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BEAUTY AND UGLINESS

VITAL LIES

STUDIES OF SOME VARIETIES OF RECENT OBSCURANTISM

BY

VERNON LEE

VOL. I

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How then may we devise one of those falsehoods in the hour of need, I said, which we lately spoke of—just one royal lie [*γενναῖόν τι ἓν ψευδομένους*] which may deceive the rulers, if that be possible, and at any rate the rest of the city?

Plato, *Republic*, iii. 414
(Jowett's Translation).

Relling. I'm fostering the vital lie in him.
Gregers. Vital lie? Is that what you said?
Relling. Yes—I said vital lie—for illusion, you know, is *the* stimulating principle.

Ibsen, *The Wild Duck.*

Turnbull & Spears, Printers, Edinburgh

TO THE MEMORY OF MY FRIEND

GIOVANNI VAILATI

WHO, BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE, EXPLAINED

THE INCOMPATIBILITY BETWEEN

"WILLING TO BELIEVE"

AND

"MAKING ONE'S IDEAS CLEAR"

PREFACE

SCIENCE is for ever invalidating some part of its statements, because it is for ever perfecting their whole; and reason, as it develops, takes its own self as subject for its criticism, asking, with Berkeley, Hume and Kant, and now with the Pragmatism of Peirce: What can we know? or rather, How do we know? Encouraged by, and taking advantage of this, the minds reluctantly shaken in their religious habits, are laying about them for excuses to disbelieve whatever has made them unbelievers. They allege reason's criticism of its own nature and methods to discredit reason's conclusions. They argue that if religion is made by man it must be worth re-making. Philological exegesis, anthropological study of myths and institutions, psychology and metaphysical analysis, and all the sciences which have undermined what used to be called *religious truths*, are now invoked to re-instate some portion of them in the garb of desirable and valuable errors.

Some of these thinkers, unable to maintain that the ideas which they cling to are true, put their backs to the wall and explain that their value is symbolic, mythical, in short, dependent upon their being partially false.

Another group—or the same group at another moment—refuse to forgo the compelling power, or at least the reassuring sound, of the word *true*; and these apply their logic to re-defining truth in such a way as to include edifying and efficacious fallacy and falsehood.

It is to both these groups, and any cross-groups derived from them, that I venture to apply the name of Obscurantists, because they employ, they increase, and, for emotional and sometimes æsthetic reasons, they prefer, a certain amount of darkness, or at all events, a convenient, a reposeful, a suggestive intellectual penumbra.

Moreover, these thinkers have attached themselves, without exception, to the philosophical school which makes *Life* the central and ultimate and paramount mystery. Hence I take the liberty of symbolizing the various vague creeds (clung to by themselves, or recommended for the use of others) of these intellectual Obscurantists in the formula given by Ibsen's Doctor Relling, and calling them, and these studies of them, "Vital Lies."

March 1912.

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PART I
THEORETICAL PRAGMATISM

INTRODUCTION TO PART I

FIRST of all let me explain that the whole of this first half of the present book was written—indeed, some of it was already in type (for the *North American Review*)—before the death of the late Professor William James. And of this I am glad (even though I wince at the ungraciousness of a posthumous attack), because the recent loss of a man so genial, in the German as well as the English sense of the word, so impulsively, generously appreciative and creative, would have made it utterly impossible for me to discuss his works (if indeed at all!) in the tone I have adopted. Now this tone is the only one in which such highly personal and personally self-contradictory improvisations could be discussed without absurdity, at least by a reader who, like myself, was full of mixed and warring admiration and aversion for their most mixed and warring ideas.

Similarly, I want it to be thoroughly understood that in dealing with the work of the late Professor James I am attacking and condemning only that "Will-to-Believe" element with which this very suggestive and delightful thinker has, in my opinion, alloyed, debased, diminished so much of his own intellectual wealth.

It has been pointed out to me that this inferior, and, I think, worthless admixture in Professor James's work was due to a certain lack of grip and continuity and order which was the drawback of the spontaneity and impulsive appreciativeness, the passionate humanness, of his mind. Of course a greater grip and continuity and order, a greater *hardness* (to use his favourite expression) would have saved him from the "Will-to-Believe" (both as a formulated theory and as an insidious mental practice), even as a better state of health may defend you from infection which is, as people say, in the air. But the infection, the microbe, is not the same thing as the patient's congenital weakness and momentary being below par. And so, although his naturally discontinuous, diffluent thought and his more and more tentative and hurried exposition and expression undoubtedly destined Professor James to become the most illustrious victim of this intellectual epidemic, and also one of its chief centres of infection, the "Will-to-Believe" virus would have existed and made havoc in latter-day thought if Professor James had not been there to give it its name and to display, even in his own person, its various distinctive phases. Now it is merely because this "Will-to-Believe" philosophy is nowadays rife on every side that I am dealing with Professor James; and I am dealing with him, as already remarked, only in so far as the chief exponent and the chief example of this particular intellectual tendency.

Furthermore, I wish to premise that it is also because of the value of that part of Pragmatism which Professor James (and also Doctor Schiller) took over from Mr. C. S. Peirce, that it seems to me necessary to arraign Pragmatism as a whole for the adoption of that alien and hostile element of "Will-to-Believe" with which these, the two chief theoretical Pragmatists, have confused and corrupted it. It is only when we have done with the Pragmatism of James and Schiller that we can duly value and put to use the Pragmatism of Peirce. And by Pragmatism of Peirce I mean, in this connection, a great deal which has been added to it by James and Schiller, inasmuch as disciples and legitimate successors of Peirce, but which both James and Schiller have turned into an unusable confusion by this admixture of their principle of "Will-to Believe" with Peirce's principle for "making our ideas clear."

Finally, and before entering on this examination, I would on no account omit to acknowledge all the help in clearing up my own ideas upon this subject which I have received from the writings and the conversation of the late Giovanni Vailati, and from those of his collaborator and editor, Mario Calderoni.

Maiano, near Florence,
March 1912.

The posthumous volume of "Scritti di Giovanni Vailati" (Florence, Leipzig, 1911) contains all the many papers originally

published in *Mind*, in the *Monist*, in the *Revue du Mois*, in the *Journal of Philosophy*, in the *Leonardo*, in the *Rivista di Psicologia Applicata*, etc., wherein Giovanni Vailati discussed the formula and method of Ch. S. Peirce and their various applications and misapplications.

The "how to make our ideas clear" side of Pragmatism is further represented in articles in the *Leonardo* (1904-5) by Mario Calderoni; and in M. Calderoni's "Disarmonie Economiche e Disarmonie Morali" (Florence, Lumachi, 1906), in "La Prévision dans la théorie de la Connaissance" (*Rev. de Met. et de Morale*, 1907), and in "l'Arbitrario" (*Rivista di Psicologia Applicata*, March-April 1910, May-June 1910, September-October 1910), by Vailati and Calderoni.

Giovanni Vailati was born in Lombardy in 1863, and died at Rome in 1909.

CHAPTER I

THE TWO PRAGMATISMS

I

". . . The first part of the essay, however, is occupied with showing that, if Truth consists in satisfaction, it cannot be any *actual* satisfaction, but must be the satisfaction which *would* ultimately be found if the inquiry were pushed to its ultimate and indefeasible issue. This, I beg to point out, is a very different position from that of Mr Schiller and the Pragmatists of to-day. . . . Their avowedly undefinable position, if it be not capable of logical characterization, seems to me to be characterized by an angry hatred of strict logic, and even some disposition to rate any exact thought which interferes with their doctrines as all humbug. . . . It seems to me a pity they should allow a philosophy so instinct with life to become infected with seeds of death in such notions as that of the unreality of all ideas of infinity and that of the mutability of truth, and in such confusions of thought as that of active willing (willing to control thought, to doubt, and to weigh reasons) with willing not to exert the will (willing to believe)."—Charles S. Peirce, *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. II., No. 1 (October 1908), pp. 111, 112.

IN the following pages I shall try, in vulgar parlance, to show up what is nowadays being rather pressed upon our acceptance than offered for our inspection, under the ambiguous name of "Pragmatism." I would therefore premise that I am by no means attacking all the ideas connected with the doctrine so called, nor even the bulk thereof. The peculiarity of Prag-

matism is (as I hope to demonstrate) its tactics of advancing untenable propositions and falling back upon received ones; its shuffling the principle which is hard to accept in a handful of principles we have willingly accepted; its medium-like device (for only successive metaphors can illustrate habits so Protean) of slipping a hand out of the seemingly unbroken circle of concatenated thought, in order to produce all manner of new and desirable manifestations. And, for this reason, two-thirds of all that Pragmatists adduce is not only a re-statement—sometimes a really improved and enlarged re-statement—of their opponents' views, but embodies, most admirably stated, the very arguments those opponents have used against them. Indeed, as we shall see, the name of Pragmatism is now taken by a doctrine which the inventor of that name, the much-quoted and little-read Charles Sanders Peirce, forestalled only to denounce and demolish.

The result of all this is that I wish to premise that I am attacking, not certain books, with two-thirds of whose contents I concur; still less certain writers from whose analytic talent (in the case of Mr F. C. Schiller), from whose wide-sweeping genius (in the case of Professor W. James) I have derived so much advantage; least of all, the whole mass of doctrine labelled Pragmatism. I am attacking the views which put Pragmatism and Pragmatists in opposition

to every other existing or conceivable philosophy. Or, rather, I am attacking a particular temperament which, imported into philosophy from wholly different fields of thought, tests truth by the standards of worldly practicality, of moral edification, and of religious sentiment, and thereby passes off as *true* what may be merely useful or inspiriting delusions, merely practically serviceable, emotionally satisfying, or morally commendable figments.

For, at the bottom of this kind of Pragmatism, which the more illustrious of its two promoters has associated with the expression "Will-to-Believe" [1]

[1] Professor James seems anxious to withdraw the expression "will-to-believe"—telling us ("Pragmatism," page 258) that he "unluckily" gave that name to an essay of which the critics (presumably the present writer in a "Fortnightly" article, reprinted in "Gospels of Anarchy") neglected the meaning in order to "pounce down on the title." Professor James, in the same place, now defines the subject of that essay as the "Right-to-Believe." "Right-to-believe," in plain English, usually means the existence of an intellectual alternative, *i.e.*: "In the face of So-and-so's evidence, I have the right to believe that what happened was this." Or else the absence of coercion by the State: "in this country, people have the right to believe as they choose"; *i.e.* differences of opinion are tolerated by the laws and customs. What Professor James argued for in that "Will-to-Believe" essay was the expediency, the occasional personal or moral advantage (exemplified by the courage of men who *believe* they can resist brigands, and the difference in our conduct due to religious belief) of accepting a hypothesis on other than intellectual grounds. Of these he wrote ("Will-to-Believe," page 9): "It is only our dead hypotheses that our willing nature is unable to bring to life again. . . . When I say 'willing nature,' I do not mean only such deliberate volitions as may have set up habits of belief that we cannot

—at the bottom of "Will-to-Believe" Pragmatism there exist the psychological recognition of the inevitable presence, and the moralist's recognition of the occasional utility, of ideas, of opinions, of beliefs, which have not passed muster as *true*; the recognition that conduct is frequently based, and can sometimes be based with advantage, on what has not yet been tested as true, on what has not stood the test of truth, or what it is only wished should be true—viz., hypotheses, assumptions, misconceptions, misstatements, ambiguities, delusions and deceptions, a large proportion of which appears inevitable and perhaps indispensable in the life of the individual and of the race. The recognition and partial rehabilitation of this particular *not-true* element would show the superior acumen and superior sincerity of modern psychology and of modern ethics. Indeed, the progress of mental science and of utilitarian morals might culminate in some bolder Nietzsche proclaiming that truth is by no means the one thing requisite; that life has been rendered

now escape from. I mean all such factors of belief as fear and hope, prejudice and passion, imitation and partisanship, the circumpressure of our caste and set." This "willing nature" is, presumably, what Professor James referred to in his title "Will-to-Believe." And as the only change made in his subsequent books is the addition of "truth" as well as "belief" being dependent on such action of our "willing nature," I consider it fair to continue to designate his particular kind of Pragmatism by that ex-title of his, "Will-to-Believe," which I always take in the sense of "willing nature" as defined in the above passage.

liveable, and morality itself floated or ballasted only by a fortunate output of figment.

But the "Will-to-Believe" Pragmatists are not bolder than Nietzsche. They are, on the contrary (as persons concerned with practicality should be), most remarkably attached to consequences, to workable systems and moral edification; and, for the benefit of these, they are most conspicuously careful of not coming into open collision with established prejudices. Now, while *truth* is by no means always necessary for advantageous and commendable practice, *untruth* or *non-truth* (under any of its varieties and synonyms furnished forth by the invaluable Roget) happens to be hampered by a tiresome and paradoxical peculiarity: its utility, nine times out of ten, depends upon hiding its own status and keeping up the credit of truth. A hope is not a hope, a fear is not a fear, once either is recognized as unfounded. An ambiguity is acceptable only if it is accepted in one of its ambiguous meanings. A delusion is delusive only so long as it is not known to be one. A mistake can be built upon only so long as it is not suspected; and that consoling, encouraging, sometimes salutary and edifying figment which Ibsen christened "Vital Lie" can be life-enhancing or life-saving only when it is mistaken for a "Vital Truth."

The psychologists and moralists who, under the name of Pragmatists, are teaching the unavoidable presence and the practical benefits of a "Will-to-Believe," have

therefore veiled in judicious silence the disconcerting, the dangerous, the immoral fact that error, delusion and deception, when born of human needs and purposes, are occasionally efficacious in directing human decisions, in regulating human conduct, and in making human life possible. The Pragmatists have refused to proclaim the *value of what is possibly not true*, and they have applied themselves to identifying *that which possesses value* with *truth* itself. This they have done by laying hold of a philosophical principle to which its earliest formulator, Mr Charles Sanders Peirce, had given the name of " Pragmatism " ; and by converting this principle, by endless moves revoked whenever detected, into the very thing which that proto-Pragmatist had invented Pragmatism to expose, disprove, confute and reduce for ever to silence.

Let us follow this process, and in so doing obtain, not merely a knowledge of the chief peculiarities of " Will-to-Believe " Pragmatism, but an insight also into the " Will-to-Believe," the Pragmatistic, temper of mind and methods.

II

Professor James heralds his exposition of the pragmatic principle by telling us that, although only formulated by Mr Peirce in the article entitled " How to Make Things Clear," it has been tacitly applied by

the chief masters of British thought. He writes ("Varieties of Religious Experience," page 443):

"The guiding principle of British philosophy has in fact been that every difference must *make* a difference, every theoretical difference issue in a practical difference, and [that] the best method of discussing points of theory is to begin by ascertaining what practical difference would result from one alternative or the other being true. What is the particular truth in question known as? In what facts does it result? What is its cash-value in terms of particular experience? This is the characteristic English way of taking up a question. In this way, you remember, Locke takes up the question of personal identity: 'What you mean by it is just your chain of particular memories,' says he. *That is the only verifiable part of its significance.* All further ideas about it, such as the oneness or the manyness of the spiritual substance on which it is based are, therefore, void of intelligible meaning, and propositions touching such ideas may be indifferently affirmed or denied. So Berkeley with his 'Matter.' The cash-value of matter is our physical sensations. That *is what it is known as*, all that we concretely verify of its conception. That, therefore, is the whole meaning of the term 'Matter'; any other pretended meaning is mere wind of words. Hume does the same thing with Causation. It is known as habitual antecedence, and as tending on our part to look for something definite

to come. Apart from this *practical meaning* it has no significance whatever, and books about it may be committed to the flames, says Hume."

Throughout this quotation we are shown the pragmatic method applied to ascertain the contents of a thought as a preliminary to testing that thought's truth. Professor James represents Locke and Berkeley and Hume as refusing to discuss severally Human Identity, Matter and Causation, except in so far as each of these words can be translated into terms of experience. Pragmatism is being employed, as the title of Mr Peirce's famous article has it, "to make our ideas clear." The expression "practical difference" means in this connection *difference in the facts, in the experience, implied in the definition*: so when we say that the concept "match," implies the property of igniting, *cæteris paribus*, on friction with a specified surface, we verify whether a certain object is a match by rubbing it, *cæteris paribus*, against such a surface and watching whether it does or does not ignite. "Practical difference" refers to our real or imagined experiment; and the "cash-value in terms of experience" means the translation of an abstract statement into such inferred results as will by their happening or not happening declare whether that abstract statement is in the particular relation to objective reality which we designate as *truth*. The pragmatic method, as Professor James represents it as practised by these

philosophical worthies, is based upon the recognition that the idea of a thing implies *qualities in the thing*, and that the *qualities of a thing* are a convenient name given to our prevision of *how that thing will, under specified circumstances, act.* The *practical difference* referred to is a difference in the mode of proceeding *of the thing discussed*; whether or not there ensues a *practical difference* in the action of ourselves or other folk, in the action of any except that *particular discussed thing*, is a totally separate question. The "Pragmatic Principle," as exemplified in Professor James's account of its application by Locke, Berkeley and Hume, is, therefore, neither more nor less than the formula of scientific thinking, in contradistinction to such discussion of mere meaningless words as has been not unfairly reproached to "metaphysics." Thus understood, the "Pragmatic Principle" of Mr Peirce, the formula of "cash-value in experience," would, no doubt, have interested the philosophers already mentioned, and those others, particularly the Mills and Bain, whom Professor James enumerates as having been pragmatists without knowing it. It would have interested also that most suggestive and genial man of science, the writer of William James's great "Psychology" and of so many invaluable *obiter dicta* even in the works intended to convert us to the "Will-to-Believe." But when it comes to that particular Professor William James who has dis-

tinguished himself by the invention of the "Will-to-Believe," there seems no reason for his feeling particularly attracted, but rather (as we shall see later on) for his being particularly alienated, by the "Pragmatic Principle" and the "Cash-value in terms of experience" when interpreted in the above manner. For the Pragmatic Principle and, more particularly, its cash-value formulation are open also to another interpretation.

"Practical difference" may also be taken as meaning difference in the actions or habits of human beings, difference such as concerns practical persons in contradistinction to thinkers and investigators—for instance, educators and legislators, bent upon directly furthering prosperity and good behaviour. Or, in other words, "practical difference" may be taken in the sense of implying such practice as is no longer the *test* of an opinion, but the *application* of an opinion once accepted, whether previously tested or not. The two meanings of "Practical Difference" are in continual intercommunication, since everybody must admit that "practical difference" implying safe and desirable decisions about conduct, often follows upon the recognition of such "practical difference" between ideas as we have previously spoken of; nay, that though some of our *practical differences in conduct* happen to be due to our *not* knowing the *practical differences between what is and what is not true*, as when (so Pro-

fessor James often urges) we *wager*, we *take risks* in which the gain is great and the loss trifling; yet the majority of our *practical* decisions are undoubtedly founded upon ourselves or some one else having "made ideas clear" and tested suppositions by actual or supposed experiment. Indeed, the two meanings of "practical difference" are in such close proximity that the thought of even *the maker clear of our ideas*, of even Mr Peirce himself, has occasionally wavered between the two.

Since, in that very article "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," we come upon the following ambiguous developments of that ambiguous expression "practical":

"To develop its meaning we have . . . simply to determine: what habits it produces; for what a thing means is simply what habits it involves" (page 292).

"What, then, is belief? . . . it involves the establishment in our nature of a rule of action, or, say, for short, *a habit*" (page 291).

"The essence of belief is the establishment of a habit, and different beliefs are distinguished by the different modes of action to which they give rise" (page 291).

"There is no distinction of meaning so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice" (page 293).

It is this ambiguity in Mr Peirce's words, if not in his thought, which probably commended the "Pragmatic Principle" to Professor James.

III

It is the object of the following pages,[1] not to discuss the intrinsic merits of the "Pragmatic Principle," but to expose the "development or transmogrification" of the Pragmatism of "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" into the Pragmatism of the Will-to-Believe and of the Making of Truth. And, while doing this,

[1] The above had already been written when Mr Peirce published the following passage in an article in the *Hibbert Journal* (October 1908):

"In 1871, in a Metaphysical Club in Cambridge, Massachusetts, I used to preach this principle as a sort of logical gospel, representing the unformulated method followed by Berkeley, and in conversation about it I called it 'Pragmatism.' In December 1877 and January 1878 I set forth the doctrine in the *Popular Science Monthly*; and the two parts of my essay were printed in French in the *Revue Philosophique*, vols. vi. and vii. Of course, the doctrine attracted no particular attention, for, as I had remarked in my opening sentence, very few people care for logic. But in 1897 Professor James remodelled the matter, and transmogrified it into a doctrine of philosophy, some parts of which I highly approved, while other and more prominent parts I regarded, and still regard, as opposed to sound logic. About the time Professor Papirie [*sic*, query Papini, V. L.] discovered, to the delight of the Pragmatist school, that this doctrine was incapable of definition, which would certainly seem to distinguish it from every other doctrine in whatever branch of science, I was coming to the conclusion that my poor little maxim should be called by another name; and accordingly, in April 1905, I renamed it 'Pragmaticism.' I had never before dignified it by any name in print, except that, at Professor Baldwin's request, I wrote a definition of it for his 'Dictionary of Psychology and Philosophy.' I did not insert the word in the 'Century Dictionary,' though I had charge of the philosophical definitions of that work; for I have a perhaps exaggerated dislike of *réclame*."

we shall incidentally afford the reader an example of the application of the Pragmatic method itself. Like Locke asking the meaning of "Human Identity," like Berkeley asking the meaning of "Matter," like Hume asking the meaning of "Causation," we humble people will, in our turn, ask the meaning of "Practical Difference," and test it by examining whether the attitude toward *opinion and truth* taken up by Mr Peirce is the same attitude as that taken up toward *opinion and truth* by Professor James and Mr Schiller; or whether the difference in the resulting attitude does not prove a corresponding difference between the "Pragmatic Principle" as intended by Mr Peirce, and the "Pragmatic Principle" as employed by Mr. Peirce's ostensible disciples:

"Consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then *our conception of these effects* [italics mine] *is the whole of our conception of the object.*" "A figment is the product of somebody's imagination; it has such characters as his thought impresses upon it (A). That whose characters are *independent of how you or I think* [italics mine] is an external reality." (A) "Thus we may define the real as that whose characters are *independent of what anybody may think them to be.*" (B) "These minds do not seem to believe that disputation is ever to cease; they seem to think that *the opinion which is natural for one*

man is not so for another, and that belief will consequently never be settled. In contenting themselves with fixing their own opinion by a method which would lead another man to a different result, (A) *they betray their feeble hold of the conception of what truth is.* On the other hand, all the followers of science are fully persuaded that the processes of investigation, *if only pushed far enough, will give one certain solution to every question* to which they can be applied. . . . *Different minds may set out with the most antagonistic views*, but the progress of investigation carries them *by a force outside* of themselves to one and the same conclusion. (A) This *activity of thought by which we are carried, not where we wish, but to a fore-ordained goal, is like the operation of destiny.* No modification of the point of view taken, no selection of other facts for study, no natural bent of mind, can enable a man to escape the predestinate opinion. This great law is embodied in the conception of truth and reality.

(A) " The opinion which is fated to be *ultimately agreed to by all who investigate* is *what is meant by truth*, and the object represented in this opinion is the real. (A) That is the way I would explain reality." " But it may be said that this view is opposed to the abstract definition which I have given of reality, inasmuch as it makes the character of the real to depend on what is ultimately thought about them. But the answer to this is that, on the other hand, reality is independent,

not necessarily of thought in general, but only of what you or I or any finite number of men may think about it; and that, on the other hand, though the object of the final opinion depends on what that opinion is, yet (B) *what that opinion is* does not depend on what you or I or any man thinks." (C) "Our perversity and that of others may indefinitely postpone the settlement of opinion; it might even conceivably cause an arbitrary proposition to be universally accepted as long as the human race should last. Yet even that would not change the nature of the belief which could alone be the result of investigation carried sufficiently far; and if, after the extinction of our race, another should arise with faculties and dispositions for investigation, that true opinion must be the one which they would ultimately come to. Truth crushed to earth shall rise again, and *the opinion which would finally result from investigation does not depend on how anybody may actually think*" [italics mine]. "A person who arbitrarily chooses the proposition he will adopt can use the word 'truth' only to emphasize the expression of his determination to hold to his choice."[1]

These quotations from "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" (to which might be added others from the essays constituting the first and third instalments of the series,

[1] C. S. Peirce, "Illustration of the Logic of Science: II. How to Make Our Ideas Clear" (*Popular Science Monthly*, New York, Appleton & Co., No. lxix., January 1878, pp. 286 to 302).

" Illustrations of the Logic of Science ") display Mr Peirce's attitude of mind regarding the relations of " truth " with what Professor James calls our " willing nature "—and which it is convenient to call by his essay title, " Will-to-Believe." The following quotations display the attitude on this subject of the two chief philosophers who have accepted Mr Peirce's principle and name of Pragmatism. I letter both sets of quotations, in order to facilitate the comparison between them.

Schiller : " Studies in Humanism," page 18 :

(B) " Two men, therefore, with different fortunes, histories and temperaments, *ought not* to arrive at the same metaphysic . . . each should react *individually* on the food for thought which his *personal life* affords, and the resulting differences *ought not* to be set aside as void of ultimate significance." (Italics in the original.)

Schiller : " Axioms as Postulates—Personal Idealism," page 59 :

(A) " What we have seen to be untrue, viz., that there is an objective world given independently of us and constraining us to recognize it."

Schiller : " Studies in Humanism," page 189 :

(A) " He (the Pragmatist) thinks that the coerciveness of ' fact ' has been enormously exaggerated by

failure to observe that it is never sheer coercion but always mitigated by his acceptance."

Schiller : " Studies in Humanism," page 208 :

(A) (Pragmatic truth) " is fluid, not rigid, temporal and temporary, not eternal and everlasting ; *chosen, not inevitable* ; born of passion and sprung (like Aphrodite) from a foaming sea of desires, not ' dispassionate ' nor ' purely intellectual ' ; incomplete, not perfect ; fallible, not inerrant ; absorbed in the attaining of what is not yet achieved ; purposive and struggling towards ends."

Schiller : " Axioms as Postulates—Personal Idealism," page 120 :

(B) " What are these mechanical explanations which have so successfully occupied the fertile field of science ? They are devices of our own . . . ideals conceived by our intelligence to which we are coaxing reality to approximate."

Schiller : " Studies in Humanism," page 12 :

(C) " . . . The human reason is ever gloriously human . . . it mercifully interposes an impenetrable veil between us and any truth or reality *which is wholly alien to our nature.*"

William James : " Pragmatism," page 273 :

(B) " On pragmatic principles we cannot reject any

hypothesis if consequences useful to life flow from it. Universal conceptions . . . have indeed no meaning and no reality if they have no use. But if they have any use, they have that amount of meaning, and the meaning will be true if the use squares well with life's other uses."

William James : " Pragmatism," page 76 :

(B) " But in this world . . . certain ideas are not only agreeable to think about, or agreeable as supporting other ideas that we are fond of, but they are also helpful in life's practical struggles. If there be any life that it is really better we should lead, and if there be any idea which, believed in, would help us to lead that life, then it would be really *better for us* [italics *sic*] *to believe in that idea, unless, indeed, belief in it incidentally clashed with other, greater vital benefits.* (Italics *sic.*)

(B) " What would be better for us to believe ! This sounds *very like a definition of truth.* [Italics mine.] It comes very near to saying what we *ought* [italics *sic*] to believe ! And in *that* definition none of you would find any oddity. Ought we ever not to believe what it is *better for us* to believe ? And can we then keep the notion of what is better for us and what is *true for us* [italics mine] permanently apart ? Pragmatism says no, and I fully agree with her ! "

William James : " Pragmatism," page 204 :

(A) "You can say of it either that: it is useful because it is true; or that it is true because it is useful. *True* is the name for whatever starts the verification process;[1] useful is the name for its completed function in experience."

William James: "Pragmatism," page 73:

(B) "If theological ideas prove to have a value for concrete life, they will be true, for Pragmatism, in the sense that they are good for so much."

William James: "Pragmatism," page 299:

(A) "On pragmatic principles, if the hypothesis of God works satisfactorily in the widest sense of the word, it is true."

(B) "Now, whatever its residual difficulties may be, experience shows that it certainly does work and that the problem is . . . to determine it so that it will combine with all the other working truths."

William James: "Pragmatism," page 200:

(B) "Pragmatism asks its usual question: Grant an idea or a belief to be true, it says, what concrete

[1] C. S. Peirce, "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," page 289: ". . . the action of thought is excited by the irritation of doubt and ceases when belief is attained; so that production of belief is the sole function of thought." This shows that for Peirce *doubt* "is the name of what starts the verification process"—*truth* what ends that process when it has been properly carried through. Note Professor James's implying that *we know truth* before embarking on the process of ascertaining it!

difference will its being true make in any one's actual life ? "

Schiller : " Humanism," page 260 *et seq.* :

(B) " In the end the world is human experience, and a world which we neither did or could experience would not be one we need argue or trouble about

" What would be our attitude towards the world in which the ultimate significance of our ideals was denied . . . and in which the hope of happiness was nothing but a delusion ? "

Schiller : " Humanism," page 199 *et seq.* :

(B) " Knowledge is power, because we decline to recognize as knowledge whatever does not satisfy our lust for power."

" It follows that ultimate reality must be absolutely satisfactory."

(A) " There is a serious fallacy in the notion that the pursuit of truth could reveal a chamber of horrors in the innermost shrine. . . . (B) If this were true we should decline to believe it and to accept it as true. And even if we could be forced to the admission that the pursuit of truth necessarily and inevitably brought us face to face with some unbearable atrocity . . . [C] as soon as the pursuit of truth was generally recognized to be practically noxious, we should simply give it up."

(C) " If its misguided votaries persisted in their

diabolical pursuit of truth regardless of the consequences, they would be stamped out as the Indian Government has stamped out the Thugs. . . . The thing has happened over and over again. All through the Middle Ages most branches of knowledge were under black suspicion as hostile to human welfare. They languished accordingly."

Schiller: "Axioms as Postulates—Personal Idealism," page 122:

(B) "There is no intelligibility without conformity to human nature, and human nature is teleological. . . . A world which can be 'fully explained,' but only in mechanical or barely intellectual terms, is *not* fully intelligible, is *not* fully explained.

"An intelligent reader may perhaps gather . . . why the personality of God should be esteemed an indispensable postulate. Is immortality a postulate? At present we are too profoundly ignorant as to what men actually desire in the matter, and why and how to decide what they ought to desire."

William James: "Pragmatism," concluding sentence:

(B) "Between the two extremes, of crude naturalism on the one hand and transcendental absolutism on the other, you may find that what I take the liberty of calling the pragmatistic or melioristic type of theism, is exactly *what you require.*"

IV

Such, then, is the attitude towards Truth and the Will-to-Believe of Mr C. S. Peirce, and such the attitude of Messrs James and Schiller. Applying in this case that selfsame method for "making our ideas clear" which bids us test the meaning of an idea by the results of that possible meaning, we see that the Pragmatic Principle involved by Messrs James and Schiller must differ from the Pragmatic Principle formulated by Mr Peirce, inasmuch as the consequences not only deducible but actually deduced from the one are in flagrant contradiction with the consequences deduced from the other. The contradiction amounts to this, that while Mr Peirce makes *truth* into an intellectual imperative which sooner or later imposes itself (or would impose itself but for human "perversity") on *opinion*, Messrs James and Schiller (besides constantly confusing "Truth" with its objective correlate "Reality") calmly identify *truth* with *belief*, and *belief* with *opinion*, and they test *truth* (which is itself belief's and opinion's standard) by the beneficial or agreeable, the useful consequences due to holding a given belief or opinion. The contradiction between the two attitudes toward truth can be *practically* tested by substituting the word "opinion" for the word "truth" in the quotations severally from

Mr Peirce and from his self-styled disciples. In the quotations from Mr Peirce, this substitution results in nonsense: no one could mean that "opinion" [in original "truth"] "is that whose characters are independent of what anybody may think them to be," nor that "opinion" ["truth"] "is the fore-ordained conclusion of scientific investigation if pushed far enough"; nor that "opinion" ["truth"] "is produced by a force outside of ourselves and similar to destiny"; still less that "opinion" ["truth"] "crushed to earth shall rise again independent of what any one thinks," even if it have to await the coming of another race of human beings; least of all, that we may expect unanimity of "opinion" ["truth"] from individuals starting with different bias, character, and methods. It is obvious, therefore, that, when Mr Peirce speaks of *truth*, he does not mean the same thing as *opinion*.

But if we perform this little experiment upon the quotations from Messrs James and Schiller, we shall find ourselves in front of a totally different "practical result."

