of Israel." And whence came their gladness? From the conviction that they fought for the right, for the eternal right—just as the joy of the battle today, too, can be shared only by such as believe in the righteous nature of their cause.

"In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just,
And that braggarts must
Surely bite the dust,
Press we to the field ungrieving,
In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just!"

And the other great factor for joy in Religion is faith. "The righteous liveth by faith," said the Prophet who wrote the superbly optimistic lines I quoted a moment ago. Religion means faith, and faith means joy. People of little faith are people harassed by worry, by anxiety, by sombre apprehensions. They are always afraid as to what may happen: a curtain of fear hangs over their future. In the story called "Witte Arrives", a recent writer describes the sad plight of newspaper men who are constantly haunted by the fear that their job might be taken from them and given to another. It leads to all kinds of excesses and failures. Nothing is more miserable than a life full of fear for the future—as to what may happen to your work, or your health, or your children. Now, Religion breathes faith into our heart—and the coming of faith means the flight of fear and the entry of joy.

It is because Religion has made for righteousness and faith, that it has had a joyous effect on human life, and that all its institutions and customs have added to the

joy of existence. Whoever associates Religion with gloom and melancholy, thinks falsely of it, or has in mind a defective religion. The Jewish religion often has been painted as a gloomy creed; but for those who have known and lived it truly, it has been always a source of joy and inward happiness.

And as for ourselves, it is perfectly natural and proper that we should seek joy, and that happiness of which joy is the mainspring. But let us not mistake the false for the true, the jejune for the genuine. Let us not be content with the evanescent satisfactions of a counterfeit gladness! Let us seek joy where it may most surely be found—at the fountainheads of Religion. Let us allow Religion to fill with song the house of our pilgrimage!

"The royal robe I wear
Trails all along the fields of light:
Its silent blue and silver bear
For gems the starry dust of night.

"The breath of Joy unceasingly
Waves to and fro its folds starlit,
And far beyond earth's misery,
I live and breathe the joy of it."

V

THE COMFORTING QUALITY OF RELIGION

ברוב שרעפי בקרבי תנחומיך ישעשעו נפשי

"IN THE MULTITUDE OF MY THOUGHTS WITHIN ME, THY COMFORTS DELIGHT MY SOUL."—*Psalm* xciv, 19.

OFTEN has this verse seemed to me one of the most beautiful in the Bible. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul!" It is a sentiment that must find a sympathetic echo in the heart of every thoughtful person—of every person that has had any experience whatever of life, with its conflicts and contradictions.

Few are those who do not know the meaning of fret and doubt and worry! Few are those whose thoughts are peaceable, harmonious, and clear always. Most men are beset by a multitude of thoughts—by the strife of conflicting ideas and doubts; and to such what a comfort and joy it is to

have something on which they can rely, by which they can be guided—something to give them a sense of certainty and assurance!

That's what the Psalmist found in the comforts of his faith. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul!" I have often felt like reading *berib sarapai* for *berob sarapai:* "When my thoughts are in conflict, at strife, with one another, my soul finds delight in Thy comforts, O Lord!" Well may the poet have rejoiced in his faith if it offered him such a boon—and every reflective person, every one that has shared the common doubts and tribulations of humanity, every one that knows how full life (even at its best) is of doubts and uncertainties, of questions and confusion, will appreciate what a blessing such comfort is.

"There are only two religions in the world," says Mr. Gilbert Cannan, "the religion of doubt and the religion of the humble."

We know that the Bible is full of the

religion of the humble. But those who think that in the Bible there is no such thing as doubt, and the religion of doubt, are mistaken. If that were so, the Bible would not be as great a work as it is. It is part of the splendor of the Bible that it is one of the most human works in existence —and doubt, conflict of ideas, uncertainty, is part of human life. There are many things between heaven and earth that we —human beings—do not know, that are hidden from us, that we are puzzled and uncertain about. It belongs to our human struggle and destiny that we should be in the dark about them. And the greatness of the Bible—its humanness—lies in its recognition of this side of our life. In the Bible, also, we see men confused: we see them confused about the character of human life, about the existence of evil in the world, about the relationship of God and man. That is the sort of thing the poet has in mind when he speaks of the multitude —of the strife—of thoughts within him, and when he tells us that in such periods of perplexity, in such times of mental

agony and bewilderment, his soul finds delight in the comforts of God.

As far as we know, religious faith still is the chief source of comfort that men possess under similar circumstances. I have spoken of the existence of evil in the world that served to perplex the men of the Bible. But though many ages have passed since, and men have advanced in different ways, the evil of the world has never yet been eliminated. To this day poets and philosophers grapple with the problem of it. Why is there so much suffering in the world—and especially why is there so much suffering which seems wholly unnecessary, and which our reason seems totally unable to explain? In the presence of the inexplicable ills of the world, the modern mind stands just as baffled and bewildered as did man ever in the past. It is a contemporary problem. The war has served to re-emphasize it, for we cannot help asking why all this enormity of suffering and pain should have been allowed to overtake the world and to cause so much misery among the innocent and such disappointment to every

builder of ideals and dreamer of dreams in behalf of humanity.

Of course, modern poets and philosophers have framed their answers to these questions. One says, suffering is part of God's own scheme of work and self-fulfilment; another says it is essential to the perfection of human nature; and so forth. It is this thought that Mr. Richard Watson Gilder tries to express in his courageous verse:

"Uplift thine eyes, O Questioner, from the sod!
It were no longer Life
If ended were the strife:
Man were not man, God were not truly God!"

But all this is merely a way of explaining the unexplainable, of shifting the centre of gravity. At bottom, none of the most recent sages and singers can carry us beyond the view of the Psalmist. There is only one way to front the evil of the world—I mean, the unexplainable, unconquerable evil—and that is with the eye of faith, with the courage and assurance and confidence of faith;—and there is but

one thing that really can aid and comfort us when the ordeals and perplexities of suffering have entered our own experience —and that again is faith. Beyond this the world's thought has never been able to travel.

There is a reciprocal relation between suffering and faith. First, suffering refines, deepens, intensifies our faith. Many a faith that was but formal or conventional, has become personal and genuine by passing through the furnace of sorrow and affliction.

> "For thus it is God stings us into life,
> Provoking actual souls
> From bodily systems, giving us the poles
> That are His own, not merely balanced strife."

That is what Job meant when he said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee!" And that is what Goethe meant in those famous lines of his, in which many a sufferer has found solace:

> *Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass,*
> *Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte*

Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
Der kennt Euch nicht, Ihr himmlischen
Mächte!

"Who never ate with tears his bread,
Nor, through the sorrow-laden hours
Of night, sat weeping on his bed,
He knows ye not, ye heavenly powers!"

And then again, faith refines, chastens, our sorrows—makes them endurable and a fortifying influence in our life. It is sorrow coupled with faith, as Paul Bourget has pointed out in one of his stories, that purifies and ennobles. "In order not to be corrupted by suffering," he says, "one must accept one's trials as a chastening and redemption. It is not our sorrow that makes us better; it is our faith." Without faith, sorrow is very apt to deaden and dull our spirit, to make us callous and indifferent. Faith and sorrow, going hand in hand, help each other.

There is another fact of our experience that has formed an everlasting source of doubt. I refer to the hereafter. Who knows what awaits us beyond the tomb? Many have speculated on this subject, and human thought has been divided about

it. No one can prove anything in regard to it, so that no vestige of doubt shall be left.

"Dear beauteous Death! the jewel of the just,
Shining no where, but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond the dust;
Could man outlook that mark!"

And yet what could be more harmful to our life than the conclusion that this present life is all that there is to our existence—that once we are laid to rest all ceases? Would it not kill all the zest, the enthusiasm, of our life—would not such a conclusion reduce all our life and hope to dust and ashes? These are doubts and questions we all share, and especially those of us who have laid dear ones to rest: and what comes to our rescue amid such doubts, and gives us the assurance that nothing else affords, is religious faith. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul!" We are strong, we are confident, we keep up our zest and zeal because we have faith in God and faith in His goodness. "Though I

walk through the valley of shadows, I fear no evil: for Thou art with me!"

And, similarly, faith comforts and sustains us in our daily life, in whatever duty or decision we have before us. It is not only on special occasions, in the few extraordinary moments of our experience, that we experience a clash of thoughts. There is hardly a day that we are not called upon to make decisions, to pick and choose our way. Often we are bewildered. Often we are at the crossroads, perplexed. Often we do not know which way duty really lies. And not only we, but the greatest of men often found themselves in such perplexing estate. At such moments nothing is more important and more blessed than the ability to go forward in a spirit of faith, as did the children of Israel when behind them was Pharoah with his chariots and before them the weltering sea. Indeed, at such times we realize the comforting quality of Religion.

It is this quality that it behoves us to take along on our life's journey. Years come and go; we lose and gain; at times

we seem to advance, and then again we fall behind. Childhood and youth pass swiftly, and the days of maturity, too. Ofttimes the process of life confuses our mind. But let us make faith our companion, and then, come good, come ill, we shall have a sure source of comfort and strength! With the Bible poet we shall be able to say: "In the multitude, in the strife, in the confusion of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts—the comforts of a steadfast and confident faith—delight my soul!"

VI

THE INSTRUCTIVE CHARACTER OF RELIGION

מכל מלמדי השכלתי כי עדותיך שיחה לי

"I HAVE MORE UNDERSTANDING THAN ALL MY TEACHERS: FOR THY TESTIMONIES ARE MY MEDITATION."—*Psalm* cxix, 99.

AMONG the advantages that the Psalmist derives from his religion, none is more important than the one named by him in this verse, and in the passage from which the latter is taken. Religion, the Psalmist tells us, has for him instructive value. It adds to his understanding. It makes him wiser than the ancients, wiser than his enemies—it gives him more understanding than all his teachers possess.

No doubt, the Psalmist believed in education; believed in acquiring the wisdom of former generations; believed in seeking instruction and enlightenment from various sources: no doubt, he had regard for

his teachers. Yet, he felt that there was something in his religion that was not contained in the wisdom of the world; that there was a certain kind of enlightenment and understanding offered to him by his religion that surpassed greatly the wisdom and instruction of all his teachers. It was not conceit, but a profound realization of the educational value of Religion that made him utter those remarkable words: "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for Thy testimonies are my meditation."

Nor was the ancient poet unique in this respect. It has been the common experience of humanity that Religion, apart from every other benefit, possesses great educational value, that it adds to human enlightenment, that it offers something which supplements, and even transcends, every other form and department of human education. Again and again men have realized in some new way that without the kind of instruction that Religion gives, human education is incomplete.