So far from turning the sentences into nonsense, the substitution of "opinion" for "truth" will make them not only clear and reasonable, but frequently truistic and platitudinous: two individuals may, indeed, be expected to arrive at *opinions* as different as their lives and fortunes. Acceptance of an *opinion* is

certainly different from coercion by fact. *Opinion* may, indeed, be "chosen, not inevitable"; "temporary, not eternal"; "fluid, not rigid"; "passionate, not unbiassed"; nor could anything be more appropriate than Mr Schiller's simile of *opinion* rising, like Aphrodite, "out of a foaming sea of desire." We can all think of cases when human reason's "glorious humanness" has interposed a veil, merciful or otherwise, between mankind and *opinions* "alien to its nature"; and history does show (as Mr Peirce remarks in the first of his articles on the "Logic of Science") no end of violent repressions of *opinions* which were deemed dangerous or odious. Professor James would be not less logical, but a deal more so, if he said that it is *opinion* which "starts the verification-process"; more logical, because that verification-process results in a *truth* which sometimes dispels an *opinion*. People much less subtle than Mr Schiller have talked of "*making* up their minds," or "making themselves an *opinion*"; and no one, subtle or not, would deny that many *opinions* are *purposive*. And, finally, this very fluid, temporal, temporary, individual, biassed, passionate, human-made (even officially made) thing *opinion*, can be arranged, tested, accepted, welcomed, scouted, anathematized, on the score of being or not being useful, beneficent, conducive to life. For instance, basing ourselves on Lafcadio Hearn, we might quite admit that the *opinions* summed up under

the title "Ancestor-Worship" had been (to quote Professor James's rather commercial phrase of recommendation) "exactly what was required" by the former inhabitants of Japan; but few of us would be ready to describe those "Ancestor-worship" *opinions* as "independent of what any one thought," and "foreordained to be ultimately arrived at by investigators despite all individual and temporary bias," as Mr Peirce describes *truth*. For, so far from *opinion* being identifiable with *truth*, it frequently happens that an *opinion* may be extremely efficacious, practically and morally, and yet on the contrary, *false*.

V

Now, it is exactly because *opinion*, while possessing all the characteristics attributed by Messrs James and Schiller to *truth*, by no means always answers to Mr Peirce's definition of *truth*, that we must set our face against the identification, even against the partial confusion of *opinion* with *truth*: the two words must be kept separate because they answer to separate, to occasionally overlapping but by no means equivalent, notions. And the tendencies leading to this identification of *truth* and *opinion*, leading to this testing truth by practical, moral, extrinsic value, are tendencies requiring to be checked, not because they exist in dis-

tinguished thinkers like Messrs James and Schiller, but because they exist in all of us, and are such that all philosophy is not too much to keep them in order.

The " Will-to-Believe," the " Consent of our Willing Nature," the " Purposive Making of Truth " are labels for human instincts as universal as the instincts bidding us seek pleasure, repose, and advantage wherever they can be got, and without consideration for the pleasure, the repose, the advantage of other beings. Most of our thoughts, and probably the whole of our faculty for thinking, have arisen at the bidding of an interested purpose, of a self-seeking will; and this accounts for many of the absurdities that have been thought, and perhaps for most of the vices of our methods of thinking. But, thanks to the pressure of universal and averaged purposes and interests upon individuals, thanks to the conflict of *opinions*, of *purposively made truths* and of *beliefs which are willed*, there has been evolved in our thinking nature an automatic check, a counteracting force, to those interested motives and emotional preferences without which there would have been no thinking faculty at all. That check is the particular conception defined by Mr Peirce as *truth*. That counteracting force is constituted *by* the taste, the passion, the instinctive and imperious respect for *truth*, which plays in our intellectual life the part played in our individual and social life by the instincts of justice and chastity. In the same way

that our life as human beings would be laid waste without these other two great altruistic instincts, so also, were it not for the passion for truth, our intellectual life would have been perpetually jeopardized by the natural tendency to believe (or pretend to believe) whatsoever appeals to individual or momentary interests and preferences. Mankind has always wanted, perhaps always required, and certainly always made itself, a stock of delusions and sophisms, of *vital lies* or of *white lies*. Every human being's thought, consciously or unconsciously, tends to accommodate itself to some wish, some use, some habit. Every opinion tends to identify itself with truth. The Will-to-Believe, the Purposive Making of Truth, are unceasingly at work. This is the reason why we have no use for the kind of Pragmatism which teaches the testing of truth by its utility, the identification of truth with opinion, which preaches this universal and ineradicable vice of all our thinking as a self-righteous, a self-assertive virtue.

VI

At this point of my proceedings against what has usurped the name of Pragmatism, but what I would rather describe as the pragmatistic temperament in philosophy, it is quite natural that the reader should interrupt with the perhaps indignant suggestion that

I must be grossly misunderstanding, if not misrepresenting, my adversaries.

If, as I hope, he has himself read some of the books under accusation, he will point out with perfect justice that quite one half of their contents is in absolute contradiction with my summing up, and in absolute agreement with Mr Peirce's and everyone else's definition of truth. And if, on the other hand, the reader possesses no first-hand acquaintance with the incriminated writings, he will be even less able to believe my assertion that the philosophers calling themselves Pragmatists should persistently and consistently deduce from Mr Peirce's principle a doctrine so flagrantly in opposition to his own, and should claim as their remoter intellectual progenitors (Pragamatists, we are told, before Pragmatism) philosophers so extraordinarily unlike themselves as Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Mill.

Now this fact, which seems incredible to the reader, is the *hic*, the *gravamen* of the whole question of Pragmatism, and the chief reason for suspecting and discountenancing the self-styled pragmatistic attitude, and, I might add, complexion of mind. The bad business about Messrs James's and Schiller's contradictory additions to the Pragmatism of Mr Peirce, is precisely that the principles thus inserted by them into the original formula of Pragmatism are neither consistently applied nor persistently maintained, but flicker in and out of existence with perfect intermittence

and inconsistency. That Truth which is *fluid not rigid, temporary and individual*, that truth which is *what it would be good to believe*, that truth which has been got by an act of volition and choice, occasionally by a wager, that goddess of Mr Schiller's, risen not out of the old-fashioned well, *but, like Aphrodite, out of a foaming sea of desires*, that brand new and at the same time comfortingly old-fashioned sort of truth ("a new name for some old ways of thinking"),[1] is never invoked in connection with any notion of which we are already certain, nor applied to any problem upon which certainty seems proximately forthcoming.

The will to believe, even the right to believe, is indeed invoked in the obscure problems of the relation between body and soul;[2] but we are not referred to it for solutions of the problems of chemistry or physics. Still less are we recommended to apply to the disputes of Lamarckians and neo-Darwinians that test of suitability to public morals or private consolation which we are earnestly pressed to bring to bear upon the tenets of optimistic theism and the hypotheses of mediumistic spiritualism. We are recommended to believe as we choose only in the cases where rational belief cannot yet exist, and cheered onwards to make up our mind only where our judgment is necessarily

[1] "A new name for some old ways of thinking." Subtitle of Professor James's volume "Pragmatism."

[2] W. James, "Human Immortality," p. 39 *et seq.*

suspended. Wherever it is controlled by observation, experiment, calculation, or any of the ordinary methods for attaining truth, Pragmatism drops into what Mr Schiller describes as its original humility,[1] it shrinks into being once more Mr Peirce's method "for making our ideas clear"—it curtseys a welcome to unanswerable facts, to indisputable generalizations, and recites the "humble" formula in which, as we are told, Professor Peirce summed up the practice of British philosophers from Locke to Mill and Bain. But on one or two points where science declines or delays to answer; in fact, where truth in Mr Peirce's sense does not close the door in the Pragmatist's face, then Pragmatism reveals herself the real "Aphrodite born of the foaming sea of desires," and goddess-like creates truths which are conformable to the "ideals," the "hope of happiness," the "what it would be better to believe," the "vital hope of mankind," the "what is exactly what you require" of her high priests James and Schiller. *Incessu patet dea.* To the sceptic, the scoffer, to the reader in hopeless confusion of mind, Pragmatism is at last revealed in all her miraculous and beneficent glory.

[1] Schiller, "Pragmatism and Pseudo-Pragmatism," in *Mind*, p. 390: ". . . if pragmatist epistemology is more revolutionary, it is also more systematic and adequate than its humble beginnings in Dr Peirce's magazine article appeared to portend.

VII

I began this paper by stating that my chief reason for falling foul of Will-to-Believe Pragmatism is because it exemplifies an intellectual temperament which, even while examining into the nature and uses of Truth, indulges in continual ambiguities, revokes of statements, quibbles and distortions of meaning, in such tentative disingenuousness as is not easily detected by others and perhaps not easily suspected by oneself. Of such duplicity there luckily presented itself to my hand an initial example whose detection, like that of some medium's sleight of hand, was calculated to arouse in my reader's mind a justified state of distrust. That initial disingenuousness which I have already dealt with is the adoption of the name and employment of the intellectual credit of a logical method—Mr Peirce's method for " making our ideas clear "—which, as I have shown by a comparison between the conclusions of Mr Peirce and those of his self-styled disciples, is utterly incompatible with the pretensions of a " Will-to-Believe " or the " purposive " " Making of Truth."

This chapter being insufficient for the intricate processes of showing up any other of these philosophical conjurors' feats of logical skill, I shall devote its remaining pages to mere further arousing of the reader's suspiciousness, first by the exhibition of some of these

Pragmatists' choicest self-advertisements and "testimonials"; and then by the discovery of the cat which lurks at the bottom of these Pragmatists' very heterogenous bag-full.

Of the *testimonial* to Will-to-Believe Pragmatism extracted by the initial parade of Mr Peirce's "Principle" and the subsequent hiding of Mr Peirce's conclusions, we have re-valued the value by application of the Peirce method to quotations from Messrs James and Schiller compared with quotations from Mr Peirce himself. The already quoted account of Pragmatism in Professor James's "Varieties of Religious Experience" (p. 443) contains another "testimonial" in favour of the doctrine. The reader will remember that the Pragmatistic method is here described as being implicit in the philosophy of the chief British philosophers and illustrated by the proceedings of Locke, of Berkeley and of Hume; while Brown, Dugald Stewart, the Mills and James Bain are further adduced more briefly as having practised the method later to be called "Pragmatic" by Mr Peirce. But Professor James does not add that these philosophical worthies, three of whom at least, Hume, Mill and Bain, were rationalistic stalwarts, employed the pragmatic method merely in the Peircean sense of defining and verifying ideas by reference to possible experience; and that, even like Mr Peirce himself, they never employed it in the James-Schiller sense of "Willing to Believe" or

"Making Truth" in obedience to life's needs and ideals. And by this display of one half of the facts and omission of the other half of them, Professor James produces on the reader's mind the impression that the doctrine of Right-to-Believe, or Will-to-Believe, which he has foisted upon Mr Peirce's Pragmatism, is not only identical with it, but has been acted upon, long before it was ever given a name or formula, by the very philosophers who notoriously did most against those practically useful theological and mystical assumptions which they denounced as preferred, desired, "chosen," in fact, as "willed" beliefs. The lay public, the public hungry for "religious experiences" like those to whose advantages Professor James has devoted so many pages, are therefore comfortably able to say: "You know the *Will-to-Believe* was the philosophic method not only of that great Mr Peirce who invented Pragmatism, but also of Locke, Berkeley, Hume, the Mills, Professor Bain and all the people who we thought were sceptics and rationalists, it is the *characteristically British Philosophy*."

After identifying his views as characteristically British (*not made in Germany*, he is careful to point out, although as historical fact Kant, with his "Practical Reason," *did* encourage the *Will-to-Believe*) Professor James renders them further attractive to an American or English audience by comparison with Protestantism. Pragmatism, he tells us, implies an alteration in the

" seat of authority " ; he and his *Will-to-Believeists* are like the Reformers; their " ultra-rationalist " opponents are the Papists. Thus Reason is made to play the part of mediæval ecclesiastical dogmatism, and the Will-to-Believe falls into the gallant attitude of sixteenth-century free thought ; [1] and (by a mere juxtaposition of things and qualities not necessarily connected) the impression is left in the reader that Will-to-Believe Pragmatism being a philosophical heresy, the orthodox philosophy of rationalism must on the contrary be dogmatic, unscientific, illiberal and stick in the mud, while Will-to-Believism is not only scientific and progressive, but also, like the Protestantism which went to the rack and the stake, eminently scrupulous and courageous.

And since we are upon the subject of fine gallant attitudes, let me point out the self-advertisement which treats *belief due to willing* as a *risk which the believer assumes*, then turn the *risk run* (or rather as we shall see, *not* run, for the odds are supposed favourable) into an *adventure*, and the *adventure* into something bold and dashing with which to shame poor rationalists who won't join in it. While in reality there is no

[1] " It will be an alteration in the seat of authority that reminds one almost of the protestant reformation. And as, to papal minds, Protestantism has often seemed a mere mess of anarchy and confusion, such, no doubt, will Pragmatism often seem to ultra-rationalist minds in philosophy. . . . I venture to think that philosophic Protestantism will compass a not dissimilar prosperity," " Pragmatism," p. 123.

audacity (Mr Schiller's favourite virtue), nothing *adventurous* (Professor James's pet quality) in wagering, like Pascal[1] *against* the belief which, if true, means only annihilation, but if false, eternal torment; and *for* the belief which, if false, meant only the same annihilation, but if true, a possible eternity of happiness. Pascal, at least, declared roundly that such a choice was a matter of prudence; but Messrs Schiller and James cheer it on as something strenuous and adventurous and thus advertise their doctrines as possessing, besides other agreeable qualities, the further attraction of a spice of heroism.

VIII

The Pragmatists' advertisement of panaceas and show of "testimonials" by no means stops here. The volume of essays entitled "The Will-to-Believe" is dedicated to Charles S. Peirce in terms which imply that the inventor of Pragmatism acquiesced in those very methods of "fixing belief" by "what one chooses to think" against which he had, as we have seen,

[1] Professor James's treatment of Pascal's "Wager" is characteristic. For after quoting it ("Will-to-Believe," p. 5) as an example (with its mass bearings and "cela vous abêtira") of what he does *not* recommend, he proceeds on pp. 26-28 of the same book to encourage us to adopt our belief for exactly analogous prudential considerations.

especially directed his attacks. And similarly the volume "Pragmatism" is dedicated to the memory of John Stuart Mill, a philosopher whom Professor James had previously treated[1] with conspicuous grudgingness, and even made responsible ("Will-to-Believe," pp. 128 and 228) in company with Bain and Spencer, for the *dry* and *ungenerous* philosophical temper of his day, responsible also, this time in company with Bentham, Cobden and Bright, for what Professor James sneers at as England's "drifting raft" policy. One wonders why Professor James's "fancy" should "like to picture Stuart Mill as our leader if he were alive to-day," until one recollects that the theological apologists of more picturesque centuries loved to quote Hebrew and Pagan worthies, and if possible the demons and false prophets themselves, in support of articles of faith—*Teste David cum Sibylla*, as the hymn says about the Last Judgment. One is even more reminded of the heaven-inspired artifices of pious exorcists, when one finds a Will-to-Believe argument backed by a still more obdurate rationalistic demon: by W. K. Clifford, even in that very essay against teaching unproved dogmas to which a large portion of Professor James's *Will-to-Believe* is an avowed counterblast. "I can, of course," writes Professor

[1] "To the memory of John Stuart Mill, from whom I first learned the pragmatic openness of mind, and whom my fancy likes to picture as our leader, were he alive to-day."

James (" Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 518-19) " put myself in the sectarian scientific attitude, and imagine vividly that the world of sensations and of scientific law and objects may be all ; but whenever I do this, I hear that inward monitor, of whom W. K. Clifford once wrote, whispering the word ' Bosh.' " What W. K. Clifford's monitor whispered " fiddlesticks " about was in reality the hypothesis of a catastrophic origin of organic matter, and that, as remarked, in a paper (" Essays," ii, p. 335) directed against the teaching of those very dogmas which Professor James commends as *true in the sense of desirable.* But the incorporation, without a syllable to this effect, of Clifford's phrase into an argument against agnosticism associates the famous arch-agnostic's name with *Will-to-Believe* apologetics : " Even Clifford, you know, said that something inside him whispered bosh to the materialistic hypothesis " must be the average reader's impression ; an impression which a master of psychology, a remarkably acute moralist, and a first-class craftsman of words should surely have foreseen and prevented.

IX

But even if there were no testimonials from adversaries, Pragmatism would never lack for advertisement. We have seen how Professor James compares it to

Protestantism; Mr Schiller traces the heresy so far back as Protogoras, and shows us Plato himself busy maligning it ("Studies in Humanism," p. 32 *et seq.*). We have noticed also both these Pragmatists' insistence on the strenuous earnestness, the adventurous courage of those who dare to Will-to-Believe what they want to believe, who are spirited enough to Make Truth, which is truth *for them*, instead of waiting to find out what is truth on its own account. Professor James goes a step further: he compares the Pragmatist to a humbler but more indispensable hero, the watchful, disinterested, intrepid bobby. Here is the passage, instructive in many ways. Listen to "Human Immortality," pp. 39-40: "And whether we care or not for immortality in itself, we ought, as *mere critics doing police duty among the vagaries of mankind* to insist on the illogicality of a denial. . . . *How much more ought we to insist, as lovers of truth*, when the denial is that of such a vital hope of mankind." I have ventured to italicize because I desire to call attention to that "how much more," and to speculate on its meaning. We are, the reader sees, already *critics doing police service*, and apparently also *lovers of truth*. Is Professor James urging us to be even more critical than we should otherwise be because one of the two views under examination is of vital importance? This seems reasonable enough. But then follows the clause "*how much more.*" Is our love of truth to incline us to even greater love of

truth because of the vital importance of one of the two alternatives? Or are we, lovers of truth, to let our love of truth be biassed in favour of a vital hope of mankind? Or are we to love truth even more fervently than before (for that establishes us in the love of truth before these proceedings began) because there is a particular *vital hope* which, although it may be false, may also happen to be true? I will not use my *Right-to-Believe* in deciding which of these possible meanings is the one intended by Professor James. I will not even (not being a Pragmatist) wager that Professor James must have decided between these meanings himself. I will remain in crass agnostic uncertainty, and reflect that it may be with Professor James, as with Protagoras himself, the extraordinary value and suggestiveness of whose famous dictum resides, as we are told by Mr Schiller in "the conciseness which has led to these divergent interpretations" ("Studies in Humanism," p. 32 *et seq.*). One thing remains, however, certain even to the most stiffnecked rationalist: these Pragmatists may be trusted when they describe themselves as *lovers of truth*. For have they not told us that *truth is individual, temporary, fluid, born of a sea of desires* (besides being, like Aphrodite, presumably attractive), in short, something which is *accepted*, which is *chosen*, and even which is *made* by ourselves (Schiller, "Studies in Humanism," p. 208).

X

If the Pragmatism of Messrs James and Schiller were like that of Mr Peirce, merely a method for "making our ideas clear," its promulgation would undeniably further the philosophic training of the public and increase the scientific discipline of philosophers; but useful although such philosophic training and scientific discipline might be, it would scarcely produce propaganda whose persuasive enthusiasm recalls the prospectus of a personally conducted holiday trip: "With the right guides such ascents (into metaphysics) are safe," writes Mr Schiller; "we shall return refreshed from our excursion." Still less, perhaps, would mere additional *clearness in our ideas* be pressed upon our acceptance in the "Do you *really* know what you are in want of?" style which we associate with typewriters, encyclopædias, patent foods and similar boons to mankind. We are not accustomed to have what Mr Peirce called the *Logic of Science* presented in words like those of Professor James: "You may find that what I take the liberty of calling the Pragmatistic or melioristic type . . . is exactly what you require."

But once we understand that we are no longer talking about the Logic of Science, and once we recognize the fundamental distinction between the "humble" Prag-

matism of Mr Peirce and the "more revolutionary and adequate" Pragmatism of Messrs James and Schiller, we shall take in why these philosophers are so passionately anxious that we should try their panacea. That panacea is not intended to "make our ideas clear"; it is calculated to teach us to *Will-to-Believe* and to *Make Truth*. The Pragmatism of Mr Peirce is a formula of the "Logic of Science." The Pragmatism of Messrs W. James and Schiller is, so far as it possesses any originality, a method of apologetics, a not always strictly grammatical new *Grammar of Assent*. When we complete the quotation from Professor James's *Pragmatism*, we find that what he recommends to us in his farewell flourish of self-advertisement is the Pragmatistic type . . . not merely of *Philosophy*, but of *Theism*. And similarly the *postulate* which Mr Schiller shows us as not yet evolving into an *axiom* is the postulate of individual survival after death. "Is immortality a postulate?" he writes," . . . at present we are too profoundly ignorant as to what men actually desire in the matter, and why and how to decide what they ought to desire. Hence, pending the publication of a statistical inquiry undertaken by the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research, profitable discussions of this question must be postponed." [1]

[1] Schiller, "Axioms as Postulates—Personal Idealism," p. 122. Lest the reader should imagine from this that the American

In short, "the practical differences" which we find in the concluding chapters of Messrs W. James and Schiller's various volumes, but which the *humbler* Pragmatism of Mr Peirce by no means leads to, seems to be the acceptance, in consideration of beneficial results, of the *truth* of some variety of theology; or, in default of such, or perhaps in addition thereunto, of the truth of some mediumistic kind of "spiritualism." And even readers disinclined to believe what suits their own preferences, may, I think, accept the hypothesis

Branch of the S.P.R. is going to furnish statistics of the State of the Postulate-Market and the demand-for-immortality postulation, Mr Schiller adds a footnote explaining that it seems probable the inquiry will show that such a demand has not hitherto existed, at least the demand for the *genuine* sort of immortality postulation, whence: "the state of our knowledge remains commensurate with that of our desire, and the postulate remains a mere postulate without developing into a source of knowledge"; forgetting that, if postulates are merely to *make* knowledge instead of *coaxing nature* into acquiescence with our wishes, as Mr Schiller had previously led us to expect, we ought to be equally satisfied (morally and emotionally, etc.) if the knowledge should turn out contrary to the postulate; for knowledge that-we-cannot-get-what-we-want would, by this new definition, be knowledge quite as much as knowledge that we-could-get-what-we-want. It seems, therefore, to be left to our *Will-to-Believe* to choose whether Mr Schiller means:

(A) when people will want immortality sufficiently to postulate it, they will get to know whether there *is* immortality or not. Or

(B) When people want immortality sufficiently to postulate it, people will *get* immortality.

There is difference sufficient for an ample exercise of our liberty in making truth.

that this particular Pragmatism differs from that of Mr Peirce in being (to use Mr Schiller's favourite words) "genetically explicable" by the mystic union of scientific Psychology with Psychical Research.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS TRUTH?

I

WHAT is truth? asked Pilate, implying thereby that there was no such thing. And he went on to wash his hands of practical responsibilities.

The Pragmatists raise Pilate's question, but they are, unlike him, essentially ethical, efficient, and responsible. What they wash their hands of is intellectual consequences, and they answer: "Examine the practical results."

But of course not without reservations; for practical persons do not give themselves away, and morality is a matter of moderation and *juste milieu*. So, after telling us ("Pragmatism," page 204) that "*you can say of* it [an opinion]. . . *either that 'it is useful because it is true' or that 'it is true because it is useful'—both these phrases mean exactly the same thing*"—Professor William James explains that this self-same meaning of the two phrases is, "*that here is an idea that gets fulfilled and can be verified.* True is *the name for whatever idea*

starts the verification-process, useful is the name for its completed function in experience."

This sentence has the pleasant cogency of all symmetrical things, for there is an æsthetic will to believe, which the Pragmatists do not indeed discuss but occasionally appeal to. Truth is utility, utility is truth. It is almost Keats's famous formula. But Keats, being a poet, is satisfied with one lyric assertion. A philosopher never merely asserts; he refers to another assertion. The identity of "truth" and "usefulness" is explained by Professor James by each of these terms being in the same relation to a third term—namely, "verification-process." The same relation? Professor James says that when we say of an opinion that "It is useful because it is true," or "true because it is useful," "*both these phrases mean exactly the same thing, namely that here is an idea that gets fulfilled and can be verified.*" There can be no mistake: the identity of meaning rests upon identical relation to the verification-process. There buzzes through our mind a reassuring reminiscence of the Euclidean formula: "things which are equal to the same thing," etc.

But is identity of relation the same as identity of quality? If two men are exactly like a third, they must be exactly like each other; but if two men are in exactly the same relation to a third—say in the relation of a friend, or pupil, or enemy—are they like each other in everything else? Are only such ideas

as are useful liable to be fulfilled and verified in the same sense as ideas that are true? No one would take the trouble to verify an idea he thought useless. Useless in what sense? Useless to his health, his purse, his reputation, his hope of heaven? What cavilling! exclaims the Pragmatist. Why of course not any of *these* utilities: useless, of course, to—to—to . . . useless in the sense of intellectually unsatisfactory; well, useless because, you know, ideas aren't useful, *really* useful, except when they are true.

Anti-Pragmatist. Ah, of course as a Pragmatist you have a belief in the usefulness of truth and only truth, such as we—I am not sure what you would call us—have not attained to, for we have heard not only of the Noble Lies which Plato allowed the Guardians of his Republic, but also of the Vital Lies of the doctor in Ibsen's play; and we even incline to think, with certain modernists and anthropologists, that a vehicle of mistakes or lies may have been necessary for the progress of sundry useful institutions and standards; nay, even with M. Georges Sorel, that for the highest social purposes you can get use out of a myth just because it cannot be verified or fulfilled.

Pragmatist. That's neither here nor there. Except in one little reference, evidently ironical, of Mr Schiller's, Pragmatism does not concern itself with lies. It is a new mode of defining truth. And I suppose you will

not push your cavilling to the length of denying that truth is useful?

ANTI-PRAGMATIST. I think, Socrates, that truth is useful on the whole, though not in every individual case. And that is compensated by the fact that even in the individual case useful lies would not be useful if they were not mistaken for truths.

PRAGMATIST. Exactly! For the peculiarity of Pragmatism, and what distinguishes it from intellectualism, is that it enormously widens the field of agreement; it really does see truth everywhere.

ANTI-PRAGMATIST. Well now, to return to this "verification-process," in which Professor James sees the identification of truth and usefulness.

PRAGMATIST. I beg your pardon. Professor James never says that truth and usefulness are identical. He says that to say that an opinion "*is useful because it is true*" and an opinion "*is true because it is useful*" *are phrases meaning exactly the same thing.*

ANTI-PRAGMATIST. Well! I should have said that they are phrases having the same shape, like "a rug made out of a tiger" and "a tiger made out of a rug." But—tell me: do you really think that "an opinion is useful because it is true" means exactly the same as "an opinion is true because it is useful"?

PRAGMATIST. Of course they don't mean the same thing in the general sense. That's evident and left to the intelligence of the reader. Pragmatism always

counts upon the intelligence of the reader—no, not on his intelligence, rather upon his intuition. You remember how splendidly Bergson has defined intuition as originating in action.

ANTI-PRAGMATIST. Why, I thought he said that it was intelligence which was a mere rough and ready instrument of action. . . .

PRAGMATIST. Exactly. Action's negative correlate. Well, Pragmatism always counts upon the reader's intuition or intelligence, whichever he happens to have. Probably, as you say, on his intelligence, because Pragmatism wastes no time in defining but makes straight for action.

ANTI-PRAGMATIST. But I thought intelligence *did* define. . . .

PRAGMATIST. Did I say intelligence? Of course I meant intelligence in the sense of intuition. Bergson is naturally with us Pragmatists, he *is* a Pragmatist; only you must leave off defining his meaning and merely apply it in order to recognize his Pragmatism. Pragmatism makes straight for application.

ANTI-PRAGMATIST. And anything can become a Pragmatistic truth if applied by a Pragmatist?

PRAGMATIST. Ha! That's good, that's very good! You are a Pragmatist at heart, everybody is a Pragmatist at heart—at least, if not an Anti-Pragmatist, and perhaps most of all then! All the same, I must tell you that you were misquoting Professor James

most grossly. What Professor James does say is that utility and truth are, as you yourself correctly paraphrased it the moment before, the same with regard to the verification-process. Look! here it is: "True is the name for whatever idea starts the verification-process, useful is the name for its completed function in experience."

ANTI-PRAGMATIST (*rather overcome*). But—is "completing" an idea's function in experience the same as "starting" the verification-process?

PRAGMATIST. Of course. Don't we constantly see the completion of one function overlapping the starting of another function? And isn't overlapping occupying the same space, having therefore a quality of sameness? But test by application: can anyone deny that, *cæteris paribus*, and in the long run, true opinions will be found to be useful, and of course, vice versa, useful opinions will be found (*cæteris paribus*, naturally!) to be true? Surely, truth is, in a great many cases—whenever it isn't the contrary—*very* useful.

ANTI-PRAGMATIST. But—haven't we known that all along?

PRAGMATIST (*triumphant*). Of course you have! "A new name for some old ways of thinking"[1] —that's what's so splendid in Pragmatism. But then, nobody before had completed the identification; nobody

[1] Subtitle of Professor James's "Pragmatism."

had shown that the single case could be made to include all the cases; no one had understood, or rather thoroughly applied (for application is the pragmatic test), what is meant by the formulas, "in the long run" and "cæteris paribus." Besides, no other philosophy had seen how it all hinges on the verification-process. Really, putting modesty aside, I think one may say that it takes Pragmatism to say that truth is what starts the verification-process.

(*Exit Pragmatist, exulting.*)

II

The Verification-Process—the words keep haunting my mind like a solemn phrase of music. I sympathize vaguely with my Pragmatist friend's jubilation. If the form of that dictum of Professor James is symmetrical and gracious, its substance—the Verification-Process—is massive and reassuring. Verification-Process. Yes, of course. If we want to know whether an opinion is true, it is a good plan, according to Charles S. Peirce, to think out the consequences implied in the statement, and try whether those consequences tally. You can tread with all your might on a real pearl without its being crushed, but you can't do the same by a Roman pearl. If, therefore, you reduce your pearl to a mush by your stampings, you have

applied practice to an opinion, and you have—with intellectual joy but perhaps a little human annoyance at the loss both of the pearl and of your hopes—gone successfully through the Verification-Process. Whatever the truth may be, this much is true. The Verification-Process is, therefore, the one at whose completion we find that we have (or have not) an opinion which is true. This little Verification-Process (our example of the Roman pearl) has therefore proved Professor James's opinion about Verification-Processes and truth to be itself a truth, a remarkable truth. But stay—something has gone wrong somewhere. Somehow or other, that doesn't seem to have been Professor James's opinion. What *was* Professor James's opinion? Ah, here it is: "*True* is the name for whatever idea starts the Verification-Process." But what starts the Verification-Process—say in the case of the real pearl and the false one—is the desire to get at the truth, the lack of truth, the *doubt*. The truth then was at the *end* of the Verification-Process; it was its *result*. But that's not what ought to have resulted from *our* little private Verification-Process: if Professor James's dictum was true, truth ought to have been at the *beginning* of the Verification-Process. Perhaps truth was independent of the Verification-Process! These matters are puzzling, and in our desire to verify this Verification-Process business, we may have been forgetting what the real pearl was to do and the false

one. Perhaps it was the real pearl which was to be crushed.

Collecting my thoughts, I seek once more for clearer understanding of that sentence. I will let alone that troublesome first half-sentence, "*True is the name for whatever idea starts the Verification-Process,*" and proceed to the second, which will probably make everything plain: "*useful is the name for its completed function in experience.*" There arises a trifling grammatical doubt: what is the noun behind the pronoun "its"? "*True is the name for whatever idea starts the Verification-Process;* useful is the name *for its completed function in experience.*" Ought we to read, "useful is the name for whatever-starts-the-Verification-Process's completed function in experience"? This seems a little heavy for so fine a stylist. I think we ought to read, "useful is the name for whatever-has-been-named-true's (shall we say truth's?) completed function in experience." Or shall we go back to the previous sentence in search of a nominative to that "is," and read, "true is the name of whatever *idea* starts the Verification-Process, useful is the name for its [the idea's] completed function in experience"? Evidently. One must not expect verbal pedantry from a great writer. Besides, see how true it is that with patience and sympathy one will always, as St Catherine of Siena remarked, find the sweet reasonable soul of people, and also of people's sentences. I do

not, however, yet grasp fully the meaning of "completed function in experience."

"Does "experience" mean *experiment?* In that case we should be back at the—I beg its pardon, but it has given a lot of trouble—the beneficent Verification-Process. Of course the function, particularly the completed function, of an idea, is likely to be useful in the Verification-Process; indeed, an idea, even an idea's function, would seem more than merely useful, actually indispensable in an experiment. But this would come to meaning that while truth is what sets us examining whether it is true, utility is what comes out as the result of that inquiry: truth would have started the Verification-Process, and utility have completed it.