It is true that people often have thought

of Religion and Education as antagonistic, rather than friendly and mutually helpful forces. A great deal has been said about the warfare of Science and Religion, and there are those who actually believe that Religion is meant only for the ignorant and that its actual aims are superstition and stupidity. Yet, one need but study the history of Religion without bias to realize the falsity of such an idea.

In all ages, the most educated men have been devotees of Religion. The great poets, artists, philosophers, of all times have been men of religious faith. We of today may find fault with their education or with their religion; but according to their lights, the intellectual giants of the past, as a rule, were men of Religion. And this is particularly true of Israel's religion. Whoever thinks that the Jewish religion was hostile to education, knows but little of the inner history of Judaism. Encouragement of education formed one of the chief aims of Judaism, and it is demonstrated by the fact that frequently the great teachers of the Jewish religion

were also among the foremost philosophic teachers and scientific experts of their age. In the domain of Judaism, Religion and Education were meant and encouraged to go hand in hand. But what Religion has maintained is this: that without religion, education is incomplete; without faith, knowledge, be it never so extensive and variegated, is imperfect; that there are certain branches of human study and inquiry where Religion is more potent and has a great deal more to teach than lies within the power of all other teachers and sciences. That has been the affirmation of enlightened Religion, and time and again mankind has learnt anew the truth of it.

Perhaps nothing has ever illustrated this truth as forcibly as the course of the physical sciences within the last half-century. We all know with what assurance the physical sciences were offered a generation or so ago as the great hope of humanity. In those days it was thought that the whole spiritual and mental and ethical future of mankind belonged to the physical sciences. They were to rule all education. They were

to have sole mastery over the minds. They were to answer all questions. They were to solve all the problems that ever puzzled human brain: they—biology, physics, and chemistry. Religion was to be no more. It was this proud conviction that led Bertholet, the famous French chemist, to declare: "Nature has no more secrets for us", and on the occasion of his jubilee, in 1902, to say: "Science claims today both the material, the intellectual, and the moral direction of society." The French scientist, thus, echoed the feeling of a generation.

But, the nineteenth century was not yet closed, when men began to realize the vain hopes of the sciences. Physical science has accomplished much; but that it could not form the all in all of education, the all in all of wisdom, the all in all of life, it did not take humanity very long to find out. The dawn of the twentieth century witnessed a renewal of this realization. It marked a protest against the self-sufficiency of the physical sciences. It voiced a new demand for Religion—for the spiritual sciences—

for the sort of wisdom and understanding that Religion alone can offer, and that in certain paramount matters mean more than the understanding of all other teachers and sciences.

Of course, the physical sciences have accomplished a great deal. They have helped to explore nature, to explain the workings of the laws of the universe, to enrich life. They have helped vastly to increase the marvels and the comforts of our material civilization. But one thing they have been unable to do thus far, namely, to explain life. What is life? "M. Bertholet," says a French writer, Remy de Gourmont, though by no means himself a conventional religionist, "knows what camphor is, and that is something: but what is life?" Thus far the masters of the physical sciences have toiled in vain to answer this question. "Granted that the blaze of the sun accounts for winds and waves, and hail, and rain, and rivers, and all the myriad activities of the earth, does it account for life? Has it accounted for the life of the lowest animal, the tiniest

plant, the simplest cell, hardly visible, but self-moving, in the field of a microscope?" This question is that of a modern scientist. But it reminds us of what the rabbis said long ago. *Ilmale nithkansu kol hakme ha-olam en hem yekholim libro aphilu kanaph ehad shel yattush;* "If all the scholars of the world got together, they would be unable to create even one wing of a gnat."

All the efforts of the physical sciences to account for life—for its origin—have failed, and even should science ever be able to trace the real origin of life, and by some chemical process to call life into being, it yet would be unable to explain, or to minimize the mystery, the grandeur, the miracle of it all—the miracle of human consciousness and achievement, of human idealism and personality. It is for an understanding of all this that we must still turn to Religion. It alone is able to enlighten us in regard to this—it alone can help us to understand life as something different from the stuff of the scientist—as something that sprang from the Uni-

versal Spirit, that is imbued with Divinity, that is made in the image and endures as part of God. Science can study life; Religion alone can explain it.

And, similarly, there is nothing that can teach us about the sense and purpose of life as effectively as Religion. If the discovery of the nature of life has kept the sciences busy, ascertainment of the purpose, of the sense, of life has occupied the philosophers perennially. What is the object of life? What do we live for? This is the old question, which has been diversely answered; but no answer has quite satisfied the human heart, if the religious consideration was omitted. "It is the power and the beauty of religion," says Anatole France, "that it teaches man his reason of existence and his final end." We may say, we live for pleasure; or we may say, we live for the good of others; and so forth; but all this means but little. It is evanescent. Religion alone gives an adequate answer. We live, it says, because we are part of the Divine order. Our life is part of the Divine scheme. Our work is

part of God's work; and though we may not see the meaning and the relations of it all clearly, it still shall form part of the Divine plan.

This conviction we need in order to find pleasure in our life and satisfaction in our work. It is a conviction that we do not get from the diverse sciences, though it is paramount. It is from Religion that we get it, and getting it, dispel that sadness and that distaste for life, which, as Anatole France rightly says, is the result of our not knowing the reason of our existence, why we are in this world, and what we are come here to do. In this regard, Religion surpasses all other instruction.

This is the great lesson mastered by the hero of one of the finest novels the present war has inspired, Mr. Wells's "Mr. Britling Sees it Through." The hero is a man of education, a thinker, an author, equipped with all the philosophic and scientific knowledge of our age. But the war has broken down all his ideas, swept away all his dreams, exposed the hollowness of the

surrounding civilization. It has aroused within him the question as to the sense and use of life, particularly when the universal catastrophe has come nearest to his own heart through the death of his son. It is then that the full meaning of Religion first takes hold of him, that he realizes what the instruction of Religion means to life, that he realizes what God means, that he realizes that Religion is the beginning and the end of life and that no man has really begun to live until he has taken God into his life.

There is but one thought I would add, and namely with reference to our daily conduct.

Here, too, the instruction of Religion surpasses all other teachings. How shall I order my daily conduct? This is a question we all have to settle. It means our happiness. Often the answer has been complicated exceedingly. Human conduct has become a complex thing: it has become a matter of prudence, of diplomacy, of intrigue, of many devices—both for nations and individuals. That this complication of

conduct has not augmented human happiness, none will gainsay. If there is one lesson the present war teaches, it is that national or individual conduct built up on sophistication and diplomacy is no guarantee of great happiness for mankind. Against all this wisdom of the world stands the old ideal of conduct put up by Religion. It is "to do justice, to love mercy, to walk humbly with thy God." It is what is sometimes called "the wisdom of fools"; it is what has been called the wisdom of the humble; it is the kind of wisdom that is hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed to babes. It is the kind of wisdom poets have often striven to express under different forms—the Parsifal wisdom—the wisdom of simplicity and integrity which with its sword of faith cuts asunder the whole web of wordly sophistication and intrigue. But it is certain that conduct governed by such wisdom still leads to deeper satisfaction and happiness than all others.

"It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes,

But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Our knowledge is a torch of smoking pine
That lights the pathway but one step ahead,
Across a void of mystery and dread.
Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
By which alone the mortal heart is led
Unto the thinking of the thought divine!"

None can deny that the world has traveled far on the road of enlightenment. But in several matters of supreme import we need Religion still. When it is a question of interpreting this life of ours, and the sense and purpose of it, and the quintessence of conduct, nothing is so needful as Religion. Let us use it, then, and we too might be able to say:

"I am wiser than all my teachers,
for Thy testimonies are my meditation."

VII

THE INSPIRATIONAL VALUE OF RELIGION

האל המאזרני חיל ועל במותי יעמידני

"IT IS GOD THAT GIRDETH ME WITH STRENGTH AND SETTETH ME UPON MY HIGH PLACES."—*Psalm* xviii, 33-34.

WHEN we read the eighteenth Psalm, we cannot help realizing that it is one of the most beautiful and poetical in the whole Psalter. It is full of rich and varied imagery and its diction is sublime. But no less sublime is the thought that throbs in all its lines. It is the thought of what a source of strength and inspiration God has been to the poet. He cannot say enough about it. His heart is full of it and he searches almost in vain for words to express it. God has been his delight—his lamp and his illumination—his sword and shield—his buckler: God has helped him to run through troops and scale walls—He has taught him to fight and

to triumph. In a word, Religion has played a tremendous inspirational part in his life, and thus it has meant more to him than all his poetic faculty finds it possible to utter. "It is God that girdeth me with strength, that maketh my way perfect, and setteth me upon my high places."

If this inspirational character of Religion is what made the old poet feel so ineffably grateful and jubilant, may we not say that herein also has lain a good part of its merit and value for humanity at large?

"He setteth me upon my high places!"

The high places count for most in the life of men and women—in the history of mankind. I mean the ideals to which men and women lift their souls, the striving after which forms what interest and beauty this life of ours may possess, and the attainment of which constitutes the unfading glory of human life. Take ideals out of human life, and what is left of it—what is there to make it desirable or durable? It makes no difference what else our life may contain—no matter how much money we may possess, how many comforts, and

honors, if there is not something to which we aspire, that we consider it worth striving and struggling for, if we have no high places of our own to which our eyes are raised—life is but an empty show.

Such is the import of our ideals. And nothing is of such worth and blessing to us as the force that girds us with strength in the pursuit of our ideals, that teaches us the path toward them, that inspires us to strive after our high places, and helps us to attain them: sets us upon them.

This is the part that Religion has played in the history of humanity. Insofar as our civilization has meant a pursuit of ideals, and a partial realization of ideals, it has been to a large extent the effect of Religion. When we think of the most fertile ages of human activity, we think of periods when Religion was a potent influence in human life. Even the masterpieces of pagan civilization were the offspring, as has often been pointed out, of the religious beliefs and passions of the pagan world. When pagan religion decayed, there set in also the decadence of the art and the

poetry and the social life of the pagan world. "Wherever God sets for a period, like the sun," says Jean Paul Richter, "there the world steps into darkness." There are those who think that in the future it may be possible for the world to be governed by atheism and materialism, and yet continue to work on the structure of civilization, and add to its strength and beauty. A bold prophecy and speculation, this! It certainly has no warrant from the past. Hitherto it is Religion that has been the most potent factor in the great ages of civilization, and the most powerful inspiration behind them.