This seems clear, as clear almost as Professor James's way of putting the thing—in fact, amazingly like it; so true is it that it is difficult for cold criticism to improve upon the expression of a great thought, since expression and thought are apt to bubble up together in the master-mind.

Utility would have completed the Verification-Process started by truth. We seem to have arrived at the conclusion that a useful idea is an idea which we try to verify.

But when the Pragmatist decides to accept the ideas (let us say) of free-will and of a pluralistic universe because, like Professor James, he thinks them useful, can that Pragmatist be correctly described as "*starting*

the Verification-Process"? I should have thought that he was stopping it off, as much as the possessor of a doubtful pearl who forbears from stamping on it in his desire, shall we say in Pragmatistic phrase to get its "cash-value."[1]

III

The Assimilation of Truth

"*Pragmatism*," says Professor James, "*asks the usual question.*"

I hope to have shown in my introductory chapters that there are two Pragmatisms and two Questions, the difference between the two Pragmatisms—namely, Mr Peirce's and Professor James's—consisting exactly in the different question which each is really asking, and the different answer, also, which each is furnishing. But in the comedy of errors of Will-to-Believe philosophy, the two Pragmatisms run in and out like twins of similar aspect but different sex and character; they dance *pas seuls* in rapid alternation—is that the boy or the girl? is there a boy *and* a girl?—disappearing just as we think we know one apart; nay, occasionally and even pretty often, they furnish the

[1] W. James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 443: "What is its cash value in terms of particular experience?"

bewildering spectacle of a whirling metamorphosis where both are present only to seem one.

"Pragmatism asks its usual question." Quick, snatch at the question and see which Pragmatism. "*Grant an idea or belief to be true, it says, what concrete difference will its being true make in anyone's actual life?*" Which Pragmatism is this? The Will-to-Believe, of course; for note the expression, "*any one's actual life.*" But it is not every "concrete difference," or even abstract difference, in the life of somebody, since it is in the somebody's thought? Is not a chemical experiment in the chemist's life, and its upshot even more so, spelling as it does the success or defeat of a supposition? Need this quotation mean anything beyond the rule that a difference in opinion must mean a difference in the facts about which that opinion is held and a difference in the facts due to this difference? This is Peircean Pragmatism, pure and simple. And note the next sentence: "*How will the truth be realized?*" Could anything be more thinly intellectual, more disterested, nay, disembodied than that?

"*What experiences will be different from those which would obtain if the belief were false?*" Experiences—why, of course, intellectual experiences, or experiences looked upon from the intellectual standpoint; every experiment is such an experience, and every scientific investigation, from Abbot Mendel sowing

his peas to Signor Boni digging up the Roman Forum, means nothing save the watching for differences and resemblances in experience. Moreover, the summing up of the sentence makes our certainty only more certain. "*What, in short, is the truth's cash-value in experiential terms?*" This is pure Peircean Pragmatism—in fact, perhaps purer than Peirce's Peircean Pragmatism, since that word "cash-value" is merely a more appealing way of saying *equivalent*; for a theory can be doled out to us not in the abstract promissory cheque but in so many little facts, which, like sovereigns or shillings, we can turn round, and spin, and test, and count in easily managed heaps of four or five, and each of which can itself, like the sovereigns or shillings, have its own "cash-value." There is absolutely no reason why *cash-value in experiential terms* should suggest any valuing of ideas for what amounts of pleasure or profit or safety or edification there may attach to them.

And now comes the last sentence: "*True ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate, and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot.*"

Let us seek for the cash-value of these words by trying what other words they will exchange for. "Validate," "Corroborate"; so far we have mere augmentations of "verify." Now, to "verify" means (I am quoting Samuel Johnson) to "justify against a charge of falsehood; to confirm; to prove true."

In fact, this new statement means nothing more recondite than that true ideas are those which, with the reinforcing applied by "corroborate" and perhaps by "validate," we can prove true. A true thing is one which has been found to be true. It seems a little thin, and undoubtedly old-fashioned; yet, why should we expect that an adjective made to designate one particular quality should be translatable into another adjective made to designate another quality? *Near*, that which is not far; *far*, that which is not near; *true*, that which is not *false*.

"*Pragmatism . . . sees the answer: 'True ideas are those that we can validate, corroborate, and verify,'*"—verify, prove to be true. And a very good answer, surely!

But in my analysis of this definition of truth there is a word which I have purposely left out. The word—and it comes first, overwhelmed by the succeeding wave of "proving to be true"—that word is "assimilate." This is an addition to the statement that a true idea is what we can prove (and double prove: "validate," and triple prove: "corroborate") true. "Assimilate" (I again refer to Johnson) has in English two meanings: first, "to bring to a likeness or resemblance"; and second, "to turn to its own nature by digestion." Neither of these two meanings brings "assimilate" under the heading of "proving true." Hence, as I have just remarked, the statement that

" true ideas are those which can be proved true," is being added to by the information that true ideas are those which can be assimilated either in the sense (*a*) of being brought to a likeness or resemblance, or (*b*) of being turned to its own nature by digestion. Indeed, it seems a pity that, in summing up of the pragmatistic answer, Professor James should not have isolated and insisted upon this addition to the usual and tautological answer to " What is truth ? " Now it remains to find out in which of these two Johnsonian senses, or in what other sense, unsuspected by the eighteenth century, Professor James intends his reader to understand that word " assimilate."

While hunting for a quotation which may settle this question, my own mind sets to idling round that word " assimilate." And, as I cannot get any forwarder by thinking in what way *assimilation* is a test of truth, I go on to the negative side of the matter. I quite agree with Professor James that false ideas cannot be validated, corroborated, and verified—in other words, that false ideas cannot be proved true. But assimilated—can a false idea not be *assimilated ?* I have spent my life under the impression (subject to correction or the Verification-Process, of course) that a large part of the world's business, ever since the beginning, had been the *assimilation,* in both the Johnsonian meanings, of ideas that were subsequently neither validated nor verified, although I am sorry

to find they were often corroborated on account of a practical cash-value. Joshua must have assimilated a wrong idea about the sun before he fell to stopping it, and this wrong idea seems to have been corroborated both by the Jews of his immediate *entourage* and by the theologians salaried for teaching Bible miracles. Indeed, the thorough assimilation of that particular astronomic fallacy is proved by Galileo's imprisonment for having said that it *was* a fallacy. The cash-value of that particular astronomical idea was in this case dissimilar to Galileo and to his judges.

IV

Practical Guidance

"*True ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate, and verify.*" We must hold on to this word "assimilate," since it evidently contains the addition made by the Pragmatism of Professor James and Mr Schiller not merely to the Peircean Pragmatism which *made our ideas clear*, but to the old irrefragable, tautological answer: "*True ideas are those that we can . . . validate, corroborate, and verify*"—or, in less philosophical English, "true ideas are those which can be proved to be true."

Let us therefore try to discover in what "assimila-

tion " consists, and with what a true idea must assimilate in order to be true.

Unluckily for this inquiry, that word " assimilate " has been withdrawn from circulation ; I cannot find it again in Professor James's text, and am obliged to hunt about for some other expression which may determine its cash-value, if not in experience, at all events in intention. The nearest approach I can find is " to agree " ; " *our ideas agree with reality.*" Here is what Professor James tells us about such agreement (" Pragmatism," page 212) : " *To ' agree ' in the widest sense with a reality can only mean to be guided either straight up to it or into its surroundings, or to be put into such working touch with it as to handle either it or something connected with it better than if we disagreed. Better either intellectually or practically ! . . . To copy a reality is, indeed, one very important way of agreeing with it, but it is far from being essential. The essential thing is the process of being guided. Any ideal that helps us to deal, whether practically or intellectually, with either the reality or its belongings, that doesn't entangle our progress in frustrations, that fits, in fact, and adapts our life to the reality's whole setting, will agree sufficiently to meet the requirement. It will hold true of that reality.*"

" Assimilation," the assimilation which was one of the tests of whether an idea is true, is presumably the same thing as this " *agreement with reality,*" which is

itself not merely a "*copying of reality*" but such "*guidance*" as "*adapts our life to the reality's whole setting.*" "Life" is a large order. Shall we try narrowing down the possible meaning to that part of our life which wants to know about this reality? Evidently not; for that portion of our life is already provided for under Professor James's rubric of "*handling reality intellectually,*" a rubric to which he adds and opposes (by means of the conjunction "*or*") another rubric of handling reality "*practically*"; moreover, it has been dismissed as "*one very important way of agreeing with it* [*reality*], *but it is far from being essential.*" "The essential thing," he continues, "is . . . *being guided.*" Guided, guided indeed "*intellectually,*" he tells us—rather unnecessarily, since the intellectual guidance could guide us only to the "*copying of reality*" he has already dealt with before we came to the guidance at all. But also guide us "*practically*" . . .

"Practically." For if the intellectual guidance leading to "*correct copying of reality*" can obviously not be what the guided-to copying of reality is itself not allowed to be—namely, the "*essential thing*"—why, then we are thrown back upon the other half of the "*guiding*"—that, namely, which, duly separated off by its "*or,*" is "practical."

But, just as we were obliged to ask what was "*assimilation*"; what was "*agreement with reality*"; and what—whether the whole or only one side—was meant by

"*our life*," which was to be "*adapted to reality*"; so we have now to ask ourselves, what is "*practical*"? (All these inquiries in order to refine and enrich that poor, tautological "*truth is what can be proved true.*" Surely no one can complain that Pragmatism dislikes taking intellectual trouble!)

Once more, however, Professor James has not thought it necessary—why should he?—to define exactly what he means by "*practical.*" He uses that word again and again, but leaves the meaning to his reader's intelligence. My own—perhaps inadequate to the task—suggests that "*practical*" may possibly mean "expedient." For a few pages further on ("Pragmatism," page 222), I find, italicized in the text: "'*The true*,' *to put it very briefly, is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as* '*the right*' *is only the expedient in the way of our behaving. Expedient in almost any fashion; and expedient in the long run and on the whole, of course; for what meets expediently all the experience in sight won't necessarily meet all farther experiences equally satisfactorily.*"

Quite true. The reality of the universe will eventually turn and rend an idea which is "expedient" only in a limited sense—"expedient" for one person, time, class, or purpose—and hurl the rest of humanity, or abstraction humanity, most violently back upon the "true" (shall we say the *real* true?) and the universally and eternally expedient. Despite the contrary

teachings of M. Bergson, who holds that practicality is at loggerheads with a knowledge of realities, I agree with Professor James that such ultimate reprisals of reality are exceedingly probable. But for the time being, the "expedient"—the really, eventually, completely expedient—remains quite as difficult of definition as the true. Indeed, perhaps more so; for we can hope to prove that a few ideas are *true*; whereas doctors may differ as to what is expedient in the long run and on the whole, particularly with the encyclopædic addition, "*in almost any fashion.*"

Let us, therefore, in our search for the pragmatistic addition to "Truth is what can be proved true," turn back to an earlier part of Professor James's volume, that volume called "Pragmatism, a New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking," and dedicated to the memory of John Stuart Mill, "*from whom I* [*that is, Professor James*] *first learned the pragmatic openness of mind, and whom my* [*Professor James's*] *fancy likes to picture as our leader—were he alive to-day*":

"*Truth is one species of good, and not, as is usually supposed, a category distinct from good, and co-ordinate with it. The true is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief, and good, too, for definite, assignable reasons. Surely you must admit this, that if there were no good for life in true ideas, or if the knowledge of them were positively disadvantageous and false ideas the only useful ones, then the current notion that*

truth is divine and precious, and its pursuit a duty, could never have grown up or become a dogma. In a world like that, our duty would be to shun truth, rather." ("Pragmatism," p. 75.)

V

Vital Benefits

That dedication has returned to my mind in connection with this quotation, because in it and similar passages, Pragmatism puts forward its claim to be "an old way of thinking," and gets consecrated as utilitarianism, *sub invocatione* J. S. Mill.

That truth is "good," meaning thereby "useful," for life, is indeed the utilitarian explanation for the "*current notion that truth is divine and precious, and its pursuit a duty,*" because being "good for life," life of the individual or life of the race, is the utilitarian explanation of all habitual standards of value; and more than ever since utilitarianism has been fortified by the evolutional conception that the survival of the races best fitted for life implies the survival of the habits and standards most useful to life. From the utilitarian standpoint, "*good for life*" explains why we cultivate righteousness, beauty, health, wealth, and, in the present case, why we cultivate truth. Utilitarianism goes further: just as it explains in

what manner righteousness, health, wealth (and attempts to explain, as yet not very successfully, how beauty) are each and all "good for life," so it explains also the particular service which truth renders that master-exploiter, Life. Truth is good or useful for life, because life implies a constant adaptation to really existing circumstances, and because such adaptation is more easy and complete when the people who do the adapting believe those circumstances to be what they *are* rather than what they are *not*; to have a true opinion of anything is to save that overdue knowledge of reality which spells successively surprise, waste of effort, failure, ruin. That is why truth is useful for life, and, being useful, ought to be cultivated. So far we have learned that it is good for life to believe in opinions which are true. We still require to learn what information is added by Professor James's variation on this utilitarian formula, namely, "*true is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief, and good too, for definite, assignable reasons.*"

This formula requires interpretation, for it can be interpreted in two ways, according to the reference of the words "good in the way of belief." "Good in the way of belief" may mean either: first, that the content, of a given opinion, its subject matter, is such that belief in that opinion will have good results: or, second, that the content, the subject

matter of an opinion, is in a peculiar relation, called truth, to something independent of that opinion, namely, reality ; and that being in this truthful relation to reality, the holding of this opinion is likely to have good results. The difference between the two interpretations depends upon whether the good results are expected from the content of the opinion, or from the fact of the opinion being correct ; and the difference can be tested practically by asking, Why ? Thus : it is good to believe that water tends to regain its level. Why is it good to believe this ? Because the belief is true, and holding it will enable us to deal better with water than holding the contrary belief, which is false. On the other hand : it is good to believe that wicked people will be punished in hell. Why is it good to believe this ? Because it makes people less inclined to be wicked.

Again : it was good for primitive man to believe in the regularity of the seasons, and of day and night. Why was it good ? Because, being true, this belief enabled savages to take precautions against wild beasts and famine and cold, and consequently to remain alive. But : it was good for primitive man to believe that dead ancestors required to be fed and honoured. Why was it good ? Because it induced savages to bring up their offspring instead of letting it perish. But although it was useful to hold that opinion, the opinion was false.

Now it seems evident that Professor James cannot mean that "true" can ever be the name for an opinion which is false. We must therefore discard our first interpretation, the interpretation according to which the utility to be inquired about resides in the content of the opinion, independent of its truth, and fall back upon the second interpretation, according to which the utility in question resides not in the content of the opinion as such, but in the fact that this content happens to be true. "True," therefore, we may paraphrase, is the name for "whatever is good in the way of belief because it is true." This is irrefutable, but somewhat jejune. Professor James's contribution to the subject must therefore lie in the qualifying half-sentence, "*and good, too, for definite, assignable reasons.*"

Well, to say that an opinion is true because it is good for us on account of its truth, is a definite reason, but scarcely an assignable one. There must be more than that in Professor James's thought; and so, of course, there is. Continuing that page, I come to this: "*If there be any life that it is really better we should lead, and if there be any idea which, if believed in, would help us to lead that life, then it would be really better for us to believe in that idea, unless, indeed, belief in it incidentally clashed with other greater vital benefits.*"

Can this be the "*definite, assignable*" reason for finding an opinion good to believe and therefore true?

Be of good cheer; Pragmatism is sprung from utilitarianism, and is fertile in useful opinions. "*Unless*," writes Professor James, carefully reiterating his own statement, "*unless the belief incidentally clashes with some other vital benefit.*" "*Now* [it is always Professor James speaking], *in real life what vital benefits is any particular belief of ours most liable to clash with? What indeed except the vital benefits yielded by other beliefs when these prove incompatible with the first ones?*"

Let me try and follow: Here is a vitally beneficial belief. It clashes with another vitally beneficial belief, and is therefore proved not to be good in the way of belief—that is, not to be *true*. Was the vitally beneficial belief not *truly* vitally beneficial? Or was it only *less* vitally beneficial than the one which it clashed with? Or—this is a different supposition—was the vitally beneficial belief which succumbed in the clashing really as vitally beneficial as the vitally beneficial belief which got the better in the clashing, and did it succumb in the clashing, because the other vitally beneficial opinion, although not *more* vitally beneficial than itself, was also *true*? But then, being *true* would no longer be the same as being vitally beneficial. Ah, here I have it. The vitally beneficial belief is true when it does not clash with another vitally beneficial belief. With another belief which is vitally beneficial *because*

it is true? No—and yes, for Professor James has *told us that useful because it is true* and *true because it is useful have the same meaning.* In the present case, however, not so much vitally beneficial because it is true, but rather true because it is vitally beneficial.

Anyhow, if a vitally beneficial belief does not clash with another vitally beneficial belief, either or both (for we must not make too sure) of the vitally beneficial beliefs may be true. That is simple enough. But suppose two vitally beneficial beliefs *do* clash; which is the really vitally beneficial one of the two? The one, evidently, which gets the better in the clashing. But why will it get the better in the clashing? Because —why because it is *true*, and the true *is* the vitally beneficial.

But how about that matter of ancestor cultus? I mean the belief (typical of many similar ones, of which more anon) that deceased parents and guardians required to be fed and honoured by survivors, a belief most beneficial to our remote forebears and ourselves by inducing primeval persons to cumber themselves with otherwise embarrassing offspring? Shall we say that as that opinion was not *true* it could not have been *beneficial* (and set out to prove that it was never held or never useful)? Or shall we say that if it *was* beneficial it was, in so far . . .

VI

At this juncture it happened very luckily that my Pragmatist friend came in to tell me that reflection had convinced him that I was already a Pragmatist without knowing it. So, feeling my mind giving way under this logical strain, I read the quotations to him and begged him to settle the difficulty. "With the greatest pleasure in the world," he answered, and began as follows: "You see," he said, "ancestor worship perhaps never really existed at all—I can lend you a very revolutionary book against it by an Austrian Jew. Oh, no, pray don't think that I mean to deny the existence of ancestor worship. Not in the least—only it may all be a mistake. One advantage of Pragmatism, as you will soon find out, is that, as the young Florentine Papini said (and Professor James thought it so first-rate that he repeated it verbatim), Pragmatism is a corridor with rooms off it where people are saying prayers to different gods and writing treatises against one another. But to return to your difficulty. Supposing ancestor worship to have existed (and perhaps it hasn't), you may be sure that it was beneficial only so long as it was held, and it was held so long as did not clash with some other beneficial belief. Not the most virulent Anti-Pragmatist could pretend that a belief can be beneficial

if it is not held! The whole matter (goes on my Pragmatist) pivots upon the fact of not *clashing with other truths*: so long as a truth—a beneficial truth, of course—does not clash with other truths—that is to say with other beneficial, that is to say *true*, beliefs—why, so long it is a truth. And when it has been knocked into cocked hats by another truth in the clash we have been speaking of—why, it ceases to be altogether and therefore ceases to be a truth. Can something be true if it has ceased to be?"

Anti-Pragmatist. Do you mean (a sudden light dawning in my mind) that a dead truth becomes a living falsehood or error?

Pragmatist. Good! as Polonius says, that "living falsehood or error" is *good*, though it is perhaps pushing things a little far; that belief of ancestor cultus, for instance, is evidently false. No one can say that it isn't as dead as a door-nail, and quite useless in modern life.

Anti-Pragmatist. But then—do truths die?

Pragmatist. Let me answer you in the words of Professor James: "*the greatest enemy of any one of our truths may be the rest of our truths.*"

But my Pragmatist, having gone away, as usual exulting, after contributing thus much to my understanding of the very pragmatistic answer to "What is truth?", returned the very next minute and added this further information.

PRAGMATIST. Don't imagine from what I have been saying that pragmatistic truths are *always* each other's enemies. Quite the contrary; one of the chief merits of Pragmatism (all that matter of Signor Papini's corridor ought to prove it) is precisely that it saves such a lot of all that destructive *clashing of truths.* Truths which would hit up against each other in any other philosophical system, all live quite peaceably side by side in Pragmatism, because of its great principle of *so-far-forth.*

ANTI-PRAGMATIST. "So-far-forth?"

PRAGMATIST. What, hadn't you grasped the principle of "true-in-so-far-forth"? It's like rules of precedence; it decides what place a truth is to occupy, and, as in precedence, there's room for all truths—only it's better than ordinary rules of precedence, because the place need not necessarily be the same, so that the truth which goes in first to dinner in your house, may sit below the salt in mine, and all quite peaceably and politely. You really must study that principle of "so-far-forth." You will find it discussed in James's "Pragmatism" at page 73 and thereabouts, for it comes in, of course, pretty often. I can scarcely imagine how you can have missed it. And once you've grasped it thoroughly, you will have the key to all your difficulties about truths clashing and being enemies and so forth; in fact—for that's what's so splendid about Pragmatism—

you will probably recognize that you have thought it all along yourself, like Milton's Fallen Angels, who recognized that they would all have invented artillery as soon as Satan had once invented it. Meanwhile, I will go home and mark you some passages in another book of Professor James's—just to see the importance of it all " for knowledge," as he says. I don't see the book here upon your table—so I'll send it. It's the " Varieties of Religious Experience."

ANTI-PRAGMATIST (a light dawning). Oh, is *that* perhaps the " experience " in which we must seek for the " cash-value " of truth ?

While waiting for my friend the Pragmatist to bring his copy of the " Varieties of Religious Experience, " I set to turning over the pages of Professor James's " Pragmatism," wondering whether I should be able to recover, among all those definitions of truth, a sentence which was knocking at the door of my memory, of which that title, " Religious Experience," had somehow evoked a vague shadow. And by the greatest good luck, there it stood on the very page (namely 73) at which I opened the book :

" Now pragmatism, devoted though she be to facts, has no such materialistic bias. . . . *If theological ideas prove to have a value for concrete life, they will be true for Pragmatism, in the sense of being good for so much.*"

As if foreseeing their immense value, not merely

in helping me to define truth, but in guiding me among the Varieties of Religious Experience, Professor James has actually underlined that sentence himself.

VII

Sub Invocatione

John Stuart Mill

Improving upon my Pragmatist's advice, I decided to put off my inquiry into the principle of *true-in-so-far-forth* until I could find it illustrated in that other book of Professor James's, a book, I should add, which I had read with very great admiration and enjoyment a few years back, but before I had turned my thoughts to Pragmatism.

While waiting, therefore, for his copy of the "Varieties of Religious Experience," and for whatever notes he might obligingly add to it, I refreshed my somewhat wearied mind by going to the window and gazing blankly at the starry heavens, whose direct influence upon births, deaths, and marriages, had been one of those truths which, after practically guiding mankind for many centuries, had eventually gone under in a clash, with what we at present call the truths of astronomy.

While thus idling I found my mind haunted, as

one is haunted by musical phrases, by that dedication of "Pragmatism" to John Stuart Mill, who had taught Professor James the "*Pragmatic openness of mind.*"

John Stuart Mill (thus idled my thoughts) was not only a utilitarian, but also an economist. And, being an economist, I can imagine him applying to the question: "Why do we prize truth," the economic formula of supply and demand, in the following fashion:

The fact that we prize truth and try to tempt people to pursue it, shows that the demand for it is greater than the supply. We may risk the supposition that the soil in which it can be cultivated is limited, and that the cultivation involves some hardship; also that there are perhaps special causes of climate and so forth which threaten its successful production. At all events, it would seem certain, judging by the high estimation it is held in, that truth is not one of those commodities like plain sewing or literature (see John Stuart Mill's "Political Economy") which are notoriously produced by any person without special endowment or training, and therefore glut the market.

Nor is this all—it is the Economist speaking in my imagination—the insufficient supply of truth compared with the great demand for it, makes it extremely probable that, like other necessaries of human existence

which are similarly economically situated, truth will tend to be adulterated and fraudulently imitated. Adulteration consists in adding to a certain amount a greater or lesser amount of fallacy or of nonsense. Falsification, I take it, is the application to given opinions of labels or names such as lead people to suppose that they are identical with other opinions which have passed muster or enjoy a good reputation.

VIII

True-in-so-far-forth

When, however, the next morning had come without the promised volume making its appearance, I yielded to curiosity on the subject of *true-in-so-far-forth*, and turned to the pages of " Pragmatism " which had been pointed out to me, and in which I did indeed, as my Pragmatist had assured me, find some very interesting elucidations of Professor James's phrase: "*A value for concrete life.*"

It was in the midst of a long discussion of the Absolute of Transcendental Idealism, a form of philosophy which Professor James seems to find almost as dull as I am ashamed to confess I do myself. The sentence my eye fell upon was a perfect instance of that conciliating rule of precedence which my Pragmatist had said I should find in the principle of *true-in-so-far-forth.*

For this is what I read about that (to Professor James and my humble self) singularly uninviting, *Absolute :*

" *First I called it majestic, and said it yielded religious comfort to a class of minds . . . In so far . . .*" (*Here was the principle !*) " *In so far as it affords such comfort . . . it performs a concrete function. As a good Pragmatist, I myself ought to call the Absolute ' true in so far forth ' then ; and I unhesitatingly now do so. But what does* true-in-so-far-forth *mean in this case ? What do believers in the Absolute mean by saying that their belief affords them comfort ? They mean that since, in the Absolute, finite evil is ' overruled ' already, we may, therefore, whenever we wish, treat the temporal as if it were potentially the eternal, be sure that we can trust its outcome, and without sin, dismiss our fear and drop the worry of our finite responsibility. In short, they mean that we have a right ever and anon to take a moral holiday, to let the world wag in its own way, feeling that its issues are in better hands than ours and are none of our business.*"

Let us grasp this much : Professor James is investigating the *concrete function* of this idea of the Absolute. But instead of beginning his inquiry with the sentence : " What do believers in the Absolute mean by saying that their belief affords them comfort ? " he leads off with " What does ' *true-in-so-far-forth* ' mean in this case ? " thus identifying truth once more, not only with concrete function, but with " giving comfort,"

so that there remains the result : *An idea which gives comfort is true so-far-forth.*

" *My belief in the Absolute,*" goes on Professor James, " *based on the good it does me, must run the gauntlet of my other beliefs. Grant that it may be true in giving me a moral holiday. Nevertheless, as I conceive it—and let me speak now confidentially, as it were, and merely in my own private person—it clashes with other truths of mine whose benefits I hate to give up on its account. It happens to be associated with a kind of logic of which I am the enemy, I find that it entangles me in metaphysical paradoxes that are inacceptable, etc., etc. But as I have enough trouble in life already without adding these intellectual inconsistencies, I personally give up the Absolute. If I could restrict my notion of the Absolute to its bare holiday giving value, it wouldn't clash with my beliefs. But we cannot easily thus restrict our hypothesis. They carry supernumerary features, and these it is that clash so.*"

Now let me see whether I follow :

The other truth which restricted the so-far-forth truth of the Absolute of Transcendental Idealism is not merely negative in action, it does not merely consist in other " clashing truths." That truth which *so-far-forths* the truth of the Absolute, partly consists in the greater attractiveness and practical advantage of a particular scheme of the Universe which Professor James commends to our favourable notice

(" exactly what you require," " Pragmatism," p. 301) in all of his pragmatistic volumes. [1]

Let me see again whether I have really grasped the meaning of that limiting qualification " so-far-forth." A thing being *true-so-far-forth* means that it may be untrue in some particular different from the one under examination, for instance: " Your statement that last Wednesday was a rainy day is true in so far forth as there was rain from eight to twelve; the same statement was untrue in so far forth that on that same Wednesday there was no rain from twelve to eight." Let us apply this analogy to Professor James's explanation of that limiting *so-far-forth* which he put to the *truth* of the idea of the Absolute of Transcendental Idealism. As the truth of Wednesday having been a rainy day was restricted by the truth of no

[1] Professor James reverts to this so-far-forth truth of the " melioristic " or " pluralistic " view compared with that of the *Absolute*," on p. 295.

" *May not religious optimism be too idyllic? Must all be saved? Is no price to be paid in the work of salvation?* Is the last word sweet? Is all ' yes, yes ' in the Universe? Doesn't the fact of ' No ' stand at the very core of life, etc.? I cannot speak officially as a Pragmatist here; all I can say is that my own Pragmatism offers no objection to my taking sides with this more moralistic view, and giving up the claim of total reconciliation. The possibility of this is involved in the pragmatistic willingness to treat pluralism as a serious hypothesis. In the end, it is our faith and not our logic that decides such questions, and I deny the right of any pretended logic to veto my own faith. I find myself willing to take the universe to be really dangerous and adventurous, without therefore backing out and crying ' no play.' "

rain having fallen after twelve o'clock, so the truth of the "Absolute" is restricted ("so-far-forthed") by the "benefits" which Professor James derives from certain other truths of an incompatible nature.

Here, therefore, we have two "truths," of which one restricts (so-far-forths) and the other is restricted (so-far-forthed). The so-far-forthing truth is the one labelled *Pluralistic Universe*, the so-far-forthed is the one labelled the *Absolute*; both are true *in-so-far-forth* they bring comfort; only the greater truths bring, of course, more comfort. But the matter of *so-far-forth* by no means ends here. One of these truths, the *so-far-forthed* truth labelled "the Absolute" inspires reliance upon . . . well, on the "Absolute,"; the other truth, the *so-far-forthing*, labelled "Pluralistic Universe" inspires reliance on oneself. Now observe how this complicates the nice question of the precedence (as the fact of intermarriage with royalty does that of earls and dukes) of these undoubted but by no means equal Truths! . . . For whereas reliance on something else—on the already existing perfection of the Absolute, or the Justice of Predestination—has a tendency to leave people where it finds them, or even to make them fatalistic, dull, and generally indifferent and quiescent, in fact, to impair their faculties; confidence in themselves has been known to have marvellous effects in curing hysteria, jumping

crevasses, doing unlikely things of all sorts—in short, self-reliance, we all know, is half the battle.

Nay, more—for the *truth* labelled Pluralistic Universe is surely only the truer for not being restricted or so-far-forthed by the useful, comforting, and *so-far-forth-true* doctrine of orthodox Christianity; nay, more—there are cases where reliance on something *not* oneself actually tends to realize its own contents; at least in a negative manner: thus our belief in Christ's power of saving souls is absolutely indispensable (according to Catholics) to *His* willingness to save us if we do our part. I fear somehow that this further argument in favour of the greater truths of "a Pluralistic Universe" will not commend it either to those who believe in Catholicism or those who believe in a Pluralistic Universe. So I drop it and revert to my simple summing up, which is this:

If we add to the "*truth in so far forth as comfort*" the "*truth in so far forth as concrete functions of making people self-reliant and venturesome and strenuous*" we shall find that, although "The Absolute" is true, it is a good deal, even a great deal, less true in so-far-forth than a Pluralistic Universe.

I wondered whether I had now at last mastered the principle of *true-in-so-far-forth* sufficiently to use it as a guide in the volume on the "Varieties of Religious Experiences," which my friend the Pragmatist had meanwhile sent me. So, to make assurance doubly

sure, I turned back to page 73 of "Pragmatism" and copied out, for my own future guidance, the following paragraph :—

"*Now, Pragmatism, devoted though she be to facts, has no such materialistic bias as ordinary empiricism labours under. Moreover, she has no objection whatever to the realising of abstractions, so long as you get about among particulars with their aid and they actually carry you somewhere. Interested in no conclusions but those which our minds and our experiences work out together, she has no* a priori *prejudices against theology.* If theological ideas prove to have a value for concrete life, they will be true for Pragmatism, in the sense of being good for so much. For how much more they are true will depend upon their relations to the other truths that also have to be acknowledged."

Almost as if foreseeing their immense value in steering me among the "Varieties of Religious Experiences," Professor James has actually taken the trouble to underline the first two sentences of the above passage.

IX

A little while back, my last day in Rome, I went for a few minutes into St Peter's. It was hung with crimson and smelt (that wonderful vast atmosphere such that no crowds can exhaust or defile it!)

delicious of incense. There had been some papal ceremony; people in hired veils and dress-clothes were going out, women, also, wearing the Franciscan Third Order's smock and cape in curious combination with modern hats. And before the Chapel of the Sacrament a whole flock of little girls in white veils knelt down, looking like a swarm of pigeons, and reminding one at the same time of an Eastern market-place. A woman, with a child at her breast, kissed the toe of the bronze St Peter, and another child whom she dragged along roared to be lifted up and kiss it too. The curtains of the apse and cupola let in an apricot-coloured light, and all the gold shone, and the inscriptions twice or thrice a man's height glittered forth—gigantic advertisements of the unique quality of the religion of which Jesus was sole inventor and Peter ("Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram," etc.) sole certified retail agent. As I read these words the Pragmatistic formula came to my mind, "True in so far forth."