And this fact we find illustrated not only in the general history of mankind, but also in the lives of those men who by their toil and teaching, by their ideals and achievements, have enriched the life of humanity and increased its beauty and happiness. There has never lived a group of men that had done more for the moral improvement of mankind than the Jewish Prophets. Of them Renan has said that they created an entirely new idea in Religion, and their

ethical teachings have never been surpassed. They were, each and every one of them, inspired by Religion—the called, the devotees, the captives of God. None of them but had a hard road to travel, much bitterness and hardship to endure. Similarly, the other benefactors of mankind in the various provinces of life: artists like Michelangelo, poets like Dante, reformers like Bright or Howard or Lincoln —to say nothing of the long line of Jewish poets and teachers, all of whom, we may say, were men of sorrow and acquainted with grief. Even poets as favored by fortune as Goethe and Browning had their trials and failures. Yet all these men remained true to their task, clung to their commission and to their ideals, because they were men of Religion, and from its hidden fountains they drew strength and inspiration. "It is God that girdeth me with strengh, that maketh my way perfect, and setteth me on my high places!"

What is it, we may ask, that invests Religion with such inspirational power? The answer lies in the very character of

Religion, as it is understood not by those who merely profess it outwardly, but by those who apprehend and live it inwardly—with whom Religion is not a mere pious rhetoric, but an ever-present part of life. To such people Religion is spirit: religion is action; religion is faith, and where Religion means these things it cannot help but serve as a source of inspiration and strength.

Religion is spirit, I say, and it helps us to construe all life in terms of spirit. How much of our unhappiness does not come from our attaching too much importance to the material side of life—to material power, possessions, and glory! Much of the hatred and strife of the world springs from that, and of course a great deal of our unhappiness. From all this he is free who has come to realize that the most glorious, the most beautiful, the most vital and most enduring thing in the world is not matter but the spirit, of which the material world is but an external and transient expression.

"Only for him," says an old German philosopher, "is there such a thing as freedom

and infinitude who knows what the world is and what man is, who has clearly solved for himself the great riddle of the difference between the two, and how they act upon each other; a riddle in whose ancient darkness thousands still perish, slavishly following, as they do, the most deceptive appearances, because their own light is extinguished." "What they name the world" he adds, "is to me man; and what they name man, is my world. To them the world is always first, and the spirit is for them but a small guest in the world, uncertain of its place and strength. For me, the spirit is the first and only thing, for what I know as world is but the most beautiful work of the spirit and its self-created mirror."

It is the realization of the world in terms of spirit, that minimises the trials and the sorrows of the material world and enriches life with inspiration—the inspiration of beauty, of infinitude, of grandeur, of youth.

But Religion quickens, also, to action. Religion means not merely cognition, but

also contact—it means not only cognition of the universal Spirit but also contact with it, and we cannot experience such contact without being quickened with energy.

There are those who identify religion with lassitude and inactivity. But that is not the sort of religion that has been exemplified by the greatest names in the annals of Religion—by Moses, or Isaiah, or Ezra, and all the rest. Such men, as a French writer has said, were not mere men of contemplation, impotent dreamers, fakirs perched on their pillars. "The world," says Edouard Schuré, "has not known greater men of action than these, in the most pregnant, most incalculable sense of the word. Their names shine as stars of first magnitude in the sky of the souls. They are called Krishna, Buddha, Zoroastre, Hermes, Moses, Pythagoras, Jesus, and they were mighty molders of the spirit, formidable awakeners of soul, beneficent organizers of society. Living only for their idea, ever-ready to die for it, and knowing that death for Truth is the most efficacious and supreme form

of action, they have created the sciences and the religions, and also the literatures and the arts, by whose essence we are still nourished and made to live."

The greatest seers and saints were men of spiritual energy, ever seeking to express the energy within them in the form of service to the world. It matters not what particular form their service took: impelled to serve they felt, and their chief unhappiness came from the obstacles and hindrances that their will to serve encountered. "Man's unhappiness," says Carlyle, "comes of his greatness: it is because there is an infinite in him which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the finite." Once we grow conscious of that infinite force within us, we yearn, we strive, we toil to express it—we must express it. That is the consciousness Religion gives us, and that is why it fills us with inspiration to action and to service.

And Religion means faith. And faith means adventure and eager setting forth upon all manner of enterprise. Faith

means romance—the very opposite of monotony and dreariness and gloom. There is no countenance so flabby and dead as where the stars of faith are extinct. Faith means perseverance. It means to be able to perdure. It means a lamp in the darkness —something to lead and help and shield us amid all those untoward events that one must needs encounter on life's path. When we are trying to do our part in the world, when we are seeking to follow our ideal along the zigzag of life, when we are dealing with the diverse stern facts of our experience, be it hardship, or weariness, or the sense of futility, or adversity, or sorrow —wherever our lines be cast—that is the thing we need above all: faith—faith in the rightness of things, in the stability of justice and the permanence of love, in the final triumph of the good and the true. "Faith," some one has said, "is the courage of the spirit that thrusts itself forward, certain of finding the truth." Such faith one source alone will yield, and that is Religion. And giving us faith, Religion gives us inspiration for life and its enter-

prises, for life and its adventures.

Such inspiration we all need. Let us then cherish the treasures of Religion, and we shall have it abundantly. We shall have light—power—incentive. We, too, shall be able to say:

> "It is God that girdeth me with strength; He maketh my way perfect: He setteth me upon my high places!"

VIII

THE PATRIOTIC POWER OF RELIGION

באלהים נעשה חיל והוא יבוס צרינו

"THROUGH GOD WE SHALL ACQUIRE POWER, AND HE WILL TREAD DOWN OUR ENEMIES."—*Psalm* cviii, 13.

THIS is a patriotic Psalm, and no reader can mistake its nature. The poet here speaks for his people. He tries to express its needs, its aspirations, its hopes. He has a glorious vision of its ascendancy over all its foes, of whom there are many. He prophesies its triumph, and prays for it. And it is while in such a mood that he realizes the nation's need of God, and that he exclaims, in the significant words I have chosen: "Through God we shall acquire power, and He will tread down our enemies." The Psalmist's patriotic hope and determination are encouraged, fortified, sustained by his religious faith.

In this respect, the Psalmist has not remained alone, nor the people whose patriotic sentiment and hope he voiced. There has never been a time in the history of humanity that a country has not been helped and fortified by its Religion, that the highest forms of patriotism have not drawn power from the fountains of religious faith.

We may ask, What do we mean by patriotism? A recent writer has said that patriotism is the emotion of his national crowd in the heart of the individual citizen. In fact, patriotism is one of the profound and primary emotions of the individual soul. It is not merely love of country. In its essence, it means our consciousness of group, our feeling that we belong to a community, that all that means most to us in life and eternity is bound up with this group or community or country to which we belong. Patriotism takes us out of our limited self and binds us body and soul to our fellows. It is altruism. It is love of our community, and the readiness inspired

by such love to serve and to make sacrifices in its behalf.

It may be said with good reason that such patriotism is common among men, inborn. Yet, no agency has served so effectively to promote and develop it as Religion.

It is this fact that some years ago Mr. Benjamin Kidd endeavored to make clear in his book on Social Evolution, which created so profound an impression when it appeared. His thesis was that no force has done as much for the progress and development of human society as Religion, because of the principles and ideals with which Religion has ever been identified. Today this book of Mr. Kidd's may be forgotten, or neglected, but the truth of its thesis still stands.

Patriotism of the kind that has made for human progress has been promoted mightily by the force of Religion. Because Religion, more than any other social agency, has taught the great principles without which there can be no progressive and fruitful patriotism. Religion has

taught selflessness. It has taught service. It has taught self-sacrifice. And on these foundation-principles the whole structure of patriotism is built up; through them mankind has made whatever progress it has achieved in the elevation and improvement of social life.

Such is the power of Religion behind patriotism. We find it illustrated in the history of the various peoples of antiquity. We find it illustrated in the history of Israel. And we find it illustrated most vividly and forcefully in the present war.

There are those who wonder how it is possible for the several nations of Europe to mingle their love of country with Religion; how it is possible for them severally to invoke God's help and to pray to Him for victory. There are those who can see in such procedure nothing so much as blasphemy and hypocrisy. Neither can they see how it is possible to speak of the present war having brought about a revival of Religion in Europe.

Yet, the facts speak for themselves. The war has brought in its train a re-

vival of religious enthusiasm, it has restored the dominion of faith, and it has frequently moved the various embattled nations to fervent prayer for strength and victory. For our part, we may consider it all a peculiar form or expression of Religion; according to our own sympathies, we may approve or disapprove of such prayers, we may hope for their fulfilment or failure. But the fact remains that the patriotism of the several nations finds comfort in such religious outpourings and exercises, and is sustained by it, that it feels itself entitled to call upon God, and, moreover, that religious faith keeps on generating that spirit of selflessness and sacrifice and service which are necessary to the conduct of the war, and which, I may say, constitute its sole solace and glory.

I know it has been pointed out that there have been noteworthy patriots who were not religious. Professor Leuba, in his recent volume on The Belief in God and Immortality, makes the point that the commanding figures of the war in France

have made no official mention of Religion and are free-thinkers. Whether this is accurate or no, I do not know. But I do know that in no country has there been a more general and genuine reawakening of Religion than in France, if French literature of today be any criterion, and, moreover, that the general rejuvenation and reinvigoration of France in recent years, which, indeed, has made her valorous exploits possible, has been intertwined with a latter-day religious revival. The fact that Church and State were separated in France several years ago, does not mean that Religion as such was weakened. On the contrary, it has helped strengthen it, just as separation of the two in our Republic has served to the advantage of Religion, rather than the contrary.

And if we go to history, what do we find? It teaches us that the foremost and most beneficent patriots of the world have been men of Religion. Think of a man like John Bright, or a man like Gladstone, or Mazzini: or think of those two men whose names shine with

undying brilliance in the sky of American patriotism — George Washington and Abraham Lincoln: to whatever country we turn, or whatever period, we discover that the most progressive and beneficent patriots, the most energetic and self-sacrificing, were men of Religion, and namely, not of a mere formal religion, but of a sincere, spontaneous religion, of a religion overflowing with inspiration and power, spelling initiative and courage. And in this regard, the heroes of the nations but serve to express the religious trust and fervor that form the driving force behind the patriotism of their several peoples.

There is, however, one thing in particular that Religion has ever sought to do for patriotism, and we must not overlook it. Religion has sought to purify patriotism, to ennoble it. It has sought to hallow patriotism.