True, certainly, if we measure truth by yards of masonry, tons of marble, and hundredweights of gilding, and all the human feeling and willing required to move and spend it all. The building of such a church is surely a fine pragmatistic object-lesson! But looking round St Peter's one realizes also how totally such considerations have nothing to do with Truth. Or more properly, one realizes that the true

fact for which St Peter's and all built on it ("et super hanc ædificabo," etc.) stands, is this: that where mistakes, fallacies, and lies are more comforting and profitable than truth as such, St Peter's—material or spiritual—will be built, ornamented, and guarded, and truth be left outside to starve, when it is not hurried out of existence by more active methods, as that day when, from the great church's steps, you might have seen the flame-reddened smoke of Bruno's faggots. "So-far-forth-true."

But here, I suppose, the *so-far-forthness* stops, and the truths of Catholicism would come into clashing collision with other truths—good not only "for so much," but "good for so much more" in the eyes of Professor James.

CHAPTER III

THE TRUTHS OF MYSTICISM

I

I DO not feel sure who had put that marker into the "Varieties of Religious Experience," and it is of little consequence whether it was myself or my Pragmatist, or, indeed, whether such a Pragmatist ever existed outside my fancy. Suffice it that the slip was inserted at page 413, and that on it was written "Professor James's examination of the message of mysticism from the point of view of "true-in-so-far-forth."

The examination in question, which I should like to analyse from the point of view of true-without any so-far-forth, begins with the following remarks :—

"*To the medical mind these ecstasies signify nothing but suggestion and . . . hypnotic states, on an intellectual basis of superstition, and a corporeal one of degeneration and hysteria. Undoubtedly these pathological conditions have existed in many and possibly in all the cases, but that fact tells us nothing about the value for knowledge of the consciousness which they induce.*"

The *value for knowledge*, writes Professor James. And so far as knowledge is concerned, I agree with him : a pathological condition may or *might* be such as to favour the acquisition of certain sorts of facts, or the analysis of certain others, or the recognition, let us say the divination, of certain relations, of what we call laws. The question depends upon what meaning we attach to the word *pathological*. It is quite conceivable that the hyperacuity of a given faculty may coincide with a bad complexion of body, or even, by defrauding more ordinary functions, lead to bodily deterioration and death ; and may we go so far as to imagine (psychiatry of the Lombroso-Möbius, etc., kind has surely developed our imagination in such matters !) that hyperacuity of a given sort may produce some particular organic poison, or, if you prefer, may require as a lubricant, so to speak, some secretion which poisons the rest of the organism. In all these cases we may say that the hyperacuity is *pathological*, meaning thereby that it causes or coincides with conditions destructive to health, individual or social. And nevertheless that hyperacuity may attain to knowledge which is genuine and valuable, indeed valuable enough to make the cultivation of such pathological conditions not only legitimate but praiseworthy. Lombroso has told us that *genius* (and even such modest approximation thereto as he found registered in the biographical dictionaries whence he

culled so many "facts") is conditioned by epileptic and even less pleasing habits of body; yet Lombroso himself did not deny that such epilepsy-born genius (let us say his own) sees through many millstones impenetrable to less "pathological" analysis and inference. We may therefore agree with Professor James that the pathological stigmata of mystics do not necessarily militate against their possession of modes of knowing incompatible with normal life; Professor James's comparison of the mystic's condition with that produced by alcohol or ether making the notion quite intelligible and workaday.

This being granted, we will continue where we left off:

"*To pass a spiritual judgment upon these states we must not content ourselves with superficial medical talk, but inquire into their fruits for . . . (for life.*")

Exactly! I exclaimed to myself. And perhaps I was excusable in overlooking or misreading that last word, and thinking that we were still talking of the *value for knowledge* which, in the earlier part of his sentence, Professor James had so judiciously disentangled from the possible physiological morbidness of those mystical states. Excusable or not, I continued the chapter, pencil in hand, still bent upon that *value for knowledge* which, as Professor James had remarked in the previous sentence, could not be judged by mere reference to the pathological state of saintly

persons. Such being the case, I was rather surprised at coming immediately upon several solid pages of quotations from the chief Spanish mystics; and still more surprised at Professor James's summing up of the evidence they contained. "Resolution to amend," "Unworldliness"—such were some of his headings—"Patience," "Gentleness," "Enthusiasm," "Heroism," "Indomitable spirit and energy," "The development of oneself into a most powerful practical human machine" (he was talking of Ignatius Loyola).

Very fine things, no doubt; but why should the enumeration of such moral qualities shed more light upon the *value for knowledge* of those mystical conditions," than the "superficial medical talk" about their possible pathological origin, which Professor James had dismissed as irrelevant? In another minute, however, I found him returning to that question. "*Mystical conditions*," he writes (page 415) in the sentence immediately following a quotation from Saint Teresa, "*mystical conditions may, therefore, render the soul more energetic in the lines which their inspiration favours. But this could be reckoned an advantage only in case the inspiration* were a true one." (I snatch up my pencil and underline. Here we are at the value for knowledge!)

". . . were a true one."

"*If the inspiration were erroneous, the energy would be all the more mistaken and misbegotten*"—

" be all the more mistaken . . ."

My mind is, so to speak (and to speak in the language of mystical conditions) transfixed and irradiated by that little phrase "*all the more.*" . . . *All the more* . . . but if it would, under certain circumstances (*i.e.* the erroneousness of the inspiration), be *more* mistaken and misbegotten, then this mystically increased energy must *already* have been *mistaken and misbegotten*, even if the inspiration had *not* been erroneous: how can anything be *more* mistaken—let alone misbegotten—than if it were not mistaken at all? All the more? And with that word comes the remembrance of an axiom in a famous treatise of logic. " It is easy," said Alice, " to have *more* than nothing." It must similarly be easy to be " all the more mistaken " than not to be mistaken at all.

In the present case it is *I* who have been mistaken, mistaken in supposing that Professor James would waste his time in enouncing anything so crassly obvious as that the value for knowledge of the energy devoted to its service depended upon whether, so to speak, the knowledge *was* knowledge. Still less would he have thought it necessary to repeat the truism over again. No; this is not a valuation of mystical conditions for knowledge; or rather it is, but it is something more. In the light of the pragmatistic definition of truth, I may add, that being something more than a valuation for knowledge, it

is *all the more a valuation for knowledge.* That mysterious "*all the more*" has, as I remarked, pierced through my thick truistic thought and flooded it with comprehension: Professor James is reckoning up all the advantages resulting from that "increment" spiritual energy produced by mystical conditions, upon whatever lines (and not merely lines of knowledge) which the inspiration favours. What makes me certain is the *therefore* with which he begins the passage. "Mystical conditions may therefore"—follow that *therefore* backwards and what do we find? Why, the catalogue (with abundant samples pinned into it) of all the various virtues and practical excellences which the mystics attributed to their mystical conditions. "The lines which their inspiration favours" are *therefore* (and on account of a *therefore*) no mere lines, *of knowledge*, but lines also, indeed chiefly, of moral improvement and disinterested, yet sagacious, conduct. And, so far from enouncing a truism, here is Professor James deciding, and repeating his decision, that if the inspiration alleged in the mystical condition happened to be erroneous, all these virtues, all this practical sagacity, all this spiritual energy would be mistaken and misbegotten.

II

I believe that in Witch Trials a distinction was sometimes found necessary between *an inspiration true in the sense of truly coming from its alleged author*, and an inspiration *true in the sense* of conveying *true information*, and Professor James's dealings with mediums have perhaps resulted in similar distinctions between the *truth* of the facts *purporting to be conveyed by spirits* and the *truth* of those facts *having been conveyed by spirits*. But as we are dealing with revelations which are supposed to come, not from devils or the low-class deceased, but from the Well Head of Truth and from Veracity personified, I think we may identify *truth of the information conveyed by mystic inspiration, with truth about the origin of that inspiration*. And we thus get the following paraphrase of Professor James's sentence: Whatever value, *for other concerns than knowledge*, there may be in the increment to spiritual energy induced by mystical conditions, their value for knowledge depends entirely upon whether the inspiration alleged by those mystical states, and the items communicated by that inspiration, happen or not to be what the mystic alleges that they are. And, as regards the energy, which the mystical conditions have increased, why, that increase of energy will be of value to knowledge, in case the inspiration be true,

and of detriment to knowledge in case the inspiration be false. But Professor James does not seem satisfied with this theory that if the inspiration is *erroneous*, the increase of spiritual energy put to its service cannot be "reckoned an advantage" to knowledge. "If the inspiration were erroneous," he concludes vehemently, "the energy would be all the more mistaken and misbegotten." *More* mistaken? *More* misbegotten? Is that not saying a little too much?

III

Well, Pragmatists are *specialists in Truth*; and of course specialists are apt to become puristic and over-exclusive. Not being a Pragmatist I should not have made so sure that all those virtues inventorized above, and a great many more with which this volume deals, must have been "mistaken and misbegotten" (let alone "all the more mistaken and misbegotten") in the event of their inspiration being not "true" at all, but thoroughly "mistaken."

The inspiration both of Moses (if there was a Moses!) and of Jesus, are to my thinking quite "mistaken," yet I would never venture to assert that the Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount were "misbegotten." Or indeed otherwise than incalculably valuable for human edification and conduct. History

strikes me as showing many examples of fortunate fallacies and beneficent misapprehensions, and I have noticed more than once in private life the ennobling influence of friends and teachers whose nobility was mostly of our own imagining. Indeed this very volume will show that I am inclined to accept that view of modern anthropological sociology (especially Mr Ernest Crawley's), according to which the most foolish and basest mythological muddles of our savage forefathers helped not only to suggest and sanction enduring moral rules, but also to evolve and establish habitual deference to unscrutinized moral standards. Nay more, as my Reader will learn still further on, I think there is a partial scientific truth in Monsieur Georges Sorel's theory, that sweeping moral results are best obtained by myths, just because it is a myth's essence never to come true. But then, you see, I do not hold with Professor James's and Mr Schiller's Pragmatism that we can test truth by asking ourselves "what it would be better to believe." And among the truths which, because they are true, I am willing to look in the face despite their being perhaps not very good to believe or at least to proclaim, is precisely this truth: that fallacies, mistakes, nay falsehoods, may sometimes have remarkably life-preserving and life-improving effects, in other words that there exists, alongside of vital *truths*, a by no means negligible category of vital *lies*.

So much for me. On the contrary a Pragmatist is, as already hinted, a specialist *in truth*, and his rather professional exclusivism has no use either for Plato's *Noble*[1] lies or for Ibsen's *Vital* ones. The question which busies him is, *What is Truth* ? Quite consonantly with this, and after those difficult sentences making the value of mystical energy dependent upon the truth of mystical inspiration, we immediately find Professor James concluding his paragraph :

" *And so we stand once more before that problem of truth which confronted us at the end of the lectures on saintliness. You will remember that we turned to mysticism precisely to get some light on truth.*"

Having thus put aside, a little too rigorously (*I* think), those *fruits for life* whose value depends upon their not being " misbegotten " by " mistaken " inspiration, Professor James is at last attacking the question of the " value for knowledge of the consciousness which they (*i.e.*, the mystical states) produce."

IV

" In spite of this repudiation of articulate self-description," begins this inquiry (" Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 415), " mystical states in general assert a pretty distinct theoretic drift. It is possible to give

[1] Republic III. Jowett translates " Royal."

the outcome of the majority of them in terms that point in definite philosophical directions. One of these directions is optimism, and the other is monism."

Now let me grasp that: *the value to knowledge*, of mystical states, would therefore be due to these mystical states adding certain items to what we hitherto know, to wit the facts (or facts leading to the facts) that the universe *is all for the best* (optimism), or that the universe, perhaps with its Creator thrown in, is *one* (monism). Now we have indeed got at last to *value for knowledge*! And ten minutes, even of careful attention, are surely not too much to bestow upon facts, and the mystical conditions requisite for the ascertaining of such facts, which point so distinctly to the real régime of the universe.

We will therefore continue, where we left off, with Professor James's summing up of the testimony of Mystics on this question:

"*We pass into mystical states from out of an ordinary consciousness as from a smallness into a vastness, and at the same time as from an unrest to a rest.*"

How does this testify to the truth of optimism and monism? Why, very simply: the mystic's everyday consciousness is exchanged for an unusual one; the unusual one being distinguished by vastness; now, as the everyday consciousness is notoriously concerned with only a small portion of the universe, the unusual (that is the mystical) consciousness being

different, is probably concerned with something different; and being further differentiated by a sense of *vastness*, it is possible that this vastness may be due to the passage from concern with a small part of the universe to concern with a larger part of the universe; for is not everyday consciousness itself liable to a similar sense of change from small to large when we pass, let us say, from a small room to a less small, from a narrow view to a wider? If, therefore, the mystic in his unusual state feels that he is in the presence of something larger than in his everyday state, may he not suppose (what in fact the mystic *does* suppose) that there must be some larger reality to account for this change? *Therefore* (*i.e.*, by this chain of reasoning) the mystic has come in contact with some unusual and larger reality. And since it is *larger*, why should it not be *largest*? But this is only a part of the matter: the mystic, we are told in Professor James's other half sentence, experiences not only a change from the small to the large, but at the same time from "an unrest to a rest." The conclusion is that *if the sense of largeness* (as compared to previous *smallness*) has been produced in the mystic by his passage from the presence of a small (everyday) portion of the universe to the presence of a larger part of the universe, and moreover if this *larger* is not only larger, but *largest*, not only different from the everyday fragment, but different inasmuch as the *whole*, why,

then, this transition from the part to the whole (since we have admitted it to be the whole) is a transition from the unsatisfactory *milieu* productive of *unrest* to the satisfactory *milieu* productive of *rest*; in other words the *larger*, which is the same as the *largest*, which is the same as the *whole*, which is the same as the *universe*, is *satisfactory* to the mystic, which is the same as good: hence, concludes the mystic (or Professor James arguing for the mystic, or more precisely still your humble servant going pedestrially through the steps of argument which Professor James has bounded across); hence, says the mystic, or the "mystic consciousness" summed up in Professor James's passage, the testimony of *mystic states* is in favour of the universe being *one*, and of that *one* being good, in other words in favour of monism and optimism.

So far, so good. Or rather not good enough (I mean of course not the *One*, the *Universe*, but the mystical testimony in favour of the *Oneness* and the *Goodness*). For this testimony has consisted mainly of inferences, and of inferences which there is no reason why anyone except the mystic should either make or accept: first, the inference that *because* the mystical state is *unusual* it must put us into the presence of items which are *unattainable* in the everyday, *usual* consciousness; second, that these *unusual and unattainable* items, being accompanied by a sense of a certain change of *magnitude*, must be items concerning

a LARGER portion of the *whole*; thirdly, that this sense of *something larger* must refer to *the universe*; fourthly, that this sense of something *larger* must be a sense of something *largest*; fifthly, not merely *largest* to the possibilities of feeling of the particular mystic [as for instance a given volume of sound or a given extent of view may be the largest to the possibilities of feeling of an everyday person], but *largest in se* and as such, in other words *the Whole*. While, on the other hand, we have a *sixth* inference that the accompanying sense of *restfulness* after *unrest* refers to this passage from a *smaller* to a *larger* which is the *largest*, which is the *whole*; and a *seventh* inference, that the sense of *restfulness* to the mystic must coincide with the absolute goodness *in se* (as distinguished from comparative goodness to the mystic's apprehension) of this Whole. Here we have seven inferences, or rather seven propositions which, while they may be true, may also be false; seven inferences without one single reason for their acceptance except the mystic's *opinion* and the opinion of the persons who agree with his opinion. It is as if the mystic repeated seven times over: "I know that the universe is *One*, and I know that the *One* is satisfactory." All that such reiteration would tell us is that the mystic is convinced of this fact, or really, more strictly, that the mystic is *stating it*. So far as our knowledge goes, we have learned only the mystic's view of the *oneness*

and the *satisfactoriness*; we have learned not about the *universe*, but about the mystic's (and the mystic's sponsors' and abettors') chain of seven inferences. But this is of course not all: the mystical evidence (otherwise it would not be evidence) contains *facts*, facts which have been connected by those numerous acts of inference. So far these facts are: first, that the mystic *feels* himself in an unusual state of consciousness; second, that the mystic feels a change "as from a smallness into a vastness"; and third, "as from an unrest to a rest." Having made a note of these, let us proceed with Professor James's enumeration of the other items with which mystical states can enrich knowledge. I will return back, so as to show the progression from one fact or order of facts, to another:

"*We pass into mystical states from out of ordinary consciousness as from a less into a more, as from a smallness into a vastness, and at the same time as from an unrest to a rest. We feel them as reconciling, unifying states.* [This is a repetition of the contents of the previous sentence, with the addition of *reconciliation* which is a cause of *rest.*] "*They appeal to the yes-function more than to the no-function in us. In them the unlimited absorbs the limits and peacefully closes the account. Their very denial of every adjective you may propose as applicable to the ultimate truth . . . though it seems on the surface to be a no-function—is a denial made on behalf of a deeper yes.*"

V

I was on the point of summing up the *value to knowledge* of the foregoing statements; but Professor James has done it himself a few pages (p. 425) later: "*The fact is*," he writes, "*that the mystical feeling of enlargement, union, and emancipation has no specific intellectual contents whatever of its own. It is capable of forming matrimonial alliances with material furnished by the most diverse philosophies and theologies, provided only they can find a place in their framework for its peculiar emotional mood.*"

Therefore, whatever truth may be found in the works of the mystics, it would (according to the foregoing quotation) either be independent of their mysticism and imported from elsewhere, or else this *mystical truth* (for Professor James uses this expression, p. 420) would have to be of a kind different from what truth usually is, inasmuch as it would be truth "with no specific intellectual contents whatever of its own." What this other kind of truth may be, we are told pretty explicitly in the following passage:—

"*In mystical literature such self-contradictory phrases as 'dazzling obscurity,' 'whispering silence,' 'teeming desert' are continually met with. They prove that not conceptual speech, but* music *rather, is the element*

through which we are best spoken to by mystical truth. Many mystical scriptures are indeed little more than musical compositions." And having quoted a passage from H. P. Blavatsky's "Voice of the Silence," he emphasizes the above remark by the addition (p. 421): "*These words, if they do not awaken laughter as you receive them, probably stir chords within you which* music *and language touch in common. Music gives us ontological messages which non-musical criticism is unable to contradict, though it may laugh at our foolishness in minding them.*"

But not music only, as is shown in a further passage of great subtlety and beauty (p. 383): "Most of us can remember the strangely moving power of passages in certain poems read when we were young—irrational doorways as they were, through which the mystery of fact, the wildness and the pang of life, stole into our hearts and thrilled them. The words have now, perhaps, become mere polished surfaces to us; *but lyric poetry and music are alive and significant* only in proportion as they fetch these *vague vistas* of a *life continuous with our own*, beckoning and inviting, yet ever eluding our pursuit. We are alive or dead to the eternal inner message of the arts according as we have kept or lost this mystical susceptibility."

VI

"*The existence of a life continuous with our own.*" I am the last person in the world to deny that Art (and Music is here the typical art) does deal with *a life continuous with our own*, since my explanation [1] of Art's importance for the individual and the race is precisely that it satisfies our craving for *continuing our own sense of living beyond the limits of our own life.* All the satisfactions which Art does not merely share with other branches of experience, pleasures of sensuous stimulation, of logical and purposive fitness, or of fulfilled expectation, all the kinds of satisfaction by which Art distinguishes itself from what is not Art, arise (according to my school of psychological æsthetics) precisely from Man's imaginatively projecting life like his own beyond his own life's limits, and thereby attaining a wider, more vivid, and more harmonious sense of living than is habitually afforded by his practical dealings with reality. Art, therefore, deals in a sense far more literal than Professor James perhaps ever thought of, with a life *continuous with our own.* But Art deals with such a *life continuous with our own* beyond our own life's real limits; makes it, makes an enlargement, a continuity, a harmony of our life;

[1] *Cf.* "Beauty and Ugliness," by Vernon Lee and C. Anstruther Thomson. John Lane, 1912.

makes it, observe, *not discovers* it. And makes it because we *want* it. But Art does not bring us a message from or about *something already existing* independent of ourselves: nay, just because no such world of life *continuous with our own* sends us a message, a testimony, of its independent existence, does Art set about making one to satisfy the heart's desire. Religion works for that satisfaction; but in so far Religion is two-thirds unconscious *Art*; nor would Religion have survived its earliest stages of utilitarian magic based on blunders, had not it enlisted Art in its service, and, what is more, done Art's own duty: making us, by personification of moral standards and metaphysical postulates, a universe to suit the heart's desire.

But there is a difference between Religion and Art: namely, that Art never pretends the desired world of continuous and more perfect life to have an independent existence, to be anything except a fabric of human making; whereas, on the contrary, the very first postulate of every creed has precisely been and is that Religion does not itself make, fabricate, invent anything, but merely brings us tidings of the already and independently existing. Art has never laid claim to any message save from the soul of man to the soul of man, the message that man's own powers have answered to man's own needs and wishes. But Religion has asserted *its* message to be what Professor James calls "ontological." Art says to man:

"Behold this structure; it is fair, and it is I that made it for thy service and joy" But Religion takes into its mouth the words of knowledge, saying: "Recognise and believe: this image is *faithful*; it is important, because it tells of something which exists for and in itself; and fair or foul, useless or serviceable, I have done nothing but make it such that thy eye could see it: the original exists, I have not tampered with it." Or briefly: "This is a message, and the message is *true*."

True. Here we are back again at "*What is Truth?*" And, returning to the great Arch-Pragmatist James (as distinguished from the humble Proto-Pragmatist Peirce!) and his discussion of the *value for knowledge of mystical conditions*, we had better forget none of the Pragmatistic tests—such as "*True-in-so-far-forth*," and "what would be better to believe."

VII

Going on to page 427 of the "Varieties of Religious Experience," we come to the following passage, of which I desire my reader to appreciate not only the contents, but the original and suggestive connection, or rather disconnection, of the sentences. "*Once more then, I repeat that non-mystics are under no obligation to acknowledge in mystical states a superior authority*

conferred on them by their intrinsic nature. Yet, I repeat once more, the existence of mystical states absolutely overthrows the pretension of non-mystical states to be the sole and ultimate dictators of what we may believe. As a rule, mystical states merely add a supersensuous meaning to the ordinary outward data of consciousness. They are excitements like the emotions of love or ambition, gifts to our spirit by means of which facts already objectively before us fall into new expressiveness and make a new connection with our active life. They do not contradict these facts as such, or deny anything that our senses have immediately seized.[1] *It is the rationalistic critic who plays the part of denier in the controversy, and his denials have no strength, for there never can be a state of facts to which new meaning may not truthfully be added, provided the mind ascend to a more enveloping point of view. It must always remain an open question whether mystical states may not possibly be such superior points of view, windows through which the mind looks out upon a more extensive and inclusive world.*"

First, let me see whether I understand the initial statement that although "non-mystics are under no obligation to acknowledge in mystical states a superior authority, etc. It means that although people who

[1] *They sometimes add subjective* AUDITA ET VISA *to the facts, but as these are usually interpreted as transmundane, they oblige no alteration in the facts of sense.*

do not believe in the testimony of mystical states *need* not (to which one might add a substratum of *cannot*) be made to believe in them, yet those who *do* believe in this testimony need not (and cannot) be argued out of that belief. This looks like a drawn battle, an insoluble controversy, an agreement to disagree to all Eternity; and to *disagree*, moreover, about an ontological *message* and its truth or falsehood—that is to say, about a statement concerning not the preference of the parties involved for monism and optimism or the contrary, or the comparative suitableness thereof to their requirements, but concerning the question whether the universe is or is not monistically or optimistically arranged, altogether independent of what any mystic's or non-mystic's preferences would like it to be.

And first, let me make a note of Professor James's statement (*vide supra*) that " as a rule mystical states " . . . " do not contradict these facts " (*i.e.* facts already objectively before us), or " deny anything that our senses have immediately seized "—which tallies with the statement two sentences back that " as a rule mystical states *merely add a supersensuous meaning to the ordinary outward data of consciousness.*" In this manner, therefore, mystical states neither contradict facts of ordinary consciousness nor add other facts to them. Facts remain just where and how they were: it is the interpretation of these facts which changes:

("*mystical states merely add a supersensuous meaning.*") Mystical states, neither contradicting nor adding to facts, are therefore reduced, or promoted, to being "points of view"—and the quotation ends: "*It must always remain an open question whether mystical states may not possibly be such superior points of view.*" Therefore not "points of view" only, but "points of view" which may be "*superior.*" Now, what is a "*superior*" point of view? The next half sentence tells us "*it is a window through which the mind looks out upon a more extensive and inclusive world.*" This possible superiority of the mystic point of view may therefore consist in its telling us more facts (*a more extensive world*). But this seems scarcely compatible with the previous remark about the *facts objectively before us not being contradicted nor added to.* And indeed we have been told that "*as a rule mystical states merely add a supersensuous meaning to the ordinary outward data of consciousness.*" The *superiority* of the mystical "point of view" over the non-mystical "point of view" must, therefore, be sought not so much in that *extensiveness* of what is seen, but rather in the *inclusiveness* with which Professor James couples and qualifies it in that phrase "through which the mind looks out upon a more extensive and inclusive world." The superiority of the mystic point of view is, therefore, largely (if not solely) a question of its greater *inclusiveness*—by which is meant, I suppose,

a greater correlation or co-ordination in the various seen details, one item being *included* or *enclosed* in the other. This would be consonant with other portions of the quoted text, like "*mystical states merely add a supersensuous meaning*" and the indisputable tautology that "*there can never be a state of facts to which new meanings may not truthfully be added, provided the mind ascend to a more enveloping point of view.*" In this way, a man who has ascended to a fourteenth-floor window may take in the fact that what seen from the ground floor seemed a number of small, isolated ponds, are in reality the continuous meanders of a single river. Can this illustration be correct? My mind misgives me; for Professor James has told us that mystic testimony does not usually alter already existing objective facts, still less contradict them, whereas our ascent to the top of the tower has not only *added* a fact to the objectively existing one, but even replaced an *apparent* objective fact (namely, the ponds) by a *really* objective fact, to wit, the existence of a winding river, the reality of whose continuous meanders can be tested by boating along them.

But, after all, is not *optimism* or *monism* also the postulation of a fact? Does it not mean that the Universe is *one*, or that it is *all for the best*? And is not the *oneness* of the Universe, supposing it to exist, or the *all-for-the-bestness* of the Universe, an *objective*

fact ; if it is a fact at all ? For an *objective* fact surely means a fact about something which is not its own perception or inference ; and if *monism* or *optimism* was only a *subjective* fact, that would mean that the fact under consideration was the existence of an *opinion, perception,* or *inference* that the Universe is *one,* or is *all for the best,* but not the *existence* of such a universe : if monism or optisism was only a subjective fact, some one who, so to speak, went to see what the universe was really like (as we might go and look into that river-pond question), or somebody who made plans involving that view of the Universe (like our plan of boating down the meandering river, which we could not execute if the river turned out to be a lot of ponds), such a person might find that the only fact in the whole business was not *objective* but *subjective,* to wit, that some other person had *thought* that the Universe was monistically or optimistically arranged. Of course the peculiarity of this whole business is that only the mystics think that they have been to look how the Universe *is* arranged, and that the non-mystics cannot therefore give an equally definite report, and are, as Professor James remarks, reduced to the poor position of merely denying that the mystics have gone anywhere, except, perhaps, out of their right mind. This being the case, "*non-mystics are under no obligation to acknowledge in mystic states a superior authority conferred on them by their intrinsic*

nature," and Professor James adds: "*Yet, I repeat it, the existence of mystical states absolutely overthrows the pretension of non-mystical states to be the sole and ultimate dictators of what we may believe.*"

VIII

(*Parenthetical*)

"SUPERFICIAL MEDICAL TALK" ("Varieties," p. 413)

You must not think that Professor James came to that conclusion on any mere abstract, still less, *a priori* grounds. Finding, as we have seen, that the mere examination of mystical writings did not decide whether the Mystics had really travelled beyond the Flaming Bounds of Time and Space, he collected the evidence of other persons who had seemingly made a similar excursion, not on the Seraph-wings of contemplation, but, as the other poet says, charioted by Bacchus and his pards. "The sway of alcohol over mankind," writes Professor James ("Varieties," p. 387), "is unquestionably due to the power to stimulate the mystical faculties of human nature, usually crushed to earth by the cold facts and dry criticisms of the sober hour. Sobriety diminishes, discriminates, and says no; drunkenness expands, unites, and says yes. . . . It brings its votary from the chill periphery of things to the

radiant core. It makes him for the moment one with truth." The Bacchus charioting the psychological experimenter was, however, usually not the classic God of the Grape, but (as befits the modern and scientific character of Pragmatism) Dionysus Anæstheticus, he whose votive fumes hang about surgeries and who may be heard babble from the dentist's dreaded chair. Thus, the chapter I have just quoted contains several accounts of what various persons (including the late J. A. Symonds) experienced under chloroform and other anæsthetics; also a long and very serious notice of a rare American book entitled "The Anæsthetic-Revelation and the Gist of Philosophy." But Professor James had not been satisfied with information obtained at second-hand; he submitted his own self to poisoning by nitrous oxide gas, and published a verbatim record of his utterances when under its Bacchic influence. As the book in which I am studying the Truths of Mysticism contains no quotation from this document, I have copied out the following sample from Professor James's earlier volume, entitled the *Will-to-Believe* (p. 296), the better to appreciate his statement that "Drunkenness brings its votary from the chill periphery of things to their radiant core. It makes him for the moment one with truth."

"What's mistake but a kind of take? What's nausea but a kind of ausea? Sober, drunk,—'unk,

astonishment. Everything can become the subject of criticism. How criticize without something to criticize? Agreement — Disagreement! Emotion — motion!!! . . . Reconciliation of opposite—sober, drunk, all the same!

"Good and evil reconciled in a laugh! It escapes, it escapes! But — what escapes, what escapes? Emphasis, *Em*phasis—there must be some emphasis in order for there to be a phasis . . . Incoherent, coherent . . . same. And it fades! And it's infinite! And it's infinite! If it wasn't *going*, why should you hold on to it? . . . Extreme, extreme, extreme! Within the *ex*tensity that 'extreme' contains, is contained the 'extreme' of intensity.

"Something, and *other* than that thing! . . . There is a reconciliation. Reconciliation — *e*conciliation! By God, how that hurts! By God, how it doesn't hurt! Reconciliation of two extremes. By George, nothing but *othing!* That sounds like nonsense, but it is pure *on*sense! Thought deeper than Speech—Medical School; divinity school, School! School! Oh my God, oh God, oh God!"

The chief addition brought by this document to the knowledge of mystic states would probably consist in the resemblance of these utterances to a column of Roget's well-named "Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases," and at the same time to the exercises of a person fumbling for rhymes, alliterations, sym-

metrical syllables and such-like material of poetical expression. If the reader thereof had contracted (perhaps in the study of Professor James' own *Principles of Psychology*) a taste for "superficial medical talk" —this sceptic might add that something of the sort would probably result if the speech-centres were excited to the exclusion of everything else. And if the sceptic had passed beyond that stage to the experiments and hypotheses of some of Professor James's more recent psychological successors, he might add that these particular utterances, and the analogous ones (abundantly represented in the "Varieties of Religious Experience") from *bona-fide* mystics both religious and poetical, would furnish valuable evidence for the theory (held, for instance, by the school of Titchener) that our intellectual operations employ a framework, so to speak, of *motor-images* or, if you prefer, of senses of activity and its modalities. Such a reader would point out that these inner activities are extraordinarily well represented in this quotation: there is *connecting, weighing, comparing, finding equivalents, rejecting, accepting* (particularly that *yes-saying* which Professor James finds characteristic of mysticism) with all the prepositions and conjunctions, the *ands, buts, in-order-that's, must be's*, etc., which are their grammatical signs; there is a constant naming of the acts we are most conscious of in thinking: thoughts are *reconciled*, they are *held on to*,

they are *pursued*, and (alas, how characteristic!) thoughts *escape*. Even in that treasury just referred to, of "English Words and Phrases—Classified and Arranged so as to Facilitate the Expression of Ideas—And assist in—Literary Composition" it would be impossible to find a more varied collection of everything necessary for the above purposes.

But the sceptic, being only a sceptic, would note that in all this exhibition of the necessaries and accessories of thinking, there is an important omission: there is not anything thought about. Indeed, the sceptic might apply to this interesting pageful one of its own happiest phrases: "By George, nothing but othing!"

That is the sceptic's hopeless attitude. It is not Professor James's. This is what he says about these same experiences under nitrous oxide gas: "Looking back on my own experiences, they all converge towards a kind of insight to which I cannot help ascribing some metaphysical significance. The keynote of it is invariably a reconciliation. It is as if the opposites of the world, whose contradictions and conflict make all our difficulties and troubles, were melted into unity."