There are two kinds of patriotism in the world—the one is commonly designated as jingoism or chauvinism; the other is the true patriotism. Jingoism is patriotism in its rudimentary form, the

patriotism of the mob. It speaks the language of boastfulness and brutality. For the moment, it may seem the more popular and more proper form of patriotism, and any one not sharing it, may be considered an enemy to his people; but it is not the best form of patriotism in the long run. Patriotism wedded to Righteousness, suffused with Righteousness, saturated with the purpose and passion of Righteousness —that is the best, the most durable, the noblest and most beneficent form of patriotism.

Of this species of patriotism, the Prophets of Israel served as among the earliest and most illustrious examples. That they were patriots none could doubt. They loved their country. They wrought and suffered for it. They prayed and strove for it. They would readily have died for it. But love for country meant for them consecration to Righteousness—a sacred, inviolable pledge to maintain what was true and just and humane among their compatriots and through them in the world at large. Such was the patriotism

of the Prophets—misunderstood ofttimes, but immortal, and making for the immortality of their people. And these Prophets have had their disciples and followers through the ages, and they have them today, thank Heaven, scattered here and there in Europe and America. There is Edward Carpenter and Bertrand Russell and Romain Rolland and Israel Zangwill, and others of their school: it is such patriotism—the patriotism of Righteousness and Humanity—that forms the one hope of Civilization.

It would have been unnatural if the war had not stimulated the discussion of patriotism among us in America. We have heard various reasons advanced for a livelier and more ardent patriotism. Appeals have been made to our material interests, to the part America is destined to play in the industrial and commercial, as well as the political, life of the future. Good reasons, these, for patriotic activity! But let us not forget one thing. True patriotism we can derive from one source only—from Religion—the kind of Religion that

teaches not self-seeking and self-interest, but their opposites: selflessness, and service, and sacrifice for the common good of our community, of our country, of our kind.

Yes, of our kind! The most alluring record of democracy, says Walt Whitman, is that it alone can bind, and ever seeks to bind, all nations, all men, of however various and distant lands, into a brotherhood, a family. "Democracy," he adds, "means not only individualism, that half which isolates. There is another half, which is adhesiveness or love, that fuses, ties and aggregates, making the races comrades, and fraternizing all. Both are to be vitalized by Religion (the sole worthiest elevator of man or States) breathing into the proud material tissues the breath of life."

The patriotism of the future will go beyond the borders of one's country. It will embrace the welfare of other countries, and as the patriotism of the past was made possible by the readiness of the individual to sacrifice himself

for the good of his country, so the civilization of the future will be promoted by an increased readiness of nations to sacrifice their own temporary interests or desires on the altar of the common good of humanity and its future.

"Through God," says the Psalmist, "we shall acquire power!" The more true religion we have, the deeper and the more durable our patriotism—the more powerful and permanent it shall be; and the more true religion there will be in the world, the broader and the more beneficent will patriotism grow, and the brighter our hopes for civilization and peace.

We live today in critical times. It is a momentous period, fraught with incalculable significance for the whole future of our country and of mankind. It is pre-eminently a time for prayer. Let us pray for a diffusion of a high and pure patriotism among us! Let us pray for a patriotism ennobled and exalted by Righteousness, for a patriotism full of patience and fortitude, for a large and humane patriotism. Let us pray that we may be

imbued with the kind of patriotism that made Washington and Lincoln immortal, and that may yet write the name of President Wilson in the annals of immortality.

> "Through God we shall acquire power, and He will tread down our enemies!"

IX

HOW CAN WE GAIN THE BENEFITS OF RELIGION?

ישישו וישמחו בך כל מבקשיך ויאמרו תמיד יגדל
אלהים אהבי ישועתך

"THOSE THAT SEEK THEE SHALL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN THEE, AND SUCH AS LOVE THY SALVATION SHALL CONTINUALLY SAY, LET GOD BE MAGNIFIED!"—*Psalm* lxx, 5.

THAT Religion abounds in benefits is commonly acknowledged. Once we consider the effect that Religion has had on human life, we cannot help realizing its advantages. The fruits of the tree of Religion have been manifold. Religion has served to broaden human life. It has offered moral support. It has acted as a vehicle of instruction and source of inspiration. It has been a fountain of joy and of patriotic devotion.

This is not to say that Religion had not at times been used for injurious and harmful ends. Alas! it has been often abused and turned into an instrument

for the very opposite ends to those it was designed for. Time and again, Religion has been debased into fanaticism, cruelty, and superstition.

But when we strike a balance, we cannot help admitting that the advantages and benefits of Religion far outweigh its evils, both in the history of individual men and women and of the world at large. If with the aid and inspiration and guidance of Religion, the advance of mankind has been so slow and difficult, what would have happened without it? Religion has formed the divine pedagogic of the human race.

If this be true, we may well try to answer the question as to how one may obtain these diverse benefits of Religion.

There was a time when self-satisfied and superior people inclined to treat all Religion as superstition and those devoted to it as a stupid or hypocritical lot. That, however, is the case no longer. Religion has proven too mighty and too persistent a force for people to laugh to scorn. Modern poetry, as well as modern psychology, has recognized its power. "Relig-

ious faith is the foundation of hope," says Ferdinand Brunetière, one of the keenest of modern French critics, "and one will never take it away from man, for one cannot take away man's need for it."

Right now Religion is one of the most wide-spread social forces, and one cannot reckon without it. The remarkable thing is that Religion is constantly expressing itself in new ways and forms, and that no sooner does it seem to have been done away with and entombed in one form, than it is restored to life in a new one. Nor are its new incarnations as a rule better than its old forms.

People, I say, recognize today that Religion cannot be dismissed with a facile gesture of personal superiority, that it is, in reality, a genuine influence in the life of men and women, making for most desirable things—making for breadth of sympathy, for moral strength, for joy and wisdom, for service of the world—and rather than spurn it, as they used to do, people now ask the question as to how such Religion and its blessings can be ob-

tained by such as have them not. We envy those that have in their lives the help and mainstay of Religion, they say, but how can one get it who has it not?

This question, I believe, is answered by the Psalmist when he says, "Those that seek Thee shall rejoice and be glad in Thee, and such as love Thy salvation shall continually say, Let God be magnified!"

No doubt, the poet likewise was faced with the question as to who might gain access to the benefits of Religion, and how they might be found; no doubt, in his own life and experience, so full of hardships and ordeals, this question often arose, and it is in response to himself and to others, and as a result of his own spiritual history, that his answer was framed. "All those that seek Thee, O Lord, shall rejoice and be glad in Thee, and such as love Thy salvation shall continually say, Let God be magnified!" To whom shall the joy of Religion belong? Who shall share in the enthusiasm for Religion? Who shall have part in its help and greatness? Who shall be benefited by it continually, whatever life may bring?

All those that seek the Lord and love His salvation! The seekers and the lovers of God, the seekers and the lovers of Religion, which means man's union with God, they shall inherit the joy and the gifts and the glory of Religion.

Israel's religious poet thus expressed a universal truth. Religions may vary, but the central truths of the religious experience of mankind, the mainsprings of Religion in the human heart, are always the same. Whatever glimmer of hope we may cherish for the future religious unification of mankind has its origin and justification in this fact—that at core the religious yearnings and dreams and intuitions and purposes of all men are the same, that at heart religious truth is the same, and that it is only the outward forms and temporary expressions that vary. Our religion is the best for us, if we actually believe it truest and love it best. "The good and true religion," said Renan, "is for each the one which he believes and loves." The more deeply rooted our religion is in our hearts and minds, the more we shall care for it,

and seek to perpetuate it and to spread its influence abroad. But as far as the religious life in general is concerned, it depends for all men on the same factors, on the same needs, on the same habits of mind and spirit. It is this truth the Psalmist has summed up. Those that seek the Lord and love His salvation, shall rejoice and be glad in Him—and those not yet in such estate must do those things, and show that disposition, that are most likely to result in creating it.

When I try to define these things, I cannot help thinking of the case of Ernest Psichari, who died for France in the opening days of the war. The story of Ernest Psichari has attracted much attention. He was a grandson of Ernest Renan, and became noted as an author and soldier. But it is his spiritual history that attracted particular attention, not only for its own sake, but also as typical of so many of his contemporaries. He began as a free-thinker, but gradually the need and beauty and truth of Religion came into his life, and he died, though still a young man, a con-

vinced believer in Religion and a member of his own ancestral church.

This evolution was gradual, it was the result of thought, of searching, of divine desire. "There are three kinds of persons," says Pascal, "those that serve God, having found Him; those who are engaged in seeking Him, not having found Him; and those who live without seeking Him nor having found Him." Psichari was a free-thinker. But he was not only free—he was also a thinker. And being a thinker, he found his way to God. One of his biographers has said that three things about him made it possible for him to find his way to God, namely: good-will, humility, and prayer. And I doubt whether any one of us in similar plight, not yet sharing the benefits of Religion, ever can hope to do so unless he possesses or cultivates the qualities of the young French writer, traveler, and patriot. There must be good-will; there must be humility; there must be prayer. As a result of these, the joy and the benefits of Religion will come to us.

If this is true of every religion, it is

particularly true of our own. It is the peculiar distinction of the Jewish religion that it has put the core of all religion in the heart and the mind of the individual, and nowhere else. It is we ourselves that must find our way to God; no one can do it for us. Ours is not a cheap religion, and its benefits are not to be gained cheaply. If we would have it, we must live it. No paraclete can gain its benefits for us. It is there if we seek it, and in order to find it, we must have the good-will first. "In order to our perceiving divine truth," says Coleridge, "there must be a disposition in the will to embrace it." For, he adds, "no man can discourse correctly of natural things till he perceives them through sense." Likewise, "no man can reason rightly on religion till he can see the spiritual things of which religion essentially consists, beholding them with the eyes of the spirit." First, I say, there must be the disposition toward Religion, the good-will.

> "If I must want those beams I wish, yet grant
> That I, at least, may wish those beams I want."

As an ancient Jewish writer has it, "Think ye of the Lord with a good mind, and in singleness of heart seek ye Him!"

And, then, we must have humility, that humility the lack of which, as M. Brunetière has well said, "one might call the great heresy of modern times," and which by our teachers has always been held up as the root of Religion and the crown of virtue.

And we must have the habit of prayer, which does not mean merely pleading for material gifts, but which is aspiration, the reaching forth of what is best in our spiritual nature, the yearning for contact with the Divine, and which thus is the truest expression of the religious quest, as well as the finest flower of faith.

Let us cultivate good-will toward Religion; let us cultivate humility and prayer. Thus we shall have an answer to the question as to how the benefits of Religion may be gained, and perhaps be able to take some of those benefits into our own lives. And thus it may be given to us also to say

from our own experience and with personal conviction:

> "Those that seek Thee rejoice and are glad in Thee, and such as love Thy salvation shall say continually, Let God be magnified!"