Yes; but *what* was *melted*? The troubles, not what caused them; the *contradictions* and *conflicts* felt by the speaker, not the realities which had set them up. Even as when anæsthetics are used for less metaphysico-mystic purposes, the *pain* is abolished,

melted away; but the surgeon's knife and the limb are *not* melted away; nor the relations between knife and limb which we sum up by saying that the one has cut off the other; so also in this case the displeasure caused by the universe and its arrangements is blotted out from that particular soul, but the universe itself goes on wagging just the same. Moreover, even in this drugged consciousness the universe with its "opposite" are not thought of as "melted into unity"; the universe, whether as present experience or stored-up images, is simply not thought of at all. The *thinker*, the subject, is absorbed in his own feelings; the *thought-of*, the non-ego, the object, has ceased to trouble because it has ceased to be present in consciousness, banished from that "radiant core" to what Professor James has called (in his fine description of the drunken man's mental condition) "the chill periphery of things." We have been shown the scheme of a complicated drama of thinking and feeling: entries and exits, the gestures, the facial expression and tones of voice, all the stage business of escaping and holding on, of separation and reconciliation, the agony and the blessed relief ("By God, how that hurts! by God, how it doesn't hurt!"); but we have not been shown the *dramatis personæ* nor the scenery and properties. The *how* is all there, but the *what* is missing; the *what* on which depends the *why*; the *what* and the *why* which, however, infinitesimally

scrappy, may have some "value for knowledge." Of course the sceptic may also say that in this case the *what* (which governs the *why*) the sample of the universe whereof all this is a message (like the leaf in the dove's bill) is simply a well-known chemical substance called nitrous oxide gas, taken in combination with certain less-known substances called the brain, the nerves, and the viscera. In this sense the *anæsthetic revelation* would indeed be a revelation from the *core*, that is to say, from the drugged person's—how shall I call it?—inside. And, with the casual candour of Pragmatism, Professor James seems, in another part of the same volume (p. 512) himself to entertain this view. "Let me then propose as an hypothesis," he says, "that whatever it may be on its *farther* side, the 'more' with which in religious experience we feel ourselves connected is on its *hither* side the sub-conscious continuation of our conscious life." Now if the Conscious is what is usually called the Mind; and if the sub-conscious is what we know or guess to exist below (or behind) the Mind, then the sub-conscious, so far as it is not merely a vaguer, an unfocussed part of consciousness, can only be what such Psychology as Professor James (with its elaborate brain and nerve anatomy, its cerebral localization, and its theory of the visceral and vaso-motor nature of emotion) teaches us to recognize *below* or *behind* mind, namely, the Body, or, more correctly, the bodily pro-

cesses. And this view (whether right or wrong) is logically borne out by the fact that Professor James has studied the mystic consciousness in direct connection (as we have just seen) with fumes and drams which have been poured, not metaphorically into the soul, but literally, and by the respiratory and alimentary channels, into the body. On this definition of the sub-conscious—and Professor James of the famous "Lange-James" hypothesis cannot logically have any other—*the invasion* (as he is going to call it) from the *sub-conscious* would mean that by alcoholic, anæsthetic or "organic" poisoning of the organs which normally keep our microcosm connected with the macrocosm, the mind would be emptied of its normal supply of sensations and memories and left open to invasions of facts usually hidden or merged into vagueness, or even (as Siegmund Freud supposes in the case of dreams) suppressed in the lucid condition. The *periphery of things*, as Professor James calls it, would no longer shed its chilly influence on the mystic any more than on the drunkard; his consciousness would be flooded with the knowledge of his own bodily self; and, if he had the use of speech, he would talk, as Professor James did under nitrous oxide gas, solely of the doings and feelings of that if not exactly *radiant*, at all events highly irradiating, and all-else obliterating core.

The above is the only way in which I can understand

Professor James introduction into this examination of religious mysticism, of the "invasions of the sub-conscious"; and what is more significant, of the action of alcoholic and anæsthetic intoxication, which can be mentioned in this connection only if we suppose (what the "superficial medical talk" *does* suppose) that some equivalent auto-intoxication may be produced by the bad habit of body and the bad bodily habits of *bona-fide* religious mystics.

But whether or not Professor James intended to convey this connection of the *sub-conscious* with the bodily substratum so abnormally treated in all these cases; one thing is clear and undeniable: Professor James considers the *sub-conscious* wheresoever it resideth, as part and parcel of ourselves. For, as you will see in the following quotation, he speaks of its "invasions" as "taking on an *objective appearance*," which these invasions would not require to do if they were invasions from *outside* us, and in so far already objective and provided with an *objective appearance*.

"Starting thus," he continues on that page, 512), "with a recognized psychological fact (*i.e.* the existence of a '*sub-conscious continuation of our conscious life*') we seem to preserve a contact with 'science' which the ordinary theologian lacks. At the same time the theologian's contention that the religious man is moved by an external power is vindicated, for it is one of the peculiarities of invasions from the sub-conscious region

to take on objective appearances, and to suggest to the subject an external control. In the religious life the control is felt as 'higher'; but since in our own hypothesis it is primarily the higher faculties of our hidden mind which are controlling, the sense of union with the power beyond us is a sense of something, not merely apparent, but literally true."

In other words, the theologian who thinks that the Mystical Revelation comes from God ("an External Power") and Professor James who thinks that the Mystical Revelation comes from our own subconsciousness [1] plus occasional anæsthesia or auto-intoxication, are both thinking the same thing. And that same thing which one is referring to the "Chill periphery" and the other to the "Radiant core"—that same thing is "not only apparently but literally true."

But as for us sceptics we can only stand more or less

[1] Perhaps it may enlighten this question of sub-consciousness if I quote from a recent article (*Revue Philosophique*, May 1910) by Monsieur P. Janet, one of the men who first and most completely studied the phenomena summed up under that misleading name:

"L'examen de certaine troubles mentaux nous a permis de montrer. . . . que certains phénomènes psychologiques étaient parfaitement réels, mais que les sujets, par suite. . . .d'un trouble dans la formation de leur perception personnelle, ne rattachaient pas ces faits à leur personnalité, n'en prenaient pas conscience. J'ai appelé ces faits des phénomènes sub-conscients. *Beaucoup de philosophes en ont tiré cette conclusion bizarre, qu'il y avait au-dessous de la conscience normale un monde mystérieux et tout puissant de pensées profondes, et ils font jouer à ces pensées latentes un rôle merveilleux.*" I think that Professor James is one of these "philosophers."

respectfully aside ; and, if we are wise, meditate over another most pregnant verse of the nitrous-oxide message :

" Something, and *other* than that thing . . .
There is a reconciliation.
Reconciliation.
E-conciliation . . .
Reconciliation of Two Extremes."

IX

Fortunately Professor James's book is written not only for mystics, but also for non-mystics. And as these, he has told us, " are under no obligation to acknowledge in mystic states a superior authority conferred on them by their intrinsic nature," he has discussed mystical states and their value for knowledge from the point of view of mere pragmation, of that philosophy which was invented by Mr Ch. S. Peirce with the sole and express object of helping us " to make our ideas clear."

So let us ask Professor James to make our ideas rather clearer than (owing to our sceptical bias) they were left by the last quotations in the last chapter.

You will remember the reference to the ontological messages of music and the other arts ? Well, that is most satisfactorily connected with what Professor James tells us (page 427) about the mystical states

giving "excitements, like the emotions of love or ambition, gifts to our spirits by means of which facts already objectively before us fall into a new expressiveness.'

Like the emotion of love! That likeness has led, on the part of a whole school of sceptics (amongst others, that most interesting critic, Dr Leuba) to a deal of discussion which Professor James, out of reverence either for Religion or for Mrs Grundy, has passed over in austere but not quite scientific silence. It is not, therefore, with any such indelicate analogies to the connection between mystical states and drunkenness and anæsthesia that I am going to distress my Anglo-Saxon readers. We will deal with the comparison between *mystical excitement* and the *emotion of love*, not on the plane of any possible common (Lange-James) bodily origin, but simply on that of their being, as Professor James calls them both "gifts to our spirit, by means of which facts already objectively before us fall into new expressiveness."

And, in order to understand the working of this obscure and rare gift to the spirit, namely mystical excitement, and the manner in which it conjures already existing facts into new expressiveness, I will examine the similar working of that other excitement to which Professor James has compared it, the emotion of love. Behold, I am doing so.

No one will deny that the emotion of love produces

an alteration in one's view of most things. In the first place, it fills the consciousness with one matter, which not only extrudes many others from the focus of attention, but which becomes, by a law repeatedly formulated by psychologists, the centre of synthesis, or, in common language, the chief interest to which everything is referred: everything reminds the lover of his mistress, the stars are like her eyes, or they are looked at by her eyes; flowers are like her breath, or they may, like poor Gretchen's Daisy, bear some "loves me—loves me not" message about her; moreover, places and persons take on a meaning connected with this love; even letters of the alphabet or dates in the almanac becoming consecrate to its sole service. How much doth calf love gloat over a name, and how, even to the love of those far older than calves, the fact of sharing a not uncommon name with the beloved, may lend grace to every woman called Mary, or every man called Jones! The whole subject has been studied, and more pathologically than it should be—for there is nothing pathological whatever about it—under the name of the *symbolism* or *fetichism* of lovers. In this way does the emotion of love make lovers see many things invisible to those who do not love, and imagine they see sundry others which are not there to see at all; and here we may employ advantageously an adjective furnished us by Professor James himself, nay, two adjectives, meaning

much the same thing ("a more *enveloping* point of view—a more *inclusive* world"), and sum up our remarks by saying that the person in a state of love-excitement *envelopes* all things thinkable in a net of ideas connected with his passion; and that, corresponding thereunto, the world perceived and reasoned about by the lover is a world *included* in his love, all the rest being, *ipso facto*, excluded. Neither is this all: that excitement of love consists, very largely, in cravings, and hence in expectations; and the lover becomes not only subtle in foreseeing all chances of meeting the beloved, but, owing to his attention being closed to most other things, he is perpetually thrown into agitated hopes and fears, and not only missing no slightest reference to his love in other person's conversation, but finding such references where there are none; nay, as the poets tell us, in the rustle of the leaves, the babble of the stream, and the mocking voice of the echo. The whole visible, audible, sensible, thinkable world has taken on for him a new *expressiveness*, that is to say, that the lover finds in it all what he finds above all in the music made very often by men who were not thinking of love at all, and invariably by men who were not thinking of *his* love, the *expression* of *his* emotion. And here we are, back in the presence of music and poetry and all art, to whose function, as Professor James has reminded us, we should be deaf were we incapable of an interpretative activity which

he points out as the rudimentary form, the simplest element, of the mystical state. Back also at my remark that Art never pretends to give us *ontological messages*, but merely constructs an imaginary world wherein we can live, we and our heart's desire.

We are also back at the consideration of the *mystical states*—the better understanding of whose "*gift to our spirit*" Professor James has compared, and thereby enabled us to compare, with the gift to our spirit due to the excitement of the emotion of love. And as regards the gifts to the spirit of this latter state of excitement, I think we may wind up that, whatever heightening of vitality, developing of the soul's powers of hoping, striving, and enduring, whatever unintended replenishing and harmonising of our whole nature the lover's emotion may bring as a gift to the spirit, the lover's state of emotional excitement will indeed lead him to see and infer very different things from those visible and inferable by the man who is not in love; but that this emotional excitement of love will also prevent the lover from seeing and inferring just as many other things which the everyday individual does happen to see and infer; in short, that the lover sees both more correctly and more incorrectly as a result of his emotion, so that, in the long run, we are obliged to confirm some of his statements and invalidate others by a comparison with those of the man who is not in love, and whose spirit

has not, at that moment, received the gifts of interpretation and misinterpretation which emotional excitement and its attendant mono-ideism bring to us.

This would be a case (remembering Professor James's remark in "Pragmatism") of "one *truth having no worse enemy than another truth*": *the in-so-far-forth* truth of the man in love having to run the gauntlet of the (not necessarily *in-so-far-forth*) truth of the man *not* in love; with the frequent curious result that the truth obtained through a "Gift to the Spirit," to wit, amorous excitement, might be absolutely worsted in the encounter.

X

But what if all Truths, at least all Truths Which-It-Might-Be-Better-to-Believe, should turn out to be born of Gifts to the Spirit, of *Passions* and *Excitements?* The base-born truths, bent only on work-a-day dropping into their lawful place, would (like mediæval commoners and serfs) be shut out from the tournament, where theological and mystical truths (to which Professor James adds truths of patriotism and politics), would riot undisturbed in the fine fratricidal fight of peers and seigneurs. Or, rather, even as the *Iliad* is the war of gods and goddesses behind their human heroic children, so the contest between the various hostile truths-in-so-far forth would really be the

battle between various Gifts to the Spirit, *Passions* and *Intuitions* eternally at loggerheads, and dragging the Truths by them engendered into the ever-raging, ever-renewed epic fray. Human Belief would thus truly be what Pragmatists speak of with such pride and pleasure: a *risk*, an *adventure*, occasionally as in the case of that proto-Pragmatist Pascal, admitting of a most unsporting piece of betting.

Well! Professor James does really countenance this view, namely, that these various Truths-which-it-would-be-better-to-believe, are engendered by *Passions* and not by anything more humdrum and reasonable. The very word *engendered* is supplied by him. For this is what we read on page 436 of the "Varieties of Religious Experience": "I believe, in fact, that the logical reason of man operates in this field of divinity exactly as it has always operated in love, or in patriotism, or in politics, or in any other of the wider affairs of life in which our passions or our mystical intuitions fix our belief beforehand. It finds arguments for our conviction; for, indeed, it has to find them. It amplifies it and defines it, and lends it words and plausibility. It hardly ever engenders it."

Oh, Galuppi Baldassaro, this is very sad to find!
I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove me deaf and blind . . .
But although I take your meaning, 'tis with such a heavy mind . . .

For the *meaning* in this case would surely be that the Gift to the Spirit in no way secures for its possessors that *wider and more inclusive view of facts* of which these gifted people feel so uncommonly cocksure. For remark that Professor James does not confine his denial of being *reason-engendered* to the state of *believing* and *being convinced*, but applies that genealogical indictment to the *idea believed*, the *idea about which one is convinced*. He tells us that reason while incapable of engendering such *belief* and *conviction*, does nevertheless *amplify* and *define* it. Now reason, logical or illogical, can no more *amplify* and *define* the state of believing and being convinced than you can widen (amplify) or restrict (define) the state of carrying a load ; just as what can be widened or restricted is the load itself, so also what can be *amplified* or *defined* is the not believing or being convinced, but the *idea* which is the object of that belief and that conviction. It is, therefore, the *idea* which patriots, politicians, and religious persons *believe* in and are *convinced about* which, according to Professor James, is "hardly ever engendered by logical reason." Hence the patriotic, political, or religious ideas, are presumably engendered by our *Passions*, the plain name which Professor James here gives to what he elsewhere calls Gifts to our Spirit. This does indeed, appear to be Professor James's view of the case ; he writes quite unmistakeably about the "*wider*

affairs of life in which our passions or our mystical intuitions fix our belief beforehand."

"*Fix our belief beforehand.*"—Well, how does the fixing by passion exclude the preliminary engendering by something else, even by logical reason? For you must have something to fix before you can fix it, and that something—in this case an *idea*, a *thought of*, *a supposed fact*—has been previously produced. Now, do passions, even of politicians and divines, produce ideas, engender them? And when we say that these passions can *fix* our beliefs, do we mean anything except that they can fix, or rather direct, our *attention?* Passions can make us look in one quarter rather than another; more particularly they can make us *overlook*, chin in the air, eyes on the clouds, the items in which they scent no interest. But, however much we may thus avoid the ideas which do not suit those passions, I do not see how, by such fixing and directing of the attention, we *engender* the ideas that do. Something else is required for that. Take the case of Pascal's mystic experience, when he inferred that the state of sudden well-being, of *euphoria*, and the sensation of blinding light, were causally connected with the fact (which his mind had been bent on for months) of divine grace. Did his *passion* engender either those items or even connect them?

(That would be a bad business for the *wider and more inclusive view of facts* claimed for the mystics.) Or

rather, let us keep our hands off the mystics, and knock about a trivial example of that other analogous *Gift to the Spirit*, namely, the lover's. The lover's passion *fixes* his *belief*: it directs his attention to the fact that the beloved wears a particular costume, it directs his attention away from the equally existing fact that a cap and apron can be transferred from one wearer to another. From the fact passionately fixed upon thus, namely, that Susanna (in the "Marriage of Figaro") wore that apron and cap at 11 a.m., he infers that the person wearing that apron and cap at 11 p.m. must also be the fascinating soubrette, and it just happens to be his own neglected, nay, forgotten Countess!

The Count's passion has certainly fixed his belief, and fixed it wrongly. But was it the passion which *engendered* the idea thus wrongly fixed upon by that over-passionate personage of comedy?

Indeed, it seems to me (even in the face of so great a psychologist as Professor James) that great as is the power of passion, its tyranny can choose and decide, accept and reject, destroy to an unlimited extent, but it cannot *create*. Above all it cannot *engender an idea*. *That* is done by something else, by a humble wedded couple, rather left out in the cold by latter day philosophers: that faithful fertile pair called *Fact* and *Thought*, or, more grandiosely, the Order of Things and the Constitution of Mind.

There has been some rather slovenly thinking of late

(perhaps not without passionate pride in its own slovenliness!) about this supposed production of "beliefs" and "conditions" by "Passion," until we have got to a kind of intellectual parthenogenesis, where that great mother of ideas (who was once, in Dr Schiller's pragmatistic mythology, no less than Aphrodite[1] in person) sits in mysterious state, and the devoted foster-father Reason attends ready to introduce Wise Men from the East or to organize some hurried flight into Egypt.

XI

Perhaps Passion, albeit not that of the theologian or politician, has, in the meanwhile, been misdirecting my logical reason, and fostering, if not engendering, an entirely wrong idea of what Professor James is talking about. For, in my summing up of Professor James's harsh dismissal of the mystical increment of energy and virtue (*mistaken* and *misbegotten* he actually called it!) in the cases where their "inspiration" proves "erroneous," I have been utterly forgetting his previous decision that "If theological ideas prove to have a value for concrete life they will be true for Pragmatism." Now this completely saves the situation: the Energy and

[1] Schiller, "Studies in Humanism," p. 208 "(Pragmatic truths), born of passion and sprung, like Aphrodite, from a foaming sea of desire."

Virtue being in themselves good, their inspiration will (for Pragmatism) be *true*; *true* is the reverse of erroneous, so the energy and virtue sprung from inspiration which is *not* erroneous could not possibly be mistaken and misbegotten. It is the neatest, possible logical circle, and not a vicious, but a virtuous one!

That hangs together with what I read in Professor James's other book ("Pragmatism," p. 273) about *universal conceptions*: "If they have any use they have that amount of meaning. And that meaning will be true if the uses square with life's other uses." And in the same book, p. 75: "If there be any life that is really better we should lead, and if there be any idea which, if believed in, would help us to lead that life, then it would be better for us to believe in that idea, unless, indeed, belief in it incidentally clashed with other greater vital benefits."

As I re-read these quotations I am overwhelmed by a suspicion: is it possible that in my slow and halting (although of course, rather *passionate* than *logically rational*) attempt to follow every step of Professor James's discussion of the mystical states and their *value for knowledge* (instead of swinging along pragmatically on a "therefore," a "because," a "then" to the full intention of the passage), is it possible that I have left anything out?

Good Heavens, yes. For, turning back to p. 247 of the "Varieties of Religious Experience," the sentence

stares me in the face with its complete significance: "They (mystical states) a*re excite*ments like the emotion of love and ambition, gifts to our spirit by means of which facts already objectively before us fall into a new expressiveness . . . (it was here that I broke off) *and make a new connection with our active life*."

Extraordinary that I should have missed out that half sentence! For, I remember, I have even quoted the one immediately following, viz.: "They do not contradict these facts as such, or deny anything that our senses have immediately seized . . . there never can be a state of facts to which new meaning may not truthfully be added, provided the mind ascend to a more enveloping point of view."

What must have happened is that the passages about *facts*, "*facts* already objectively before us fall into a new expressiveness"—and "They do not contradict these facts as such"—somehow coalesced in my thoughts and covered over, hidden in their overlapping, that little half sentence which looks so unimportant, and which is yet (on such unobtrusive points do great results sometimes turn!) the very pivot of the whole valuation of mystical states "for knowledge," and indeed, the pivot of the pragmatistic re-valuation of truth. Let me repeat it, contemplate, emblazon, enshrine it!—

"And make a new connection with our active life."

Do the energy and virtue bred of mystical states

make such a new connection ? In some eloquent pages ("Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 309 and 363) Professor James examines the question whether religion stands approved by its fruits as these are exhibited in the saintly type of character; and answers it as follows :—

"Whoever possesses strongly this sense (of the divine) comes naturally to think that the smallest details of this world derive infinite significance from their relation to an unseen order. The thought of this order yields him a superior denomination of happiness, and a steadfastness of soul with which no other can compare. In social relations his serviceability is exemplary; he abounds in impulses to help. His help is inward as well as outward, for his sympathy reaches souls as well as bodies, and kindles unsuspected faculties therein. Instead of placing happiness where common men place it, in comfort, he places it in a higher kind of inner excitement, which converts discomforts into sources of cheer and annuls unhappiness. So he turns his back upon no duty, however thankless; and when we are in need of assistance we can count upon the saint lending his hand with more certainty than we can count upon any other person. Finally his humble-mindedness and his ascetic tendencies save him from the petty personal pretensions which so obstruct our ordinary social intercourse, and his purity gives us in him a clean man for a companion."

Moreover, Professor James bids us remember that saintliness is apt to turn to heroism.

"Now, mankind's common instinct for reality has always held the world to be essentially a theatre for heroism. In heroism, we feel, life's supreme mystery is hidden. We tolerate no one who has no capacity whatever for it in any direction. On the other hand, no matter what a man's frailties otherwise may be, if he be willing to risk death, and still more, if he suffer it heroically, in the service he has chosen, the fact consecrates him for ever. Each of us in his own person feels that a high-hearted indifference to life would expiate all his short-comings. The folly of the cross, so inexplicable by the intellect, has yet its indestructible vital meaning. . . . Naturalistic optimism is mere syllabub and flattery and sponge-cake in comparison."

Now, although the "folly of the cross" and all this saintly heroism for which it stands, may be, as Professor James tells us, "inexplicable by the intellect"—of the saint, who happens to possess it, by no means follows that it is "inexplicable" as regards its utility to the race at large by the calmer and more judicial intellect of the practical man who is appraising it from a mere utilitarian point of view. Professor James is just such a calm, judicial, practical man, and this is how, immediately after that pastry-cook's metaphor applied to *Naturalistic optimism*, he judicially appraises the ascetic's enthusiasm.

"The practical course of action for us, *as religious men*, would therefore, it seems to me, not be simply to turn our backs upon the ascetic impulse, as most of us to-day turn them, but rather to discover some outlet for it of which the fruits in the way of privation and hardships will be objectively useful."

"*As religious men*"—I have underlined those words, because I should have thought that to the religious mind the justification of religious impulses would be in the religion itself, the justification of the folly of the cross would be, so to speak, in the Cross and all it stands for. But then, I am not among "religious men," and cannot place myself at their point of view of trying to discover some way of turning the self-denial and heroism of religious fervour into an outlet leading to the "objectively useful." Moreover, we must remember that we have been valuing mystical states, if not always strictly "for knowledge," at all events from the Pragmatistic point of view, namely, that "If there be any life that it is really better we should lead, and if there be any idea which, if believed in, would help us to lead that life, then it would be better for us to believe in that idea, unless, indeed, belief in it incidentally clashed with other greater vital benefits."

Now, we have been expressly told that the mystics themselves necessarily believes in the truth of (shall

we call them ?) the *ontological* messages acquired during his mystical states, so that it is idle disputing whether he is or is not to give them his belief. On the other hand we have been equally told that this belief can never be communicated (remember that our *beliefs or convictions* are hardly ever engendered in such matters by logical reason !) to the sceptics and deniers, least of all to those who have listened to " shallow medical talk "—such as does not bear upon the mystical states' *value for knowledge*. Both mystics and non-mystics having been ruled out, the valuation of the mystical states is left in the hands of those other persons, *religious men* like Professor James himself, unbiassed in either sense, and who, by careful estimation of possible " fruits for life," are alone capable of applying the pragmatic principle (Pragmatism," p. 273) that " we cannot reject any hypothesis if consequences useful to life flow from it. . . . If they (universal conceptions) have any use they have that amount of meaning. And that meaning will be true if the uses square with life's other uses."

Now I understand why the religious men were advised to inquire for outlets which should or could direct the Folly of the Cross and similar mystical heroism to something " objectively useful." The inquiry in question is implicit in the whole of Professor James's volume, and at the end he sums up its results as follows (" Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 377) :

"In a general way then, and on the whole, our abandonment of theological criteria and our testing of religion by practical commonsense and the empirical method leave it in possession of its towering place in history. Economically the saintly group of qualities is indispensable to the world's welfare."

Well, that is precisely what I might have said, and other persons, not accounted "religious men," who believe in the occasional, perhaps frequent, necessity for the *World's Welfare* of Noble Lies like Plato's, or Vital Lies like Ibsen's, and all their many intentional and unintentional varieties: Mistakes, Delusions, Fallacies and Falsehoods. But the advantage of Pragmatism is that you need not stoop to such immoral views or such offensive language. For Pragmatism (with Professor James's voice) declares:—

("Pragmatism," p. 28): "You can say of it (an opinion) either that it is useful because it is true, or it is true because it is useful. Both these phrases mean exactly the same thing."

and again, p. 75:

"The true is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief, and good, too, for definable, assignable reasons."

XII

Thus, while learning wherein consists the *value for knowledge* of mystical states, we have, incidentally, learned about some of those *definable, assignable reasons* which give us the right to call opinions *true.*

CHAPTER IV

FRUITS FOR LIFE

I

"To pass a spiritual judgment upon these states we must . . inquire into their Fruits for Life."

(W. James, "Variety of Religious Experience," p. 413.)

FRUITS for life.—The Pragmatism, I have been arraigning, and arraigning solely inasmuch and forasmuch, is an obscurantist method primarily concerned wtih increase or maintenance of these; while its definitions of truth in general, its discussions of truths in particular, are secondary and subservient to this concern for similar *Fruits for Life.*

For at the bottom of such obscurantist methods, whether theoretically proclaimed or merely incidentally applied, is one preoccupation which characterises and unites them however dissimilar and scattered, the pre-occupation with what I must call (a very modern name for a very modern conception!) *the dynamogenetic property of ideas.*

That an idea, nay, a mere rudimentary mental image, if occupying the focus of attention, will set up a mood, determine an action or re-arrange and co-ordinate the

rest of the mind's contents, unless such effects are prevented by the similar but superior power of what we call *objective facts* in contradiction to such *ideas*, this, which I have summed up as the *dynamogenetic property of ideas*, is one of the most popular generalizations of modern mental science; and it is also one of the pet postulates of those investigations and speculations which hide their disorder under the name of Sociology. In fact, while modern philosophers have been busily employed (and none more busy, naturally, than apologists for obscure dogmas, none more busy than all the various pragmatistic obscurantists) attacking the prestige and shaking the throne of the reputed monarch *Reason*, their attempt to instate *Will* (or more properly *Wish*) in Reason's stead, has really resulted in showing that Will, Wish and the various Emotions are themselves subject to the domination of intellectual *images*, or groups of memories, in fact, of simple or complex ideas. If to *feel* makes you think; to think, to think of something or a relation of somethings, makes you feel in a manner conditioned by that thought. Hence, we get among other hypotheses, which have been welcomed as much for their names as for their meaning, the *Idées Forces* of Monsieur Fouillée.

And this remark about Fouillée's *Idées Forces* leads me to an essential peculiarity of this *dynamogenetic* property of ideas: namely, that it may be the property of two *separate* and *different* ideas, in fact, the dynamo-

genetic property of a *name* awakening in one mind an idea that may differ in ninety-nine particulars from the idea awakened in another mind, while agreeing with it on the one point of generating a given mood, emotion, or attitude. Whether names as such can act dynamogenetically without the interposition of any idea at all; whether emotions and attitudes, dynamic soul-states in their turn generate ideas; whether either of these proceedings has invariable precedence, are questions for nice philosophical definition and elaborate psychologic investigation, which, taken together, may some day revolutionize this subject. But whether or not it eventually turns out that such an idea must always be present in case of soul-dynamogenesis, this much is already obvious, to wit, that an idea can act thus dynamogenetically in one mind without itself having been produced by a corresponding, or cognate, or indeed *any* idea in any other person's mind. Are we not familiar with the imaginatively dynamogenetic properties of smells, contacts, fifes, drums, bells and church-organs? Above all (returning to my theme), are we not familiar with the dynamogenetic property of *words*? Indeed, this whole question can be best understood by considering this power of words.

For, even as a word has a great many connotations, so an "idea"—a dynamogenetic "idea"—may cover, so to speak, a great many different ideas, which will

in no two cases be the same, its identity (if we may speak of identity where there is none!) consisting in a property of awakening given moods and attitudes.

II

Now philosophers bent upon such "Fruits for Life," as we have found to be Professor James's continual preoccupation, fix their attention upon this one point of similarity, namely, the similarity in spiritual dynamogenesis, and ignore the rest. Thus the *idea* "Catholicism" has not meant quite the same thing for Father Tyrrell as for Pope Pius X; but that "idea" has sufficed to make both of them feel in communion with many millions of other persons alive or dead to whom it also did not mean the same thing, and enabled them both to partake of the same sacraments with the same mystical fervour, until indeed the Pope's unphilosophical attachment to definitions and his ignorance of Bergsonian Pragmatism, resulted in Father Tyrrell being excluded from that communion and deprived of those sacraments.

Similarly it will, I hope, presently become plain to my readers that the *idea* "General Strike" is not the same in the mind of Monsieur Sorel, the philosophical expounder of its "mystic" value, and in the mind of the French Syndicalist Proletarian, in

whom he would foster this "mystic" notion; but what *is* the same is the dynamogenetic property of stirring up class warfare of this *idea* "General Strike," as it appears both to the subtle philosopher and to the ignorant trade unionist.

And with regard to my third example of *applied Pragmatism*, we shall see that in the eyes of the anthropological Sociologist, Crawley, the dynamogenetic property of religious ideas is avowedly the only thing common to the theology of contemporary church-going conservatives and those remotest ancestors who believed in eating the flesh of eminent personalities and who had not yet, we are informed, distinguished between the notions of *holiness* and *impurity*.

III

I will meanwhile forestall the results of my study of those particular instances of—may I call it?—Practical Pragmatism, by remarking that a considerable part of the undoubted dynamogenetic property of ideas may be due to ideas being expressed (or rather not adequately expressed) by words: you can get a universal "practical" response, because the practical response, or rather what produces it, is just the only common element in the various "ideas" grouped under one single name. Indeed, I almost

suspect that the latter-day unwillingness for definition, the Bergsonites' contempt for "Intelligence" as distinguished from "intuition," the fashionable preference for "unconscious" or "sub-conscious" states as distinguished from "conscious" ones, may be due to—shall we say?—an intuitive, unreasoned, unconscious, sub-conscious consciousness that you can get more "fruits for life" if you leave people to their own individual definition (or lack of definition) of the "idea" which rings them back to church or trumpets them on to battle.

IV

But be this as it may with respect to the popularity of Bergsonian and cognate philosophies, the present obsession with what I have called the Dynamogenetic Property of Ideas can be explained, quite apart from religious conservatism, by the general state of scientific thought. The conception of force seems to be replacing that of matter; mutation of species has taken the place of fixity; psychology has substituted *processes* for *faculties*; on the other hand, the economist is narrowing supply and demand into acquiescence and desire, and the biologist is for ever asking his question: what use has this for the individual or the race? The notions of activity, of alternative, of impulse, instinct

and adaptation are dominant in every department of our thinking. Moreover, the scientific spirit tends to fix rather on what *is* than what *should be*, and the investigation as to what gives us the *right to consider anything true*, is replaced by the study of what actually happens in the cases when anything is, however gratuitously, *considered to be true*. Hence a general and inevitable intellectual hankering after a pragmatistic alternation (like a musical shake which is two notes and no note !) between *truth and usefulness*; and, to return to my main subject, a sort of fascinated preoccupation with that most potent of mysterious questions, that question which deals essentially with confusions and powers, the dynamogenetic property of ideas, and of the names given to ideas.

Besides, our time is one of loosened custom, questioned law and consequent universal recourse to persuasion and panacea. We all want to save something or somebody, we are all urging on or holding back, wanting to have our finger into this great chaotically shaping pie of the immediate future. We all want to get hold of other folk's volition and action, to do something more than we can do to, or through, or for, ourselves.

Hence Imperialism, Nationalism, Progress, Order, Orthodoxy, Individualism, Socialism. What words to conjure with ! What investments for the man of actions, the moralist's, the saviour's, dealing with his

fellows; and what a lot of meaning they all have, these great *idées forces*, however undefinable or incoherent, if only we measure *meaning* by *effect on conduct*.

V

But, even as in the fairy story, where some tiny proviso takes off, alas, so much of the spell's value, of the magic ring or magic lamp's virtue, so in this matter of the sovereign power of *ideas*, there is a tiresome little condition which requires fulfilling. The idea, in order to have effects on conduct, *must be believed to be true*.

Let us look at this, occasionally awkward, peculiarity of the dynamogenetic property of ideas.

VI

We may approach it through a brief return to the subject (touched upon in my dealings with Professor James's valuation of mystic states) of Art, Simply because Art happens to be in the highest degree dynamogenetic, and, at the same time, conspicuously barren of practical results in conduct. I am thus explicit, because unlike (I think) Professor James, I not only like explicitness, but I am, moreover, far from

limiting "Fruits for Life" to such results as these. For I am tempted to think that one great service rendered to Life by Art may just have been the production of moods and attitudes which are *not* spent in practice, both because there may already be more such practice than needful, and also and chiefly, because such spending in practice may check the refreshment, the renewal, the alteration and purification wrought in the soul by moods and attitudes which are dwelt upon, or perhaps I should have said, *dwelt in.* Whether this notion of mine prove justified or not, no one will deny that art has immense dynamogenetic properties. It produces moods and attitudes of what Professor James characterises as *acquiescence* or *negation,* of optimism or pessimism: poetry, music, architecture, even the humblest pattern art produces, in the very act of its perception, changes in the degree and mode and direction of our activities. But the peculiarity of Art resides in the fact that this change in ourselves is not transformed into a change (or an attempted change) of something not ourselves: the dynamogenetic *ideas* (and an artistic form, visible or audible, is an *idea*) of Art do not abut in practice. We may be obsessed by the thought of the treasure in "Treasure Island," but we never take any steps to dig it up; and only in hyperbolic anecdote has a playgoer ever leapt on to the stage and throttled Iago. Yet in both these cases the *idea* may have been more

intensely and completely dynamogenetic, our mood and attitude more decided, than when we draw our money out of the bank on a bare suggestion of possible future insolvency, or when we call the police on the strength of mere suspicious noises in the house. The artistic idea has in these opposite cases provoked greater intensity and duration and exclusiveness of mood and attitude; but the other idea, though so much less vivid, enduring and absorbing, *has abutted in action.* Now the difference between the artistic idea which was *not* acted upon, and the non-artistic idea which *was* acted upon, lies in the absence in the one case, and presence in the other of something additional which is itself an idea: *the idea that we are dealing with reality.* Stevenson's "Treasure" and Iago's villainy are ideas which are not true, or rather which are yonside of true and false. But the idea of insolvency of the bank, or the idea of the burglars in our house, *must* either be true or false, and so long as it *may* be true, it results in action, were it only the action of inquiring *whether* it happens to be true or false.

This is the explanation why artistic ideas, however much they *move* us, do not *move us to action*; every child knows it, and practical moralists, among whom I find even so expert a psychologist as Professor James, are apt to suspect Art of turning our characters soppy for lack of such abutment in action.

And thus, through our excursion into the function of Art, we have come back again, and face to face with the little difficulty besetting those who value ideas for what Professor James means by their "Fruits for Life." An idea, to produce action, requires that we should hold in our mind not only the idea itself, but the certainty, the probability, or at least the possibility, of its *being true*. Briefly: we require to believe, believe that something is possible if not certain, before we can act. And what we believe in is not merely the *idea* of that something, but also the truth of that idea.

VII

This is not all. Ideas will not produce action unless these ideas are believed to be, at all events *possibly*, true. But belief that an idea is or may be true will produce action, for instance, such fruits for life as the mystics exhibit, even when that idea not only may be but actually *is*, false. The only thing needed is that the action should be required of the persons who believe that it is *true*; or that the people from whom the action is required should be the same who do the believing. Hence the practical efficacy of mistakes, fallacies, muddles, delusions, Noble Lies *à la* Plato or Vital Lies after the less classic recipe of Ibsen. You can raise fruits for life out of all of them, or they can

be left to produce equally nutritious and less precarious fruits for life without any cultivation, so long as someone believed them to be true. Indeed, we shall see by studying Mr Crawley and M. Sorel on myths, that ideas may be only the more *fruitful for life* because they are not true ; and the Modernist theory of symbols is but a re-statement of the advantages for sentiment and conduct of an idea which, never having any fixed contents, can never be proved to be false and need never be asked to be true. I have stated pretty plainly, and shall (with the help of these practical pragmatists) show more plainly still, that the practical value of ideas depends not only upon being true, but also, and quite independently, upon being *thought* true.

Speculative thinkers interested in questions of truth and falsehood for their own sake (let us say because such questions involve truth and falsehood), can find no difficulty in admitting all this, and doing justice to all the various efficacious lies, noble or vital, or neither noble nor vital. But Pragmatism of the sort I am dealing with, Pragmatism has an eye to effects, or rather *effects* fill its whole field of vision and dazzle it. And in Pragmatism of this kind (I am dealing once more with no other), such dazzling produces a curious illusion : when an effect is *true* (and everything which truly takes place is evidently true), how can its cause be otherwise than *true* also ?

And the way to make that cause, namely, an idea, *true*, is to define truth by those very effects. Hence the various answers to, or evasions of, the stolid old question, "What is Truth?" We get "true-in-so-far-forth" and the trueness of these theological ideas which "prove to have a value for concrete life." We get "will be true, for pragmatism, in the sense that they are good for so much." We get the trueness of Universal conceptions which "if they have any use have that amount of meaning, and the meaning will be true if the use squares with life's other uses"; and so on,, till we arrive at that supreme identification by superposition ("Pragmatism," page 76). "What would be better for us to believe? That sounds very like a definition of truth; it comes very near to saying what we ought to believe! Ought we ever not to believe what it would be better for us to believe?"

Something which has good effects *is better to believe;* it is what we ought to believe; it is therefore *true*, and since it *is true*, it is evidently what we cannot help believing. And by this curious optical delusion, turning two parallel lines into a circle, quite naturally and ingenuously, by one of those intuitive processes which it holds so far superior to reasoning, Pragmatism gets hold of the one thing needful: the dynamogenetic property of the idea, or at least of the word, *Truth*. For Truth is what you willingly accept, what

you accept for *assignable* reasons, to wit, its usefulness ; but Truth is also, oh miracle, a mysterious principle which wields an imperative. Thus, by the virtue of circular thinking, *Pragmatistic truth* becomes a law to itself. Unluckily it is not a law to any one else. If you believe what it is better for you to believe, your neighbour believes what it is better for *him* to believe.

Pragmatism, as one of those first enthusiastic Pragmatists later confessed, would be a splendid thing, if only one could monopolise it for oneself.

For there—since we are dealing with advantages determining belief — comes in the advantage of believing in truth as independent of your willing : it is equally independent of the willing of your contradictors.

PART II

APPLIED PRAGMATISM

"*Renan Fragm. Phil.—Il n'essaye pas de priver les religions de leurs dogmes particuliers; il ne croit pas qu'en analysant les diverses croyances, on trouverait la vérité, au fond du creuset. Une telle opération ne donnerait que le néant et le vide, chaque chose n'ayant son prix que par la forme particulière qui l'enveloppe et la caractérise. Mais il prend tout symbole pour ce qu'il est, une expression particulière d'un sentiment qui ne saurait tromper.*"

CHAPTER I

FATHER TYRRELL: MODERNISM AND THE WILL TO CONTINUE BELIEVING [1]

I

"Non disse Cristo al suo primo convento:
Andate, e predicate al mondo ciance."
Dante, *Paradiso XXIX.*

THE quarrel between the Pope and the Modernists turns upon the Right-to-Believe in a very different sense from that discussed by Pragmatism. It is a question not of *why* but of *what*. The Pope defines certain views on (what we are learning to think of as) philological, historical, and philosophical questions as indispensable qualifications, if not for salvation, at all events for salvation through the organisation for salvation over which he himself presides, and by means of the sacraments which he dispenses. If you do not hold his views, you are not of his Church, and you cannot partake of his sacraments; you are, moreover, presumably excluded from salvation, since the Pope's church is the special organisation for salvation, all other

[1] "Christianity at the Cross Roads." By George Tyrrell. 1909 (posthumous work).

analogous ones being not only unable to save, but, owing to their impious, fraudulent competition, eminently efficacious to damn you. That is the long and the short of what the Pope says. The Modernists answer, more or less explicitly—and usually less than more—that certain of the views insisted on by the Pope are mere philological and historical blunders or philosophical muddles, and that, so far from their acceptance being necessary for membership of the church, and participation in the church's sacraments, they have nothing whatever to do with either, and are bound to be eliminated out of the church and disconnected from the church's sacraments by the continuation of that very evolution, which built up the merely temporal and human institutions and dogmas, wherein the imperishable truths of religion have been vehicled through the centuries and made accessible to various stages of civilisation.

Such is the controversy between the Pope and the Modernists, sketched roughly from a distance, and merging all individual ins and outs of opinion in the general outlines. We will examine it in detail in the very noble posthumous book of the late Father Tyrrell.

But before beginning this examination, I want to point out how the Modernist contention and, more particularly, Father Tyrrell's apology for it, can be used in our study of Pragmatism and the Will-to-Believe.

In the case of the Modernists, as indeed in most cases

of genuinely religious persons, it is rather the Will-Not-to-Disbelieve.

These Modernists are scientific inquirers and philosophic thinkers, philologists and historians mainly, also, in the case at least of Father Tyrrell, metaphysicians, psychologists, and students of comparative religions. The facts and hypotheses which such studies have rendered familiar to their thoughts, have acted as a solvent to a vast amount of just those traditional views which the Church of Pope Pius X. holds indispensable for participation in that Church's sacraments: the solid mass of dogma and quasi-dogma has been eaten into on all sides; the Pope himself having furnished, in his Encyclical, a detailed descriptive inventory of the ravages of modern scientific and philosophic thought, both those already to be lamented, and those also to be feared at the present rate of the erosive process. Now, such an erosion of religious beliefs has been going on elsewhere than in the Catholic Church; indeed, the very fact of Modernists being ordered to recant, shows that the Catholic Church is just the one where it has operated least. The hostility of Roman Catholicism to any kind of independent inquiry has driven the intellectual class of certain nations and periods—say the French eighteenth century—entirely out of its dominion; while, on the other hand, the various kinds of Protestantism have either made less effectual resistance, or made it, as is shown by the rise

of German exegesis, in a much more partial manner. We are thus able to compare the anti-dogmatic action of Modernism with the far greater and sometimes entire destruction of creeds which has taken place outside the Church of Rome. And if we regard this further destruction as representing the unimpeded tendencies of scientific thought when applied to religious creeds, we can by such a comparison discover in how far it has been checked by the requirements of such Catholicism as the Modernists insist upon clinging to. For the Modernists, who are heretical innovators in the eyes of Orthodoxy, regard themselves, and with justice, as conservatives in opposition to Protestantism and Rationalism.

Thus returning to the Will-to-Believe or Will- (as it often is) Not-to-Disbelieve, we shall understand its action in the case of Father Tyrrell, by seeing where he begins to oppose himself to Liberal Protestants and Rationalists; and we shall recognise the nature of his pragmatic "*What it would be better for him to believe*" by studying the questions upon which he ceases to inquire, to analyse and to speculate, and continues to believe because, as he will tell us, *life without such belief would be intolerable in his eyes.*

And before beginning this demonstration, which I feel to be in places cruelly hostile, I wish to express (and that almost remorseful sense of my ruthlessness is itself an expression thereof) the very peculiar admira-

tion and reverence with which Father Tyrrell's posthumous book has filled and still fills me. After a course of Pragmatistic theory, with its hurry to talk over; its shirking of conclusions and shifting of responsibilities; its words thrown down at random, revoked when convenient; its twilight of suggestion and occasional Sludge-the-Medium gesture of turning on the light and showing that there's no deception; after the jumbled metaphors of Dr Schiller, the verbal slovenliness of Professor James; after that lack of logical structure which makes even M. Bergson's magnificent volumes like caverns, glittering with gems and ores, but viewless and without exit; after all that confusion of genius and shoddy, of ideality and hustle, the satisfaction inspired by this book of Father Tyrrell's is almost moral, and is most certainly æsthetic. It is like the satisfaction felt in certain churches: the recognition that all is swept and garnished, well set ashlar and massive silver, fair linen and pure vessels; everything done and spoken without hurry or passion; with no audience save the One, whom the Initiate carries in his own consecrated hands.

Such is Father Tyrrell's posthumous book. Not a work of original genius, or perhaps even original research, but thought out and set forth with absolute definiteness and order; every point made clear, every objection forestalled and given its due; the results of other men's work assimilated with lucidity and

orderliness ; a book which appeals to no reader, which has no hope of converting ; a work for a noble mind's own satisfaction ; a testament (as it proved) such as a dying man may make for the God he believes in, and the disciples he barely hopes for ; and which, like the treatise of Browning's " Grammarian " we may reverently place between his hands, folded at last and after much strife, in peace, as we take our last look at him.

II

I do not know to what extent, if at all, Father Tyrrell had been an original investigator or an original speculator in any of the studies, historical, philological, anthropological and psychological, which are nowadays dealing with the religious activities and their manifestations. But he had learned the current scientific methods, and assimilated the data and hypotheses resulting from them. And he therefore came to believe in the same probabilities and certainties as the least theological of his contemporaries, and to believe as a result of the same processes of reasoning applied to the same data.

Viewed historically, or genetically, Religion is for Father Tyrrell a series, or rather a number of competing series, of more or less co-ordinate or more or less disorderly syntheses of various products of mental

activity : explanatory, utilitarian, social-disciplinarian, æsthetic and sentimental ; constantly changing, dropping out one item, adding another, in fact, evolving in company and under the pressure of those other syntheses of human activities which have gradually differentiated themselves as social organisation, science, philosophy, crafts and trades, and art and poetry ; differentiated themselves in continual response to the development of man's mentality, and to the tasks which he was obliged to set himself.

Beginning (to use Father Tyrrell's expression), as pseudo-scientific in its magic mysticism and as disciplinary on its ethical side, Religion has slowly turned from such utilitarian functions to ministering, like art and poetry, like science and philosophy, to man's disinterested, contemplative desires ; and a spiritual element, denied by Father Tyrrell to the primitive magic-religions has thus gradually been evolved in religion under the blind and casual fingering of forgotten races and unnumbered generations, but also under the lucid handling of occasional men of genius, philosophers, poets, legislators and prophets. Our present-day itself epitomizes, in its various contemporaneous grades of civilization, this endless past evolution ; and even in the most recently organized religions, the grossest utilitarian magic elbows the highest spiritual contemplation.

This is what Father Tyrrell believed to be the past

of all Religion, and that much of its present which represents its past. As to the future of Religion, that also will be the result of continued evolution, and be conditioned by the evolution of the other branches of human activity. Indeed, Father Tyrrell repeatedly tells us that the continued progress and ultimate survival of religion depends upon its adaptation to the progress of psychology and the science of religions, to which it will have to stand, he explicitly mentions, as medicine does to the chemical and biological sciences. During all this past evolution there has been a perpetual struggle for existence between various religions as wholes, and the various elements of which each of them consisted. And, this competition continuing and increasing, there must result that the most vigorously adaptive kind of religion, will not only evolve away its own deciduous portions, but also, and in consequence, oust all its competing kindred.

This is how Father Tyrrell conceives the future of religion, unless indeed (a possibility which he does not exclude) religion should prove incapable of further and sufficient evolution and become entirely extinct.

So much for what Father Tyrrell believes to be the truth about the genesis and development of Religion. His belief on matters of historical detail is equally based upon contemporary scientific research, and is, if possible, in even more flagrant contradiction with the traditions

of the Church and the Church's dogmas. He does not even discuss either the divine inspiration or the chronological and personal authenticity of the various parts of Scripture, but implicitly accepts on these points the decisions of philological criticism. Nor is this all. According to Father Tyrrell the Founder of Christianity worked miracles only in the ignorant belief of men who did not even distinguish between natural and supernatural, because they had no conception of nature's regularity. Jesus did not rise from his grave and show himself to his disciples, but his disciples thought that he had thus risen. Moreover—and we must note that Father Tyrrell is continually attacking "Liberal Protestantism" for the contrary opinion—moreover, nothing can be more absurd than to attribute to the Founder of Christianity a mentality in advance of his time and nation and class. Jesus was an uneducated and superstitious Jew, of the reign of Tiberius; his mind was incapable of certain views, which are nowadays attributed to him; and, on the other hand, full of ideas which had to be revised as a result of his own death, and the non-fulfilment of his own prophecies. Jesus was not a moral innovator, since his morality was current both among the Jewish pietists and the Gentile philosophers of his day.

Furthermore, the morality which he preached was such as could be applied only to a world on the brink of destruction, and among men preparing in penance

for an immediate Judgment of Heaven. Jesus was preaching righteousness, not for its own sake, nor even for the love of God, but for the sake of a heavenly kingdom, which was a material, not a spiritual one, and which was to be inaugurated by himself; so that the orthodox reference of his teaching to a future spiritual existence, is as historically false as its reference, by Liberal Protestants, to a subjective Kingdom in the Spirit of Righteous Men.

In fact, Father Tyrrell not only denies any historical validity to the Church's statements as contained in its creed and catechism, but even demonstrates that the creed and the catechism, the whole body of tradition and dogma, nay, the whole application of the moral preaching of Jesus outside his own expectation of an immediate end of the world, were all of them subsequent accretions historically and psychologically explicable (and often philologically demonstrable) by the nonfulfilment of the very expectations which Jesus had come to prophecy, and the adaptation of his predictions and precepts to totally different times, circumstances and modes of thought.

III

But in Father Tyrrell's orderly and homogeneous structure of historical, psychological, and philological

convictions, there occasionally appear lapses of logical continuity and changes of intellectual orientation, interruptions, in fact, which suggest the lurking presence of heterogeneous and irreducible elements. Of such unexpected interruptions the first to awaken suspicion is that, while ostensibly regarding Religion as a human product, explicable by human needs (of which more anon) and subject to human development, Father Tyrrell should nevertheless implicitly limit religion to Christianity and expend much argument in limiting Christianity to Catholicism. Whereas, the biologist follows up the various species derived from a common type, and considers their various adaptation to circumstances, Father Tyrrell, on the contrary, passes over the other great developments of original religious activities, Shintoism, Buddhism, and Islam, as if they had atrophied and perished; and he dismisses the suggestion of a possible fusion between Catholicism and other creeds from a biological objection against crossing of genera, an analogy which (if I may forestall other questions) might surely have been urged against the hybridization of human religious thought by transcendental revelation.

The non-Christian religions are, therefore, left out of discussion. As regards Protestantism, on the other hand, Father Tyrrell's book (like M. Loisy's famous one) is directed, not so much at freeing Catholicism from scientifically untenable doctrines, as at showing that

"Liberal Protestantism," with its substitution of the ethical elements for the sacramental and transcendental ones, so far falls short of being the true embodiment of the Religious Idea.

This Religious "Idea," by which Father Tyrrell means not only (in metaphysical sense) the adequate fulfilment of a typical function, but also something like M. Bergson's creative-evolutive impulse, this Religious "Idea" will play the chief part in the following pages, and it is therefore well to try and grasp its (so far as graspable) meaning. The Religious "Idea," therefore, deals with the union of the Spirit of Man with the Divinity. And the various religions must be valued, from the religious point of view, according to the degree in which they embody this "Idea," by achieving, or tending to achieve, this union.

Having got so far, we must pause and examine what this definition may mean, for, in its apparent simplicity, it is susceptible of more than one interpretation, and of two at least which are divergent.

From the standpoint, both of psychology and of the comparative study of religions, Religion can be defined as that which connects Man with the Divinity. From the anthropological and comparative mythological point of view, this means that the particular group of doctrines and practices studied by these sciences is *intended*, is *supposed*, to put Man into such connection with the Divinity; similarly, magic can be defined as

the group of doctrines and practices enabling Man to deal with the mystically embodied powers of Nature; that is to say, magic is *intended* to do this. Whether religion or magic does do either of these things except in the opinion of its votaries is a question which the "science of religions" does not enter upon. Turning to the psychological standpoint, we may also retain that definition of religion: Religion is what brings Man in connection with the Divinity. It does so, says psychology, as Art brings Man in connection with the Beautiful or Science in connection with Knowledge: in all three cases, we have transformed into a noun, objective to the verb *connect*, what is itself a verb, "to conceive" or "to desire," and what really does the connecting with the predicate Divinity, Beauty or Knowledge. Moreover, just as Psychology analyses Beauty into the *quality of being beautiful* or Righteousness into the *quality of being righteous*, so it analyses *divineness* into the *quality of being divine*, and shows us the successive operations by which such "*divineness*" is turned into "*divinity*" and (always in men's mind), from divinity into *a God*, and finally *God*.

In this sense anthropology on the one hand, and psychology on the other, can, and do, accept Father Tyrrell's definition of Religion.

But this is not what Father Tyrrell means by that formula. Father Tyrrell means that Religion, quite apart from what any science thinks on the subject,

does bring man into connection with the Divinity. And he means that the Divinity, however much it may, as psychology tells us, exist in the mind of Man as a human idea, does exist, in some manner transcending all human conception, *outside* the mind of Man. The Divinity (or Spirit, as he often calls it) is not in this sense a human thought at all; it is an object of human experience irreducible to mere subjective existence: the divinity is not *the thought*, which can become an obsession, *of the divine*; it is a *Spirit*, which can enter into man by a process wholly transcending any psychological or rational description, a *spirit* by which Man can be not *obsessed*, but *possessed*.

IV

This brings us to another of those interruptions, as I have called them, of the sequence and homogeneousness of Father Tyrell's scientific thought—interruptions, as the reader will soon recognize, themselves representing a hidden continuity, and which, if we follow their seemingly disconnected reappearance, will help us to penetrate into the underlying unity of what is in Father Tyrrell's mind. Father Tyrrell's view of the Objectivity of God will lead us to his view of the Divinity of Christ and the unique Quality of Catholicism; and, on the other hand, it will lead us

back to his conception of Religious Ideas, thence to his conception of Ideas as such, and thus close the circle.

I have already summed up Father Tyrrell's views as to the historical, and so to speak historically conditional nature of the "Man Jesus." Indeed, one of his chief quarrels with "Liberal Protestantism" is the tendency, with which he credits it, to explain away Christ's sayings and beliefs in order to make them acceptable to modern thought. Father Tyrrell will have none of this kind of modernizing in the teeth of historical evidence and probability. The "Man Jesus," he repeatedly tells us, had and could have only the mentality of his particular time and nation; an enormous proportion of his conceptions and beliefs, and first and foremost his notion of an immediate end of the world and an ensuing material Kingdom of Heaven, must be put to the account of that unclarified mentality of his day and country. Such being the case, it becomes necessary to discriminate between what Jesus thought and said inasmuch as a "man"—a "superstitious," almost a "fanatical" man of unclear, crass ideas—and what Jesus thought and said inasmuch as an incarnation of the Divinity. The "Man Jesus" could, did, and must make erroneous statements and teach exaggerated behaviour, but the Deity (since Father Tyrrell relegates as magical mythology the Old Testament stories of False Prophets

erroneously inspired by that very Jehovah whom the "Man Jesus" believed in)—the Deity could evidently only reveal truth; and truth presumably such as could be obtained only through such revelation. Now, of all the things which Jesus said, and among which we must thus discriminate between human error and revealed truth, there is one which Father Tyrrell accepts as essentially of the latter kind—namely, the belief (quite analogous to that in the end of the world and the material Kingdom of Heaven) of Jesus in his own divine nature and in the divine origin of his message. In other words, Father Tyrrell accepts the fact of a transcendental revelation on the testimony of a person who in his human character was likely to have confused ideas on this especial subject; and also on the corroborative statement of those disciples and of that early Tradition which, we have been told, were not only full of the grossest literalness, but also of irremediably superstitious habits of mind.

This is a strange contradiction. But, in reality, as we shall discover later on, the real witness to Christ's Divine Nature and Mission is not the word of Jesus or the tradition of the Church, themselves liable to criticism and often to rejection. The Testimony is in Father Tyrrell himself; and it is the testimony of his Will, or Need, to believe.

V

Guided by Anthropology, by comparative Mythology, and by Psychology (let alone other scientific studies) Father Tyrrell has therefore presented us with an evolutional scheme where the religious function plays a part corresponding to that of the scientific function ; the truths needful for man's welfare being, in both cases, originally overlaid by all manner of human errors, through which, by a slow evolution, those truths laboriously make their way, only partially emerged in our own day, and perhaps never destined to emerge completely from that obscuring and distorting accretion of misunderstanding. But note the difference ! Whereas in the case of science the needful knowledge of nature is attained (so far as it goes) by merely human agency ; the equally needful (for if not needful where would be religion ?) knowledge of the Divine is suddenly intercalated in the human evolution, and what is more, intercalated by a transcendental revelation which, inserted into inadequate human intelligence, becomes immediately overlaid and distorted by the grossest misapprehensions, even on the part of the very Person to whom and through whom this necessary revelation is made for Man's benefit. In other words, while what we mean by Nature, however profitable the knowledge thereof,

has revealed itself piecemeal since the beginning of human thought, and continued to reveal itself without much hope of any eventual complete revelation, the object of the religious need of man, namely, the pre-existent, eternal, Infinite and Absolute, is hurried, by a sense of man's dire need, to attempted self-revelation in the year 753 of the Building of Rome, in the province of Judæa and through the miraculous mediation (we might almost say mediumship) of an ignorant and superstitious Jewish pietist, whose mind is, if possible, more incapable of grasping the divine reality than that of mankind as a whole, and of his contemporaries in particular. That such should be the case has hitherto been dealt with, perhaps wisely, as a mystery. But to Father's Tyrrell's scientific, eminently historical mind, the mystery admits of an explanation.

According to him the very choice for this transcendental revelation of a historical moment rife with the clogging superstitions of " pre-religious, pseudo-scientific " magical utilitarianism and literalness, explains likewise the choice of a mediator who, as a human personality, was fitted to cater to the superstitions of his times by his sincere and stirring belief in an immediate destruction of the world and advent of a by-no-means metaphysical or subjective Kingdom of Heaven. And the Divinity's choice (for Father Tyrrell frequently speaks of the Divinity as amenable

to motives) of such a jumble of human error for its own revelation, is explained to Father Tyrrell's very up-to-date (and distinctly Bergsonian) psychology, by the advantage of transcendental truth being vehicled (as colours are vehicled by oil or white of egg) into the human soul, not by the hard and fast (and frequently erroneous) *modus operandi* of definite ideas, but by that of legends and metaphors, whereof every man and every generation could take, or not, the "spiritual essence," and about which successive or very different ages and peoples might have lived in brotherly community of faith, had it not been for the presumptuous interference of the human reason.

The Divinity, in other words, had forestalled the Modernist theory of the *value of symbolism.*

VI

The value of symbolism is indeed one of the oldest discoveries of theological thought, for symbols are the natural resort of dogmatism whenever one of its assertions can no longer be easily maintained, and yet, owing to the necessary solidarity of dogmatic teaching, cannot be rejected or abandoned : the historical account of the stopping of the sun, or of the creation of the world, once caught in the clutches of scientific discussion, disembodied itself into symbol, and vanished,

so to speak, into a fourth dimension of thought; the dimension where, as we know, ghosts find a convenient retreat. It is in this way that Modernism has had to make use of symbolism. But to such (may we call it ?) *value of convenience* (felt but never put into words by those who feel it most), there has been added of late years another and more scientific appreciation of the uses of symbols.

Psychology has taught us that the contents of one mind does not mirror itself (as we see rooms and landscapes and ourselves mirrored in the eye of our neighbour), with mechanical and passive correctness in another mind; that, on the contrary, words merely stir the impressions already stored up in their hearer, and turn on processes already familiar; so that the word produces a change, but a change conditioned and limited by the residue of all previous changes. Hence the assimilation of a word or sentence implies its interpretation, and no one can interpret the unknown save into what he knows already. This view of words and their *modus operandi* which is now current coin among educated people, explains, and is explained by (its having arisen at all) the inevitable change in the meaning of the same words and sentences when passing from individual to individual, and from generation to generation. We know, for instance, that so simple a piece of literature as a page of Bradshaw "means" something different to the traveller who has seen the

places registered therein, and the clerk of Messrs Cook, who seeks in it only connections of trains. We know that Virgil's verse meant something different to Dante from what it could mean to Horace ; and, if we reconstruct Dante's mental possibilities by reference to his contemporary philosophy and politics, we also know that Dante's own verse meant something quite different to him, the dogmatic church-man and aristocratic authoritarian, from what it meant when it incited Gioberti and Mazzini and Garibaldi towards a unified Italian democracy. In fact, we are learning to recognize that the poets who live through the ages are also those to whom each age gives a new lease of life by fixing its attention upon items different from those which interested its predecessors, and by associating with whatever of the poet's sayings it thus happened to focus, the thoughts and feelings most vivid in itself, but often most foreign to the poet. From this recognition of the changing mental syntheses produced by poetry and likewise by much philosophic precept, it is an easy step to recognition of the symbolical value of religious teachings. And this recognition includes not merely that the same form of words, the same definition, commandment, or narrative will take different connotations and applications according to the hearer, but also that this fluctuation in the meaning, united with stability in the wording or imagery, will enable such religious formulæ to live on, like the poet's,

through the centuries with the revived and increasing power due at once to adaptation and to stability. For a passage of Virgil or Dante, a sentence of Greek philosophy (" man is the measure " or " know thyself "), a verse of the Bible, live through the ages partly because they have an intrinsic quality which makes them eternally applicable, and partly because they admit of that application being altered with each mind that assimilates them ; but above all, they live, they exist, because they remain outwardly unchanged, and because this unchanged form acquires the accumulated imperative of habit.

The power on our emotion remains the same, while the intellectual contents alters and renews itself : and thus the authority of different monarchs and different monarchies of our soul lives on uninterrupted through all change, thanks to the traditional royalty of the word which never dies. Nay, it may happen that *our own ideas*, clearly recognized as ours, react upon ourselves with increased efficacy if we express them in one of those quotations which have stirred variously the hearts of generations : *sunt lachrymæ rerum ;* or, *amor ch'a nullo amato amar perdona ;* nay, even a phrase " *God's in His Heaven, all's right in the world,*" written almost during our own lifetime by Browning, whom we ourselves have known ! And the person whose life has been most absolutely untouched by religious teachings and practices, to whom a knowledge of Christianity has come

like that of literature and art and history, may feel that his poor individual thought, without stability or authority of its own, can borrow the power of uplifting our head, or of bending our knees—a power more irresistible even than that of artistic form—if only it be expressed in the words which have been prayed and sung for eighteen centuries or in the images which exist equally in Giotto or Michelangelo's frescoes and in any wayside crucifix, or penny coloured print of the Via Crucis.

How much more is this the case when the symbol is not merely read or remembered, but repeated with every circumstance of solemnity and pathos ; when it is enacted in a ritual (the metaphor of the bread and wine translated into literal concreteness, for instance), where we are ourselves the actors, or handed over to the believer (as in devotional meditations, like those of St Ignatius), with the express command that he shall realise its every detail with his own dramatic imagination ?

The great religions of the world have thus become a marvellous living organism of symbols wherein the new is grafted on the old, where change of essence is hidden under unchangeable appearance, where accumulated primæval emotions and imperatives exchange quite unperceived subject and, so to speak, substance ; and thanks to which, men like M. Loisy and Father Tyrrell may still imagine themselves to be

in direct traditional connection with St Paul, St John, and the Early Fathers, let alone feeling themselves in communion with every Breton or Irish or Calabrian peasant.

All this is scientific psychology ; and no one believes more in scientific psychology than Father Tyrrell : his incidental explanations of the historical status and sociological function of symbols are not mere popularisations, but positive additions to our knowledge of the workings of the human mind.

VII

But psychology, individual and racial, does not merely examine and demonstrate this function of symbols as a vehicle for the new, and a protection of the old. Psychology shows that, while at any given historical moment and in any individual mind, a particular meaning, however confused, was attached to every symbol, so also every symbol, if we go far enough back, has had an original and literal meaning. Moreover, Psychology shows us not only the similarity, but the difference ; not only the unchanged emotional and practical powers of symbol, its continuous and often increasing dynamo-genetic property ; it shows us also the total and irreducible divergence in the ideas attached to that symbol at the extreme ends of its evolution.

And even if psychology did not assure us that this must be the case, and ecclesiastical history with its definitions and re-definitions did not prove it enough, an incomparable proof would be afforded by the writings of the Modernists and their condemnation in the famous Encyclical *Pascendi.*

St Paul and St John did not, could not, mean really the same things as Father Tyrrell and M. Loisy ; the " Man Jesus " himself, Father Tyrrell does not hesitate to say, could not, in so far as a historical personage, mean the same thing ;—indeed one can scarcely bear the thought of what Jesus would have felt if, in the hours on the cross, he had learned on irrecusable authority, that the end of the world and the Kingdom of Heaven were not at hand, and that these things must be understood (to use the Apologetic expression) not *facie ad faciem,* but *per specula et aenigmata.*

Father Tyrrell's recourse to symbolism is logical so long as we identify the unchanging contents of the symbol with some human thought, however vague ; some, however highly emotional, human conception of an aim in life, or an order of the Universe. But if we continue this argument in favour of symbolism, it finally abuts not only at Christ, but at the Divinity whom Christ revealed. And we then find ourselves in the presence of a Divinity who, subjected to alternatives and preferences (Father Tyrrell distinctly speaks of the Divinity as induced to the Christian revelation by over-

flowing of the cup of man's misery and the misdeeds of the Powers of Evil), obliged to accept such poor symbolic means for his revelation, is itself but a larger and vaguer kind of human being, conditioned by its own nature and by surrounding circumstances; not the real, the objective author of the revelation, but the imagined author thereof, in other words a divinity which is a purely human conception, revelation and all —just one of those human notions of which the study of symbols has shown us the genesis and transformations.

Now this is exactly what the rationalist thinker, following along Father Tyrrell's scientific lines, would arrive at. The Christian God, like the Christian Christ, like the legends and symbols, is himself a mere symbol; crudely anthropomorphic in primitive times, more and more hazy, negative, so to speak, *residual*, as man's thought progresses and gradually shuffles off its anthropocentric explanation of the universe; it is we who have made this Divinity, not this Divinity that has made us. But for Father Tyrrell the Divinity at the bottom of Christian revelation is the one who has made us, not the one whom we have made, however much we have botched and boggled His image. He (and no longer *it*) is an Objective Spiritual Entity which, in some transcendent but absolutely objective manner, has entered into the "Man Jesus" and told him things such as could not otherwise have been known; things which are eternally true, however erroneous and

deciduous the symbols wherein, first and foremost by Jesus himself, they have been conveyed to mankind.

For this logical difficulty Father Tyrrell has prepared by pointing out the usefulness of symbols in a branch of thought, namely the scientific, which is admitted to approximate more and more to a perhaps never completely attainable truth. And it is, indeed, undeniable that wherever we do not know, or do not yet know, the whole of our subject, it is wise to avoid premature definitions which might mislead, and substitute symbolic expressions committing us, as for intsance the word *Force* as scientifically employed, to the smallest number of connotations; thus Herbert Spencer showed more prudence than usual in referring not to *God* but to the *Unknowable*, and leaving his readers to identify the two if so disposed. In this manner one can understand that theological ideas might have been best promulgated in metaphysical formulæ, or, better still, in, say, algebraic symbols. But that is the exact reverse of what has happened; and the symbolism in which transcendental "ideas" have been conveyed by the Church and its founders, is the kind which says not less, but a great deal more, than is necessary; it is the symbolism which increasing connotations and associated notions increases probable misunderstanding instead of checking it. If the Powers Above had intended to diminish man's mistaken views (and consequent quarrels) about them-

selves, *they* (for I do not wish to identify the problematic X postulated by my argument with the Divinity of Father Tyrrell's worship), *They* could not have hit upon a worse plan than employing the symbolism of Scripture and Scripture's commentators. That sort of symbolism is not calculated to make men understand that they do not understand more than they actually do ; and the historical result has shown it. So that one has a right to wonder why, knowing that each century is bound to symbolize truth in a way different from other centuries, the " Spirit " should have chosen to symbolize once for all, and that in a particularly materialistic and metaphor-loving race and country, and through a particularly (in so far as himself not a symbol) literal-minded person, instead of going to the expense of furnishing as science does a fresh and less inadequate symbol to suit each age. Why *one* Christ only, and only one direct revelation ? Of course, Father Tyrrell's theory of symbols would answer (and Father Tyrrell has said so in scarcely less explicit terms) that symbols are improved by the pulling about, that they work themselves deeper *in*. But (which Father Tyrrell seems to overlook) they at the same time work themselves, at the other end, further *out* : the material imagery and literal interpretations raise disbelief after a time, and the end of the world which has not come ceases, after some repetition of its not coming, to have its full effect.

But the Modernist theory of intentional symbolism is either based upon the habit of our own ignorant and blundering mankind, groping its way under colossal difficulties, and in whose image we allow ourselves (symbolically) to conceive the "Spirit" which is neither human nor conditioned. Or else (and this is, I think, more probably the case), this theory of religious symbolism is merely one of the various inconsequences of Father Tyrrell's mode of thought, started on plain rationalistic lines, and, ever and anon, running against that hidden centre of habitual and beloved beliefs, and against the need to believe in them which he finds in himself.

Such is, roughly, the scheme of Father Tyrrell's beliefs, and I think I am correct in saying that, even as according to them the Transcendental grafts itself miraculously onto the historical, so similarly, but *vice versa*, in the mind of Modernists, the historical, the casual and analytical, grafts itself with equally confusing effect, on the mystical: the "it seems" on the "it must have seemed."

VIII

Leaving behind us the uses, divine as well as human, of Symbolism, we will proceed, penetrate if we can, to the something thus symbolized for

the greater glory of God or the greater convenience of Man.

This something persisting intact, much like Weissmann's imperishable Germ-Plasm through the generations of mortal bodies, and vehicled by those ever-changing literal and symbolical interpretations which have lived in virtue of that vital essence they have debased and endangered, this virtuous and victorious something attracting errors to its service and discarding them, is what Father Tyrrell calls the *Religious Idea.*

Let us try and grasp as much of it as we can, that much of it which is conceptual. The non-conceptual part, on which Father Tyrrell never fails to insist, we may, or may not, succeed in approaching further on in our inquiry.

The Religious Idea, as it is commonly used in modern times, is, in point of fact, a group of ideas, by no means logically inseparable from one another;—a group, moreover, which I find it convenient to separate into two subgroups, the philosophical and the sacramental. I call the first group philosophical, because its component ideas refer to a view of Man's place in the Universe and Man's destinies, a *Weltanschauung* in the sense of those given us independent of religion by various philosophers. This religious philosopher or religious *Weltanschauung* can be described as follows: The life of Man upon this earth is due to a

Divinity, who is infinite, eternal (hence unconditioned and all-powerful), also absolutely just and merciful, indeed, the fountain of all that is known by men as goodness. For some inexplicable reason this absolutely Good, Infinite, and Eternal is crossed in its own designs (or crosses its own designs) by the presence of what Man knows as Suffering and Sin. But this contradiction is set right by the divine arrangement of an after-life in which suffering is compensated, and sin either obliterated, if we have arrived at a humanitarian stage in the interpretation of symbols, or if we are in a previous stage—let us say the Dante or Pascal stage—thoroughly well, indeed eternally, punished. The centre of this half of the " Religious Idea " is therefore the Sub-Idea that *there is an after-life in which everything will be set right :* Man has but a few miserable years wherein to be just, but, as Pascal remarked, " Dieu a l'éternité." . . .

The other half of the " Religious Idea " is what I have ventured to call the *sacramental,* which others might perhaps have called the mystical. Its centre is the notion of direct and objective communication during *this* life between the Divinity and Man : by prayer, divine possession, and revelation, more particularly by certain material practices of which the principal is a sacrificial act, partaken in by lay believers as well as by the consecrated priest.

Such are those two parts of the religious idea which

can be reduced to human concepts, as distinguished from another part, or, rather, another side, of which more anon.

Rational examination can be applied to this conceptual nucleus (or double nucleus) of the Religious "Idea" as similar examination is applied by Father Tyrrell to the dogmas and symbols in which this "Idea" has travelled across the centuries, and to the gospel narratives, the scripture texts, in which the "Idea" makes its first appearance in a form singularly suitable (as Father Tyrrell points out) to the mentality of those times and places, but requiring a great deal of interpretation and even omission, before it is suitable to ours. This application of secular criticism has been made, time after time, and the result has been roughly as follows: There is in all this *Weltanschauung* nothing requiring the intervention of the Divinity; no elememt with which we are not familiar among the products of purely human thought, that is to say, in religions and philosophies which the Church of Rome does not recognize as Divine revelations, but, on the other hand, cannot be discarded as adulterated imitations of what the Church offers as revelation, since, as a whole or as parts, they preceded that revelation instead of following it. Moreover, leaving the historical question aside, there is nothing in this philosophical half of the religious "Idea" which could not be arrived at by human

thought without the assistance of divine revelation; indeed, the incoherences like the notion of an Infinite and Eternal Cause thwarted in its just and merciful designs by the presence of Evil, nay, of an Infinite which should have any designs or qualities at all—are themselves just the incoherences we have learned to expect from the workings of the human mind, particularly before it has learned to separate its various standpoints; in other words, great as is the share of nonsense which Man has attributed to various divinities, enough nonsense has been talked by Man himself for us to attribute the whole to his unaided efforts. While, on the other hand, important as may be the psychological truths and moral judgments embodied in this divine theory of man's position and destiny, there are surely enough other truths undoubtedly arrived at by man alone for us to credit him with these supposed divine ones as well. Now, if we strip away these parts, foolish and sensible, as merely the human additions, particularly the incoherences, due to man's effort to compass divine meaning with a human instrument, then what remains of the diviniely revealed meaning?

But besides the philosophical half, the *Weltanschauung*, of that germinal nucleus which is the "Religious Idea," there is the other and more important part, namely, the element of sacramentalism which informs Christianity and especially Catholicism.

IX

Father Tyrrell is anxiously careful to separate the sacramentalism essential to Catholic Christianity from those more primæval beliefs to which he denies all transcendental value, dismissing them as utilitarian pseudo-science, whose traces can exist only in the accretion, in the magical lore which has enabled the genuine and immortal Religious "Idea" to penetrate, very often incognito, into imperfectly spiritual times and classes.

In attempting this separation Father Tyrrell is not merely turning away from scientific evidence but, what is far more remarkable in so candid a thinker, he is actually flying in its face, since if there is anything common to those earlier cults and to Christianity, it is precisely the notions concerning man's mystical relations with superhuman creatures which can be summarised as prayer, possession, revelation, and the sacraments; and it is just these notions, with which comparative mythology has made us so familiar under the heading of magic, which Father Tyrrell accepts as one half of the eternal germinal nucleus of the Religious "Idea."

Now it happens that this mystical and sacramental element's existence in pre-Christian, nay, primæval beliefs, has an importance beyond its suggestion that

the Religious "Idea" may have existed independent of revelation and previous to it. For if the mystical and sacramental element is to be found in primitive and merely *pseudo-scientific* religions, then we have a right to regard it as primitive pseudo-scientific when it reappears as part of Father Tyrrell's Religious "Idea"—and, what is more, to apply to it in this privileged return upon the scene, the same rational criticism which Father Tyrrell himself would apply ruthlessly to its first manifestation in those despised non-spiritual cults of primitive man.

Such criticism of Christian mystical and sacramental habits has been carried out pretty thoroughly by anthropologists and comparative mythologists; it is enough to mention Professor Frazer, and I shall presently examine, as one of my types of latter-day Obscurantism, the apology which another learned mythologist, Mr Ernest Crawley, extracts for Anglican Christianity out of an assimilation of its mysteries to the religious notions of savage races.

But even admitting that further scientific inquiry should prove the sacraments of the church to be no such survival of primæval magic, and the Christian (or Mosaic) revelation to be no equivalent to the revelations which other religions sought in oracles and auspices and dreams; even supposing our comparative mythologists to prove mistaken, and Father Tyrrell to be justified in refusing to derive his Re-

ligious "Idea" from any earlier beliefs, there remains the quite separate objection that if we can explain Sacramentalism and Mysticism by merely human mental operations in the case of primitive superstition, then the origin of similar Sacramentalism and Mysticism existing in Father Tyrrell's Religious "Idea" need no longer be referred to transcendental explanation. If psychology (psychology racial as well as individual) can account for certain "transcendental" beliefs in savages, why should not psychology account for the same "transcendental" items in Father Tyrrell? And this is exactly what ethnological psychology, that is to say, the study of the human mind in its more primitive phases, is beginning to do.

The application of psychological analysis to the data of mythology and ethnology is beginning to shed light upon the slow development of what seem nowadays man's inevitable and almost innate mental attitudes and processes. One of the most difficult steps in this human evolution has been the gradual emergence from primæval confusion of [what seems to us] the simple distinction between the inner and the outer world. One of mankind's labours of Hercules has been the endless re-grouping of associated ideas in such a way as to separate the constantly recurring impressions from *without* and the emotional and practical reactions which these impressions set up *within*; in other words, to think of the *not-oneself*

as connected with but opposite to the *oneself*. Repeated checking of man's desires and actions has gradually set free and clear in man's consciousness our now familiar conception, the *thing*, the *object*, as distinguished from the feelings and acts which that thing's qualities elicit in man. And in this fashion there has gradually emerged, there is still emerging, from the chaos of associations, that orderly world of thought made more orderly, as Peircian Pragmatism teaches, by our past, by our present, and our foreseen, practice. What man expects has become more and more dependent upon experience, and less and less upon desire. Experience itself has become less and less of the single case connected with man's own action, and more and more of repeated cases involving different human attitudes, and at last no human attitude at all save that of contemplative thought: *the cases thought by us as a Law.* Thus has come about the separation of *It is* from *I feel and do*; the gradual recognition that our thoughts, feelings, desires can deal with things only in so much as things exist independently of them. Expectation—I must repeat it, for it bears upon my whole subject—comes to be less and less *desire*, and more and more *experience*; and *belief* becomes logical and objective, separating itself more and more from the self-centred kinds of emotional thought called *hope and fear.*

At the same time (the time extending from man's

remotest past to man's yet distant future), the imperative of reason is substituting itself for the imperative of authority : belief depends more and more upon the fitting in of facts by comparison, analysis, and causality, rather than upon reiterated assertion of statements taken in the lump and by themselves. In other words, the more *belief*—which is active and synthetic—develops, the more also does *faith* dwindle ; faith which is submission of one man's thought to another's ; in great part submission of the thought of the living to the thought, the misinterpreted, symbolically explained, thought of the dead ; for our acceptance of a fact on scientific authority is not an act of faith, but an abutting of experience and argument. And as, in this manner, belief is more and more differentiated from Hope and Fear, a further change takes place : Faith merges more and more into the confidence which disarms or propitiates, the relation of Will and Power on the one side, and of Want and Weakness on the other.

Now with this evolution of man's thinking faculty, and his distinction between himself and not-himself, there has grown up a distinction between natural and supernatural.

Natural is that which can be analysed, foretold, thought ; Supernatural is that which cannot. And as the Natural grows, invades and appropriates in all directions, the Supernatural shrinks or evaporates, as

we see it, for instance, in Spencer's "Unknowable." Primæval darkness breaks and melts away from the large spaces of human existence, curdling and shrinking into an ever smaller corner: for is not every theology or theosophy such a segregation of primitive thought still saturated with personal and racial emotion?

Indeed, I can conceive that the day may come when some of our paradoxical apologists will tell us that religions have been indispensable to the progress of thought by gathering into an ever-diminishing and less disturbing heap the vestiges of the great primæval confusion. Did not Heaven become a place of exile for those Gods who, for so many æons, had wasted poor mankind's strength by warring across his path, hiding in every object which he grasped or saw, thwarting his attempts at every turn, large or small, of his miserable, harassed existence:

> "*O genus infelix humanum, talia divis*
> *Cum tribuit facta atque iras adiunxit acerbas.*"

For of that primæval confusion there remained, there still remains, and will long remain, an insulated and impregnable corner in man's own soul: the obscure place of man's dark instinctive hopes and fears, of his unsatisfied longings and incurable griefs. There, as in the mind of our earliest ancestors, the Self and Not-Self are still merged; expectation is not experience but wish; and belief is what is given the name of Faith.

X

"*Les tendances intellectuelles, aujourd'hui innées, que la vie a dû créer au cours de son évolution, sont faites pour tout autre chose que pour nous fournir une explication de la vie.*"

Bergson, "Évolution Créatrice," p. 22

"*Son objet (de la science positive) n'est pas, en effet, de nous révéler le fond des choses, mais de nous fournir le meilleur moyen d'agir sur elles . . . Tout autre, à notre avis, est celui de la philosophie.*" Ibid., p. 101.

And here I would open a parenthesis to point out that the obscurantism of our day frequently tries to identify this residual, and so far irreclaimable, mass of mystic thought with the subconscious or automatic activities constituting life's very core; while our impatient, indiscriminating disdain for the insufficiency of former rationalistic explanation of the world delivers us into the hands of these apologists for dying creeds. Moreover, the vitalistic conceptions of much recent biology lend themselves, occasionally perhaps even in the minds of their authors, to a vague animism. On the other hand, our gradual recognition of the part played in history by myths and misapprehensions, our recognition also how little has been achieved by lucid programme and how much by mere blind struggle of passions and habits, has further contributed, in a negative sense at least, to an attempted restoration of the old principles of faith and mystery; while the increasing importance given by mental science

to the notion of unconscious reflexes and of psychic processes outside of the focus of attention, has also been called upon for the humiliation of the former despot Reason and the reinstatement of whatever mental Chaos preceded it. The imperfect discipline of many minds brought unprepared in contact with philosophic thought has resulted in an intellectual tendency parallel to the neo-monarchic and neo-aristocratic arraignments of the shams and drawbacks of democracy. We may thus daily witness an attempted identification of the residual mysteries left by scientific thought with the mysteries enshrined by various religions. Thus: If the theological explanation of Evil is full of contradiction, is the philosophical crux of *objective and subjective* not equally bewildering? If the sacraments are unfathomable by human reason, is memory, is heredity, is life itself any easier to understand? Such are the criticisms we hear on all sides. In short, there is at present a tendency, not merely to identify (like Spencer) the *Unknown* with the *Unknowable*, and the *Unknowable* with *what is known as God*, but also to treat lucid consciousness as a delusion separated from all life and hopelessly unable to tackle life's problems. The only true Knowledge, so we are constantly having it hinted (for hinting goes better with such views than plain statement) is the obscure knowledge called *Instinct* or *Intuition*, the "integral" mass of consciousness; the knowledge

which, so to say, knows what *we want* to do and does not trouble itself with what the not-ourself may happen to *be*.

Now there is indeed a sense in which this latter-day adumbration (for obscurantism prefers showing the shadow rather than the substance) may be considered correct ; but it is not the sense in which it is intended : Life, individual and racial, is certainly based in darkness, and the most constant and indispensable of life's processes, those shared not only with animals but with plants, indeed those which we share in as much as mechanical aggregates and chemical compounds with what we call inanimate nature, are unaccompanied, not only by lucid thought, but often by consciousness of any kind. Now that lucidity should not accompany the wrigglings of protozoa, or the churnings and cookings of man's viscera, nor even the strainings and shrinkings of man's sense-organs ; that lucidity should be imperfect in the thought of infants and savages, all this does not prove that lucidity is opposed to the true knowledge of ourselves and the Universe. For little as we raw philosophers may know of either, we yet know more than plants and microbes, more than our viscera and limbs, more than our new-born children and our own earliest forefathers. And incommensurable with reality as doubtless are our thoughts, they do know more of it than instincts and reflexes ; know, at least, that there is something to know about.

Indeed it is only since emerging so far from this " direct knowledge " possessed by reflexes and instincts, that we know, for one thing, that reflexes and instincts, the great Sub-Conscious itself, exist at all : for what are all these things save inferences, they and their superior powers, made by that lucid thought which we are told to despise. And if knowledge is to be measured by its knowing (if I may use such a paradox) that there are objects of knowledge besides our own cravings and movements, then, little of it as there yet may be, there was remarkably less in the beginning. For in the Beginning was, not the Word or the Thought, but the Want and the Act ; and all around lay the unexplored chaos where everything could be something else, where space could be simultaneously occupied by different bodies and time inverted, where difference could be the same as identity, where contradictions did not exclude each other ; and the only certainty was what man hoped and feared, suffered and did, particularly what a great many people said and did and hoped and feared together.

It is this primæval chaos, with its fitful gleams of idea and its ceaseless heaving of hopes and fears, which still lives on in the hidden corners of Modernism.

XI

Religious habits have so accustomed even unbelievers to such survivals of primæval mental chaos, that it takes a kind of isolating diagram to make us aware of their existence. Such an example is unintentionally offered by Father Tyrrell's theories. Here is a historian, who is also a metaphysician, giving to the unknowable, *i.e.* the region where our intellectual categories fail us, a historical *happening* in the person of Jesus, since the life of Jesus marks the point of intersection where the "transcendental" cuts into, grafts itself upon, the rationally conceivable. This is far grosser than the notion of the Transcendental Unknowable incarnating in an individual man. For we can make something of such an incarnation by regarding the Transcendental Unknowable as *thought* by that incarnating man, by turning the Transcendent into an accusative of the verb *to think*—of which that incarnating man is the nominative. But a historical revelation has to be the accusative of a verb to *reveal*, whose nominative is the Transcendent Unknowable. Now the Unknowable, the Transcendent, being only a residual and empty category, we get the following logical pattern: a residual negative concept which is the nominative of a transitive verb necessarily limited to a historical point, namely,

the historical moment when the Unknowable *made* the revelation. In other words the Unknowable, which has hitherto governed the verb *to be* (since all they can be postulated of an Unknowable is limited to its bare being) suddenly leaps out and becomes the nominative of the verb *to reveal*; and what is worse, of the verb *to reveal* in its past, its historical, tense. This is how the case shapes itself if thought out in logical, nay, in merely grammatical terms. But Father Tyrrell thinks these things in a rapid alternation, a shimmer, of objective and subjective: historic revelation, voices, spoken words, Christ's birth, teaching, and death; turn about with permanent possibilities of feeling, Christ's, Tyrrell's own, other men's, an abstract category. And, further to confuse us, he thinks of the *Whole* in metaphysical terms, and then *feels* the *Whole* as part of his own feelings. And the welter of these contradictory elements is what he means by the Religious "Idea."

XII

"*Charged with untold and indelible Wisdom.*"

We learn from Father Tyrrell, what is indeed implicit in all religious writers, that the "Religious Idea," as he calls it, consists very largely in an impulse towards union with a Whole whereof man is and knows

but a tiny part. Now there are two possible manners of realizing, or partially realizing, this which, for mere lack of proper vocabulary, I must designate as the *program* implied in that Religious "Idea." There is a manner of realizing a whole by realizing the co-ordination of many into one: a deed of analysis followed by one of synthesis, or perhaps properly speaking an interplay of analysis and synthesis, like that of the musician in "hearing out" the notes of chords and the parts of a counterpoint, taking stock of their separate nature, of their mutual relations, and uniting them in the unity of a musical idea—(not at all an "idea" in Father Tyrrell's sense!). The musician in question is in this fashion united, or rather unites himself, with the whole which is the composer's intention. Similar to this is that whole of the Universe to which the human mind would be united, were any human mind capable of knowing analytically and grasping synthetically all the relations of which that whole universe would consist.

This manner of *union with a whole* is, as you see, dependent upon a separating, a holding asunder and co-ordinating of parts. This *way of being united with a whole* is, it is well to notice, unfrequent in primæval man, because the stress of practical life, the adaptation to immediate wants and dangers do not allow such contemplative synthetic analysis, such building up of a whole from which, like the musically developed

listener to a symphony, man holds himself distinct: for union, in this sense of union with a whole, implies previous separateness. Primitive man, and every individual of us in so far as he resembles Primitive man (during infancy, for instance), has not leisure or strength for such contemplative construction: in him associations are still largely individual; in his mind, experience is not a contemplative continuity, but so many bundles, often individual (or applying to his tribe or country) of items grouped casually under the hegemony of his own feeling and action.

We have dealt so far with the *Whole* which is the result of analysis and synthesis; the whole which implies co-ordination; the whole which we know, and know to be the particular whole which it is. The other *Whole*, or rather the set of phenomena to which that name is given, is of different and even opposite nature; and the way in which man can be said to unite with it is different and opposite also. This second Whole is a whole not because we co-ordinate its parts, but because we do not perceive or conceive them. It is, so to speak, homogeneous chaos, differentiated only from ourself, but undifferentiated in itself. This kind of "Whole" is due to the abolition or the not yet existence of qualities and relations; it is the whole whereof we know only that it is *there* and that we know nothing of it. It is the *not-ourself* as yet unexplored and unmeasured by the ourself.

It is the *whole*, not as it is apprehended by the musician who hears a symphony, but as it is *felt* by the unmusical hearer to whom that symphony is a mere sea of sounds of which he can tell us nothing save how *he felt* in the midst of it. And this is the *whole* of which we are told the revelations of mystics. I have referred to the unmusical hearer of the symphony (the one for whom the symphony as symphony has no existence) being able to tell us nothing except what *he felt*. Knowledge, not of what made him feel, but of how he felt, is the characteristic of this other kind of *union with the whole*: what dominates in it, even as appetite and action predominate in the primitive man's experience, in the infant's and probably the animal's, are the man's emotional and motor conditions. Above all, he knows *them*; and if *they* are satisfactory, he, like the lover in Whitman's "Terrible Doubt of Appearances," feels satisfied about the rest. For we must remember that where emotion is strong and of a piece, it leaves no room for anything else; no questions remain unsolved, no conflicts remain unsettled, simply because questions and conflicts have vanished; and when the lover, or the mystic, or the man immersed in mere æsthetic delight, remembers that there ever have been such questions and conflicts, these become, compared with the overwhelming satisfactory emotion, mere unrealities, phantoms without the power of troubling.

Thus has the mystic come in contact with *the whole*, the *whole* in the sense of what alone is dominating his spirit, of what is known to be different from *himself* but not differentiated *in itself*, even as the unmusical man is immersed in the chaotic sea of sound. And if his attendant emotion has been satisfactory, this condition of knowing nothing is afterwards described as comprising the satisfying knowledge of everything, and this emotional realization of homogeneous chaos, is described as mystic union *with the whole.*

That this realization—if we may call it so—of an emotionally irradiated mental void should be satisfactory is due not only to the specific satisfactoriness of unification of consciousness, but, what is more important, to the fact that unsatisfactoriness would mean dismissal: for, except in mental disease, a painful unity of consciousness will produce attempts at riddance, at discrimination, and the contemplated chaotic whole will be broken up into fragments of coherent thought or coherent action. Be the explanation as it may, there exist such emptyings out of the consciouness for the benefit of one absorbing, satisfying emotion which, dismissing all questions, seems thereby to answer them:

"Of the terrible doubt of appearances,
Of the uncertainty that, after all, we may be deluded . . .

To me these and the like of these are curiously answered
by my lovers, my dear friends,
When he whom I love travels with me or sits a long
while holding me by the hand,
When the subtle air, the impalpable, the sense that words
and reason hold not,
Surround us and pervade us,
Then I am charged with untold and untellable wisdom,
I am silent ; I require nothing further ;
I cannot answer the question of appearances or that of
identity beyond the grave ;
But I walk or sit indifferent, I am satisfied,
He ahold of my hand has completely satisfied me."

. . . . . .

Like Whitman's Lover, the Mystic feels himself "charged with untold and untellable wisdom." Of that whole with which he feels himself united he knows only that it is satisfying. He is pervaded by the impalpable, the sense that words and reason hold not; and, like Whitman's lover, the Lover of God is freed from "the terrible doubt of appearances." [1]

[1] *Cf.* W. James's "Varieties of Religious Belief," and my criticism on his account of mystic *Truth*, p. 112 *et seq.*, of this book.

XIII

"The Terrible Doubt of Appearances."

Equally explicable by the primitive confusion between Man's thought and Man's emotions is the attitude of Religion towards two other of its "Mysteries": Death and Suffering.

In the light of biological knowledge, Death is one of the most orderly of all phenomena, indeed, irreplaceable in the mechanism of the higher kinds of life. For Death is co-related to assimilation and excretion, to reproduction, multiplication, competition; in fact, to all bodily and social existence; a detail so indispensable as to warrant Weissmann's suggestion that the supreme adaptation which raised certain organisms above others and secured to their species not survival merely but development, was, so to speak, the happy accident, or the happier invention, of death.

This is how death must appear to the modern intellect; how, indeed, it would have presented itself to earlier philosophic thought, but for the traditional tyranny of notions arisen from man's emotional wants. For to all our habits and instincts, our love of others and of ourselves, to the dominant mass of our feelings, death is a wrench, a tearing up, a monstrous violation. This thing of constant experience (and logical in-

evitableness) is *felt* to be unnatural. And becoming unnatural, it becomes mysterious, and thence incredible. Fear and horror end in disbelief; and clinging to his own life and the life of his dear ones, Man substitutes for death some sort of immortality:

"*Behold I show you a mystery. . . . When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*"

But to the unemotional part of man, to his experience and reason, it is the absence of death which would have a sting, that is to say, would be difficult, impossible to face.

As it is with Death, so it is with Suffering and Sin. These are facts of experience which, logically considered, have nothing strange about them; indeed, the strange thing would be if they had not existed. Suffering and Sin (which is the social expression for what produces or is supposed to produce suffering) are, rationally considered, the result of individual and collective sensitiveness, sensitiveness necessarily always (logically again) in advance of the adaptation which it strives to compass. While, as regards the presence of Evil in the universe, that problem, as we shall see in dealing with the Manichæan crux of all religion, would not exist save for man's projection of

his own preferences beyond the limits of his own nature, and his gratuitous identification of the Universe's ways with his own: there is every reason, and the whole of experience, to tell us that the telluric processes of a particular portion of land and sea cannot be subservient to the safety of the inhabitants of Messina, although the safety of the inhabitants of Messina is so barbarously jeopardized by these pre-existing processes. So the question of Evil appears to mere reason. But emotionally considered, the presence of Evil in the Universe, as exemplified by just such an earthquake (and also, I may add, by the sufferings of a vivisected dog!) is a flagrant violation of man's instincts, instincts which reason shows us to be inevitable and indispensable to man. Suffering exists only for sentient, evil only for sentient and thinking beings; but for such beings they become the most important of all facts. Hence man is puzzled by the existence of them: he cannot realize that what hurts him is not intended to hurt him, still less that there need be no intention in the matter. To his emotion suffering means injustice; and therefore he carves out of the unknown *Beyond*, out of that great continent of the *Unthought* lying beyond his exploration (as Dante carved out of the earth's bowels and the star's radiance), a place or time where evil is punished and suffering compensated, a world, transcendental indeed, but not recognized as con-

substantiate with his own mind and feeling, where death will not be, nor (as Jesus and other theologians logically added) marrying and being given in marriage either.

These are simple enough phenomena easily explicable (if only all other problems were as simple !) by what we know, scientifically and also by everyday observation, of the mentality of man. But these cravings and puzzles, these contradictions and contradictory solutions, this substitution of the " I want "—for the " It is "—are still given us by men like Father Tyrrell as mysteries, transcendental, divine, and whose explanation is so impossible to compass that we must accept it and them as altogether superior to reason, and approachable only by faith.

XIV

Religion, Father Tyrrell and all other religious apologists tell us, not only satisfies our craving for Union with the Whole, but gives us the certainty that this Whole is, in some way transcending our understanding, *good*, indeed, all-good and the Ocean, as it were, from which all human goodness proceeds and to which, in the form of religious obedience, it returns ; moreover that, in some transcendental way, suffering and sin will be neutralized or compensated ; above all,

that there is, for the individual soul, a transcendental but literal and objective life beyond this mortal one. "Death," as St Paul wrote, "is swallowed up in victory."

Now let us ask ourselves whether these beliefs are such that they must be accepted as transcendental truths divinely revealed; or whether they are the notions which could and must have arisen in the unaided human mind; notions moreover which, like that of the *Mystic Union with the Whole*, the human mind is sooner or later bound to explain by what it knows of its own constitution, and to discard as some of its own inevitable, but also inevitably relinquished, misapprehensions.

I have already referred to what recent study of primitive psychology is able to tell us about one of the main distinctions between the mentality of primitive peoples and our own: namely, the comparative absence in the thought of savages not only of abstraction and general ideas, but, what is more distinctive and important, of that principle of contradiction which polices our thought and reduces it to law-abiding order.[1]

[1] Lévy-Bruhl, "Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures" (1910), p. 77.—"*En d'autres termes, pour cette mentalité, l'opposition entre l'un et le plusieurs, le même et l'autre etc., n'impose pas la nécessité d'affirmer l'un des termes si l'on nie l'autre, ou réciproquement.*" M. Lévy-Bruhl's most interesting book is full of such instances of "pre-logical" thought, coinciding curiously with the indifference to temporal and spatial possibilities shown in the drawings of children. *Cf.* Levinstein's "Kinderzeichnungen."

Now, while the secular thought of the race has become more and more subject to experience and hence more capable of logical operations, so that the traditions of primæval confusion have been more and more replaced by a heritage (transmitted in language and the scarcely noticed education of the earliest years of infancy) of experiential axioms and logical operations, —while such has been the case in secular life, the religious life of mankind has become more and more a segregated survival, secured by the primitive methods of memorial repetition and ritual association, of habits of thought such as psychological ethnography is studying under the rubric of "pre-logical." Most characteristic of religious belief, wherever it lingers (and however much disguised as "philosophy"), is that lack, so characteristic in primitive man, of the *principle of contradiction.*

In all religious thought, as in the matter of "Union with the Whole," what dominates is the sense of emotional conditions—need, want, striving,—which do really exist alternately in the individual consciousness, and whose successive assertions are grouped together regardless of their incompatible (because successive) nature, and more regardless still of their conflict with everything else. Thus all Christian philosophical thought is crevassed through and through by certain antinomies: the postulate of Omnipotent Infinity on the one side, that of Absolute Goodness on the other; or, in

other words, the rational conception of a causal whole with the emotional demand for sympathy and righteousness. This contradiction has led, in the Christian "Idea" as expounded by Father Tyrrell, to a practical dualism (once boldly declared by the Manichæan sects) of a Good God and a Wicked Devil, among whose conflicts and occasional truces mankind develops its tragic destiny; and when it has become philosophically untenable in its religious definiteness Professor William James has crumbled it into less obvious fragments and sprinkled it about in his pluralistic system. That the *Whole* should be all good, yet contain (or *will*) evil; that God should be omnipotent yet tolerate a principle of evil and leave man free to sin and to follow its interference, is a grouping of ideas which can be accepted as "transcendentally" true only because logical thought has not analysed it and separated what it contains of observation and reason from the admixture of man's desires or strivings; because, moreover, religious habits have accustomed us to accept by "acts of faith" and transmit by verbal memory and ritual symbol, contradictions which, had they occurred in objective experience, would have long since been solved by the analysis of their components and arranging them under separate points of view. For all contradiction disappears once we recognize that morality, goodness, truth, mercy, are qualities evolved in Man because necessary to Man's social existence,

but having no meaning where no human relations exist, while they are absolutely out-of-plane with such conceptions as the Infinite, the Eternal, the Absolute, the Cause, the Whole, call it Nature or Divinity. The frightful antinomy vanishes in the clear recognition that human needs have their abutment not in what the Universe *is*, but in what mankind contrives to do or make of himself and its small scrap of that universe. But religious habit leaves the contradiction in its crudest form, the astounding symbol of a Divinity thwarted by a Demon of his own creating, rebelled against by his other creature Man, and having lost patience (as Father Tyrrell tells us) at the excesses of the principle of evil, "making *man's necessity into God's opportunity*," and letting himself be partially placated by the monstrous sacrifice of a portion of himself in expiation of man's disobedience. This inconsistency religion keeps and enshrines in every metaphor, in every verbalism susceptible of rousing human emotion; and, having silenced the sense of logical contradiction in the overpowering union or harmony of feeling, religion insists that there *is* no contradiction; till the believer, again like Whitman's lover, forgets the *terrible doubt of appearances*, and "whether there is or is not identity beyond the grave."

XV

Together with a "conceptual" side which I have tried to analyse in certain of its philosophical items, such as "union with the whole" and the problem of Suffering and Death, there is in the "Religious Idea" what Father Tyrrell calls a mystical, and I should venture to call, a sacramental side. Let us attempt, from however far off, to get a glimpse of it.

"*The Sorcerers of Loango allow the public, for a trifling consideration, to put additional articles of its own into their authorized collection of magical paraphernalia, and leave them in contact for weeks and even months.*"

This passage in M. Lévy-Bruhl's remarkable volume on the "Mental Functions of Primitive Mankind" reminded me that I had myself once witnessed a method of increasing the already existing stock of wonder-working valuables by no means unlike that of these Loango wizards. It was in the crypt of the former abbey of Jouarre, near the Marne. You tied a tape tight round the arm of a certain miraculous statue and took it away with you when it was judged to have absorbed a sufficient amount of thaumaturgic power by this contact. From such deliberately obtained (I scarcely know whether to call them) fetishes or relics, my mind passed analogically to the fact of

having once been asked to bring back from Rome an ivy-leaf off the grave of Keats. What was the difference between this leaf and all similar mementoes—locks of hair, autographs and so forth—on the one hand, and, on the other hand, both the tapes I had seen round that miraculous image at Jouarre and those small portables which, as M. Lévy-Bruhl tells us, the Loango sorcerers turn an honest penny by placing in contact with their own authenticated magic possessions? The difference between the two cases will perhaps make us understand some of the peculiarities of the mystical-sacramental frame of mind. Take the ivy leaf off Keats's grave. My friend in receiving and I in picking it, undoubtedly have a little emotion, in which the thought of Keats is more vivid than when we merely mention his name, and even perhaps when we read his poems or his life. Indeed, it is for the sake of this emotion, this acutely felt presence of what we call "Keats," that the leaf is picked and preserved. But we are thoroughly aware that the leaf as such has nothing to do either with Keats's genius or with Keats's sad history, even should it be materially sprung from Keats's mortal remains. We know that our emotion arises from our own thoughts about Keats's genius, his untimely death and the ivy having grown out of his grave. We know that except for the presence of such thoughts the ivy leaf, nay the whole ivy bush, would have no such emotional power: similarly a lock of

Keats's hair or a scrap of his writing would have no effect on a person who did not know that it was Keats's hair or Keats's writing; nor upon a person who, knowing these things, was not emotionally sensitive to the idea of the poet. The ivy does not produce the Keats-emotion as a nettle stings, or a malaria-mosquito gives fever. What works in all this case is not anything intrinsic in the ivy, but certain ideas which we connect with it.

Now the case is quite otherwise with the tapes which have been tied on the arm of the wonder-working statue: they are expected to cure rheumatics or avert accidents quite independent of all mental associations of the wearer; they may be hung as scapulars round the neck of unconscious babes or atheistic lovers; and similarly the various *objets de piété* which have rubbed magical powers off the Loango sorcerer's authentic paraphernalia are expected to heal or hurt quite independent of any associations in the mind of the sick friend or the *Sister Helen'd* enemy.

The difference between us sentimental triflers extracting poetical pathos out of the ivy off Keats's grave and those *bona fide* votaries of the Jouarre image, those even more *bona fide* customers of the Loango wizards, is that we distinguish between associations existing only in our mind and objects and qualities existing outside it; between our thoughts and what we think about; between our feelings and what sets

our feelings going; while these genuine believers do not thus distinguish, or even if they do distinguish by fits and starts, relapse perpetually into that confused identification, whenever they are less interested in the nature of things and more absorbed (and they are always thus absorbed!) in themselves and their own hopes and fears, and loves and cravings.

Now the sacraments of the Church are approached in a state of mind which partakes more of that of the Loango and Jouarre votaries than of the sentimentalists stealing a leaf for the love of Keats. When a Catholic thinks of the Eucharist he ceases to hold asunder the notions *Bread* and *Flesh*, *Wine* and *Blood*, each with its ascendants and descendants and cognates leading thought into opposite directions. He ceases likewise to hold asunder the idea *God* from the idea *Man*, the idea *then* from the idea *now*. He allows nine-tenths of these various words' meaning to drop away, all their incompatible denotations to vanish; and in so doing he loses also the clear meaning of the verb *to be* with its correlated *not to be*. Or perhaps (and this seems psychologically probable) the *is* which has faded away as a connection between coincident qualities gets replaced in his vague consciousness by a different IS, the IS of *I am*, the mutually exclusive portions of the two ideas being obliterated by the reality of his own emotion; since Emotion and Action check the thought of whatever does not immediately concern

them; moreover, in the presence of emotion and action any contradictions outside their sphere lose their importance. Alluding to the common primitive belief that certain individuals become animals as soon as they put on, in ritual masquerades, the skin of a wolf, a tiger or a bear, M. Lévy-Bruhl tells us that *these savages do not trouble their heads whether the man stops being a man in order to become a tiger, nor whether he afterwards stops being a tiger in order to become a man*"; and adds further on: "*The aim and effect of such ceremonies and dances is to awaken and keep up . . . the sense of essential oneness* (la communion par essence) *in which are merged the present individual, the ancestor whom he is sprung from, and the animal or vegetable species which is his totem. For our mentality these are necessarily three distinct realities, however closely united by kinship. But for the pre-logical mentality of primitive man, the three are one, without ceasing to be three.*"

But of all similar explanations of the sacramental element Father Tyrrell takes no account. He is even permanently at war with Liberal Protestantism for its turning the Christian symbols into facts of the human soul. According to him God is not consubstantial with man's spirit; salvation is not a state of man's inner life; the sacramental emotions are not, like those of art, emotions which man satisfies for himself; the "Transcendent," he lets us know not once but continually, must not be understood as the *subjective.*

In fact Father Tyrrell believes in a dimension, so to speak, which is neither material nor mental, which participates in both while being different from either. And in this " transcendental " dimension all contradictions and antinomies melt into the mystic unity.

XVI

The clue of rationalistic criticism, which has led Modernists so dangerously and heroically beyond the Church's established boundary lines, would lead them further still into the continuous and homogeneous field of proven facts and plausible hypothesis existing in the mind of the scientific laity.

From the discovery that scriptural texts, instead of being dictated by the deity, are a patchwork, even like any heathen cycle of sagas, made of the narratives of uncritical eye-witnesses, Modernism has gone on to the discovery that those earliest Christian witnesses must have shared the mental habits of their own contemporaries, nay, that the founder of Christianity, in order to be its founder, must have had beliefs which, so far from being all-important to more advanced mankind, are absolutely incompatible with its inevitable ideas. Furthermore, Modernism, as represented by Father Tyrrell, has gone on to recognize that the continuity in the *religious idea* can be ob-

tained only by rejecting both this literal teaching of Christ and his Apostles, and the successive additions and emendations made thereto by the Church, as so much historically explicable misinterpretation of a nuclear group of notions and practices equally suitable to all times, but which each time, taken separately, was unable to assimilate without the vehicle of its own added errors.

This explanation, obtained by mere human examination, and moreover based upon the psychological and historical knowledge of human nature and of human ideas and institutions, leads logically to a further rational belief: namely, that the nuclear groups of notions and feelings and practices for which, under the name of "Religious *Idea*" Father Tyrrell claims what we may call generative immortality, is (in so far as it really exists) itself to be explained by what we know, or shall get to know, of man's more or less unchanging or changing needs and habits. In short, after having proved that man and not God was the Author of the Scriptures and the inspirer of Church tradition, we should find that man was the inventor of revelation and of sacraments, and that the God existing in the Religious "Idea" was, like the religious "Idea" itself, not the Creator, but the creation of Man. But Father Tyrrell, as we have seen, has never followed rational criticism to this, its ultimate consequence, but, on one path after another across

this continuity of rational conception, has suddenly stopped short before a chasm which interrupted his passage: a chasm of inherited mystical belief, inexplicable only to those who shared it. For that mystical belief which interrupts Father Tyrrell's thought at the critical point is itself a humanly explicable phenomenon of human nature.

The clue which has led Father Tyrrell so far, and which might have led him and his fellow-Modernists so very much further, into a region inaccessible to encyclicals and excommunications, that clue may be given a homely name: *what man is likely to have done.* Or, more explicitly: given our knowledge, historical, philological, anthropological, psychological, and so forth, of man's ways of proceeding, how are we to explain the various phenomena grouped together as the religious creed of the Roman Catholic Church?

And now, having arrived at the point where Father Tyrrell refuses to ask more questions, we must apply our further examinations, not in his company, but to his person.

We must ask ourselves how, given our knowledge of man and mankind, are we to explain, not the religious phenomena which Father Tyrrell has examined in the teeth of the Roman Catholic Church and its prohibitions; but the phenomenon of Father Tyrrell's obstinate though partial and discriminating fidelity to that selfsame Church of Rome? And the formula

of inquiry changes from "What is mankind likely to have done and thought," to "What is this Modernist priest likely to have *wished*?"

Thus, after a long circuit, we are back again at the "*Will-to-believe.*"

XVII

"*The principle of Christian action,*" writes Father Tyrrell, "*makes for the fullest expansion of man's transcendental and spiritual nature in every direction. It recognizes the Divine, not only in conduct and in relation to man's moral progress, but also in thought and feeling; it lives for the æsthetic and intellectual as well as for the ethical "ought"—and ideal. It is the foe of falsehood and of ugliness as well as of wickedness: it sees in all of them the principle of evil, death, and decay.*"

Again, on the next page:

"*The truth, then, that Christianity symbolizes under the temporal nearness of the End, is a fundamental principle of the best spiritual life, the principle of an attachment to the world's highest interest, at once strengthened and subdued by an attachment to an eternal and transcendent life, symbolized by the Kingdom of Heaven. . . .*"

It would be easy to cull from Father Tyrrell's book a little anthology of passages like the above, such as might have been written by Professor James himself in

his most moralizing and citizenly view of Pragmatism. But such quotations would do injustice to the particular kind of *Will-to-believe* really dominant in Father Tyrrell, and really responsible for his refusal to face the logical corollaries of his application of scientific thought to the history and tenets of Catholic Christianity. For Father Tyrrell (and this is his quarrel with that "Liberal Protestantism" which, according to him, falsifies the "Idea" of Christianity far worse than the most superstitious kinds of Papistry), for Father Tyrrell does not identify religion with morality; still less does he value it as a vehicle for morality. That religion should favour righteousness is but a secondary advantage and a secondary confirmation due to the accident (if I may use this expression) of the Divinity happening to have invented righteousness and insisting upon its pursuit. And in Father Tyrrell's thought (which naturally identifies itself with the "Religious Idea"), religion is not there for the sake of morality, but rather morality for the sake of religion.[1]

The "fruits for life" are of a less obvious sort than those cultivated by the "true-in-so-far-forth" of Professor James; and Father Tyrrell's Will-to-believe

[1] "*So far as religious ethic identifies our duties in life with the Will of God, it asserts a neglected principle of Christianity. But so far as it identifies the moral with the religious life and the Kingdom of Heaven with the ideal term of an endless social and moral process, it is a flat contradiction of the Gospel of Christ*" ("Christianity at the Cross Roads," p. 171). The nominative is religion.

is of a subtler, more venerable kind, a kind which was infinitely ancient long before utilitarianism was ever erected into a system; and the life he is aiming at is not the mere moral, but the spiritual one.

"*As things are,*" he writes on page 112, "*the only test of revelation is the test of life, not merely of moral, but of spiritual fruitfulness in the deepest sense.*" This, to borrow Professor James's happy expression, "sounds very like" the Pragmatism of the "Varieties of Religious Experience." But note the continuation of the passage, with its distinction between *moral* and *mystical* and *transcendental* needs. "*It* (*Revelation*) *must at once satisfy and intensify man's mystical and moral need. It must bring the transcendent nearer to his thought, feelings, and desires. It must deepen his consciousness of union with God.*"

Let us think over these two sentences, with their insistence upon *needs*, which *revelation* is at once to satisfy and to intensify; and with their unequivocal repetition that the value of revelation is in its bringing "the transcendent"—that is to say, *that which transcends reason*—nearer, not only to Man's *thoughts* (which, in the case of the unthinkable, can never be *very* near!) but nearer also, and here the nearness may become close indeed, nearer to man's "feelings and desires." Nay, those *feelings and desires* are to be satisfied; for Revelation, we are told, "must deepen consciousness of union with God."

And lest the reader should not be sure that Father Tyrrell is identifying the existence of what he wishes with the existence of his wish for it, the passage ends as follows :

" *This, as we have said, was the ' evidence ' to which Jesus appealed in proof of his ' possession ' by God's spirit. . . . Such, too, is the evidence of Christianity as a personal religion, its power over souls that are already Christian in sympathy and capacity ; the soul-compelling power of the Spirit of Christ. Any other ' sign,' be it miracle or argument, will appeal only to the faithless and perverse . . . it may change their theology, it cannot change their hearts.*"

Now, before examining the value of such " evidence " as can " thus change the heart," I would open a parenthesis about the other sort of *evidence*, the one which Jesus and Father Tyrrell both make thus light of. Old-fashioned though it sound, I should be extremely inclined to accept the evidence of a miracle, if only a miracle could be shown to bear upon the point at issue, and, moreover, proved to have really taken place. For, after all, a miracle is only an experiment by which the divinity (like some great Chemist or Physician) should condescend to demonstrate a certain proposition, such, for instance as the consubstantiality of the eucharistic wafer with Christ's body, which was demonstrated by the miracle of Bolsena in the year 1263. The evidence of a miracle when it *did* happen

need not be diminished by the difficulty of proving that it *had* happened, by the scarceness of such demonstrations on the part of Omnipotence, or even by the fact, pointed out by Father Tyrrell with regard to the Resurrection, that miracles usually turn out to be not what has actually happened, but what somebody could not help expecting would happen. Indeed, I would point out that Christian belief was originally, has hitherto been, and will doubtless (thanks to Pope Pius X.) long be founded upon miracles accepted as divine experiments which *show that certain unlikely statements were true.*

This is what unbelievers and orthodox both think about "evidence." Let us return to Father Tyrrell's views on the subject.

The sentences quoted above (and a score of similar ones which I could quote) not only reject both miraculous demonstration and logical argument as suitable only to "faithless" and "perverse" persons, but leave no doubt as to what in both Father Tyrrell's own views (and his views of Christ's views) should constitute proper "evidence" to the truth of the Christian Revelation.

In analysing the passage last quoted, the chief point to be noted is that the revelation of a very particular fact, namely, the "possession" of a man, Jesus, by God's Spirit, is proved to be truly a revelation and truly a revelation of a truth, *by its answering the need*

of those whom it can satisfy. The existence of a given fact [the fact of "possession" of a particular man in that particular "transcendent" way] is thus made dependent on the readiness of certain other people to accept it. The doubts of those not interested in the fact under discussion are dismissed on the score of lack of that bias in its favour; and only those are accepted as judges who have got that bias, those "souls already Christian in sympathy and capacity." This sounds paradoxical. But Father Tyrrell would remind us that in every branch of daily experience truth is seen to be acceptable only when it finds a certain mental preparation: can a truth of mathematics or physics be recognized by a man totally ignorant of the elements of science? Evidently not! Moreover, Father Tyrrell would argue, does not daily experience show that the recognition of truth depends on a desire for truth, and is not truth itself one of the objects of man's pursuit and craving?

Granted! But desire for truth in general, and recognition of a given truth in particular, are not the same thing as the *true existence of a fact.* It took a great many thousand years of intellectual preparation on the part of mankind at large, and an inordinate, invincible desire for truth on the part of one or two astronomers, for the recognition of the Earth's going round the Sun. But the Sun and the Earth did not require to wait for either that intellectual culture or

that abstract love of truth before assuming that particular relation of *going and gone round*; indeed, if the earth had not gone round the sun quite independent of anyone being prepared to recognize the truth of its doing so, it is conceivable that there might have been no persons capable or incapable of grasping that particular truth, no persons with or without a desire for truth of any kind, indeed, no life, human, animal, or vegetable, preparing or not preparing for the eventful recognition of that or any other truth—on this earth at all. But behind this identification (so unpragmatistically disregarded by the Sun and Earth) of Truth and recognition of Truth, there is in Father Tyrrell's soul (as there probably was in those "souls already Christian in sympathy and capacity") an identification of *Truth* with Righteousness, and also an identification of *Truth* with the Divinity.

The first has been the work largely of professional moralists, from Moses to Socrates, and from St Paul to Tolstoi, in the last of whom it has culminated in the declaration that the only true science is the knowledge of right and wrong, and that all the *onomies* and *ologies* are false sciences because they do not make man more moral. With this moralizing tendency has united the century-long habit of theological definition and condemnation, punishing error as sin against God, and identifying truth with the Church's

pronouncements and with whatever the Church accepted as the word of God.

Of all these kinds of *truths-in-so-far-forth*, there are traces in Father Tyrrell's thought and very visibly in that typical quotation. But there is a " true-in-so-far-forth " infinitely more subtle, more difficult to seize in its fluctuating yea-and-nay, in and out appearances and disappearances ; a true-in-so-far-forth which, in Father Tyrrell's case, is not only the legacy of centuries and centuries of religious habits, but also the theoretic gifts of an ultra-modern philosophy, of that Bergsonism (faithful or not to Bergson's own intentions) of which Father Tyrrell was an adept and intended to become an expounder.

Let us try to catch a sight of this Protean thing.

The Reader will remember that in the first quotation just given, Father Tyrrell says that *revelation* must " at once satisfy and intensify man's mystical and moral need," as if a revelation, instead of referring to some fact, in this case Christ's divinity, *were* a revelation, *i.e.* a true revelation, in virtue of its suitability to the spiritual wants of the listener ; and as if, therefore, the revelation in question would have been *untrue* if it embodied facts which—instead of " bringing the transcendent nearer to his (man's) thoughts and feelings and desires," and " deepening the consciousness of union with God "—had necessarily produced the very reverse effect. And lest the Reader

should consider this passage as ambiguous, and refuse to construe "revelation *must*" into "revelation must do all this in order to *be* true," I will repeat the end of the quotation:

"*This*—" [*i.e.* "satisfying and intensifying man's mystical and moral need," "bringing the transcendent nearer to man's thought and feelings and desires," "deepening his consciousness of union with God"] "*this was the evidence to which Jesus appealed in proof of His possession by God's spirit. . . . Such, too, is the evidence of Christianity as a personal religion.*"

All this is what Father Tyrrell sums up at the beginning of the passage as the "test of life," "which is, as things are, the only test of revelation." If, therefore, the revelation alleged by Christ had been, let us say, the one which came to Nietzsche as he sat under that rock in the Alps, the atrocious revelation of the Everlasting Return and its hopelessness, then that revelation, not standing this "test of life," would have been *untrue*.

Mr Schiller, in a remarkable passage of one of his Pragmatistic essays, has indeed asserted that there could not exist a thoroughly depressing and demoralizing truth, because mankind would have stamped it out. But I do not know whether Father Tyrrell would go so far. There was, indeed, no need for facing this painful alternative, for Father Tyrrell had another line of thought, or rather another confusion of lines

of thought, in which to find safety. On page 173 of his book there stands the following passage :

" *If truth be the correct anticipation of a possible experience, it is our spiritual needs that are true to God.*"

I have meditated many hours on the logical contents of this sentence which, with its Peircian pragmatic beginning, bears so agreeable a promise of " making our ideas clear." And I cannot yet unravel whether its technical structure implies *that God is an experience foreseen by our spiritual needs which are therefore proved to be true*, or that *our spiritual needs being an experience, God is therefore a correct anticipation of them and in so far true.* But Father Tyrrell has reminded us elsewhere that spiritual needs and their satisfaction are data of experience as much, at least, as what we call the facts of science ; Bergsonian philosophy has shadowed forth that reason is probably a mere blundering adjunct of action, and that it is only by leaning over our obscure consciousness, and listening to the confused hum of instincts and impulses that we can hope to learn something of the secrets of reality. And so, letting alone all attempts at literal and logical interpretation, I think we may understand darkly, catch glimpses of the flickering coming and going of Father Tyrrell's thought, if we content ourselves with repeating that mystic formula : " *If truth be the correct anticipation of a possible experience, it is our spiritual needs that are true to God.*"

I have called the formula *mystic*; and mystic it has every right to be. For are we not dealing with what transcends human reason, with an order of things whose sacraments partake of contradictory natures and exist both inside and outside of space and time, where what is believed has compelling powers [1] upon what exists, a region (at once of reality and of thought) where, as Goethe's Chorus Mysticus tells us, temporal things are but a symbol, where the unattainable becomes fulfilment, and the inexpressible becomes fact:

"*Alles Vergängliche*
Ist nur ein Gleichniss;
Das Unzulängliche
Hier wird's Ereigniss
Das Unbeschreibliche
Hier ist's gethan."

XVIII

"*If truth be the correct anticipation of a possible experience, it is our spiritual needs that are true to God.*"

As if in explanation of this mysterious pattern of words, Father Tyrrell more than once reminds us that

[1] W. James: "*God himself, in short, may draw vital strength and increase of very being from our fidelity.*" Professor James did not see that belief in such a God would be a comfort only if God were not the Creator, but a fellow-creature; not responsible for the Universe and its evils, but trying to break loose from those evils. In fact, part of a Manichean dualism, or subject to an antique Fate. Or was Professor James's *Pluralism* merely a revived, a homeopathic Manicheism?

mental habits, desires, in short, "spiritual needs," are as much facts of experience as anything we account knowledge of the world outside us. Undoubtedly; but the experience of which spiritual needs form part is experience of *ourselves*, of our own inner reality. The experience of the *not-ourselves* is a different thing, and the two kinds of experience are by no means always in the relation of mirrored and mirroring surface. The existence of a *need*, spiritual or material, testifies to the previous existence of a group or sequence of facts standing to this "need" in the relation of cause. But this pre-existing group of causes of a need is by no means necessarily the same as the group of phenomena which would satisfy that need; the desire for food is not caused by the pre-existence of food, but by the pre-existence of certain organic conditions often implying rather the absence of food than its presence, and producing that presence of food only indirectly and in no inevitable manner. That in a great many cases a need should answer to really existing objects; that those really existing objects should, in a yet larger number of cases, be such as to put an end to the need, is explicable by racial adaptation to surroundings, individuals with unquenchable needs, and unquenchable needs in individuals themselves, having been eliminated under the competitive stress of needs which it was possible to quench. But this adaptative coincidence does not justify the assump-

tion that the existence of a need implies either the existence of the wherewithal to that need's satisfaction, or that the need, if conscious, is correct as to the nature of that satisfying wherewithal; indeed, so soon as representation of a satisfying object accompanies desires, the mere feeling of *want*, although in itself perhaps the correct expression of an organic state, is subject to an association, even an interpretation which may happen to be incorrect.

But if a "need" does not prove the possible existence of its object, still less does the existence of a "need" prove that the object is already existent. A "need" may be, often is (otherwise there would have been no human progress) a brand new group of "lackings;" a need may be an unprecedented need due to unprecedented causes—indeed, to be thus new and unprecedented has been the mark of every "higher" need, therefore of every spiritual one: does not Father Tyrrell himself deny the spiritual element to the "religions" of primeval man? Nay, more; a need may be such that its object inevitably eludes its pursuit, it may be a *need* for *more*, let us say a need of justice or perfection: does the existence of this need prove the pre-existence of sufficient justice or perfection?

Perhaps Father Tyrrell would answer boldly: "Yes; the need of justice and perfection proves the existence of such justice and perfection in God." But this is

using the existence of God as proof in an argument itself intended to prove God's existence by the supposed relation between needs and the wherewithal to their satisfaction.

As a psychological fact, such an unconscious argument in a circle can be frequently traced in theology (as elsewhere) and even in the theology of such a psychologist as Father Tyrrell. The unravelling of our premises, the separating of our standpoints, and the holding asunder of our many successive subjects of discourse, are intellectual tools which, like perspective and foreshortening, take thousands of years to fashion and master; and despite all our treatises of logic, we are still in danger of thinking, so to speak, a full face eye in a profile head; we are perpetually mistaking our habitual hypothesis for facts in their own support. The theological habit has been, and is, to think not merely of God as pre-existent, but also of man's faculties, hence his "needs" as created by God with distinct reference to God's own existence; hence a need for God, *being instituted by God*, points with the cogency of a circular argument to the reality of God. And this circular manner of thinking has doubtless been increased by the verbalism—that is to say, the deficient analysis of meanings in such discussions. The habit of speaking of a need FOR something, has overlaid and hidden the fact of a need IN *someone;* and verbal co-existence of desire and its

object has been taken as representing a real co-existence outside mere words, or, at the best, mere verbal thought.

I have applied the word *pre-existence* to the wherewithal of satisfying a need, as the pre-existence, for instance, of a divinity. I wish to return to the question of *pre-existence* insisted on in all such theological arguments, because it just happens that, in at least half of all cases we know of, "need," want or desire, incidentally shows that its object does NOT pre-exist *because it sets man making that object;* shows, moreover, that the object is not independent of the need, since the object is made conformably to that need. For desire, which is what the old proverb mongers meant by necessity, is the mother of invention.

And thus if man's soul *needs*, craves for, insists upon, certain hopes and consolations which (it is Father Tyrrell himself who repeats it) are not warranted by his rational knowledge of the existing universe, may we not suppose that when we find such a "need" satisfied, it is, as in the case of arts and industries, simply because man has made for himself what he wanted; and because a "spiritual need" is a need whose satisfaction can be compassed without help of objective reality, and merely by the presence of thought and feelings. And is it not consonant with all that we know of man's cravings and makings, that religion should prove itself merely one of man's great crafts,

the great self-unconscious craft which has provided, among many other much needed things, just those hopes and consolations which Father Tyrrell finds in the Catholic Christian revelation such as he accepts it?

In this sense the anticipation of a particular experience would indeed prove the true existence of our spiritual needs. But this humdrum rational proposition is not in the least equivalent to what I have ventured to call, on the analogy of certain symbolical interlacings of lines and of circles, the mysterious, nay, the cabalistic pattern into which Father Tyrrell has woven the same words.

XIX

"The Seraph Contemplation"

The growing recognition by philosophers (ordinary human beings having long taken it for granted) that Man has other needs than those of mere reason, that life consists of feeling and action more than of thought, and that there are other imperatives besides the rational—this growing and now overwhelming recognition, has, of course, served as explanation and apology of the various Wills-to-believe and Wills-to-make-Others-believe.

But in all this talk of man's emotional wants our

obscurantists overlook that there exists a way of satisfying the soul's cravings other than that of belief: the way of Art. Bent upon keeping or reinstating, or (as we shall see in the case of M. Sorel's "Syndicalist Myth") making afresh some kind of unrational belief, they do not perceive that a good half of all mythology is not dogma, but poetry, a good half of ritual is Art; that contemplation does not imply the question of true and false, and that the legitimate satisfaction of our wants, spiritual as well as temporal, is not through believing which we cannot, in so far as is genuine, command, but through *making*—that is, through the creation in the world outside or the world within, of those things, those shapes, those satisfactions, whereof we stand in need. Thus, in the *Will-to Believe* there has always lurked a portion, or a particle, of a nobler essence: the *Will*, if I may call it so, *to Contemplate*.

It is to contemplation, to contemplative selection and concentration that we owe all poetry, all Art, all disinterested spirituality; indeed, the spiritual life in the psychological sense, is essentially the life of contemplation.

All practically tends to be one-sided and perfunctory because it sees in things only so many means to our own constantly changing and partial ends: the least possible time and attention are given because time and attention are wanted for the next adjustment. And this perfunctoriness of practicality may perhaps

be increased by an actual self-possessing and self-developing instinct, bidding the soul hurry until it can find refreshment, repose, purification and renewal in those visions which it makes to satisfy its own need for more beauty and more righteousness than reality as yet supplies: contemplation refits us for practice, and practice, in its turn, finds its fruition in contemplation.

Such contemplation is an act of choice, in the sense that it answers to permanent and co-ordinated preferences; and it is an act of will in so far as it includes directing and steadying of our attention, excluding and intensifying.

Such contemplation of what we have ourselves selected and co-ordinated is, I believe, the spiritual, as distinguished from the utilitarian or merely personally emotional, essence of all high religions. The contemplation, steady and reiterated, of what, under the name of Zeus, is vast and beautiful and terrible in the material firmament; under the name of Jehovah, of what is irresistible in moral discipline and social law; under the name of Christ and Mary, of the purity and tenderness, the brotherly and motherly loving kindness, of which we do not get enough in life; under the name of Buddha (who knows?) of the insignificance of our own life, the indifference of the Universe, the levelling and obliterating power of death, to feel which gives us patience and peace.

Such contemplation does not imply belief. We can get the good of these symbols while knowing that they are made solely by ourselves. It is all this which Pragmatists misunderstand when they speak of *true to our wants*, using the word *true* in the sense, which is *not* its sense, of *fittingness to something asked for and expected*, as when we say that a note *is true*, meaning *in tune*, that is, precisely what it should be. Art and poetry, contemplation of all kinds, draw upon reality for their material; but their creations are outside reality, and hence yon side of *true and untrue*.

. . . . . .

Walking among the olive yards of Val di Greve (with distant profile of pine woods against the sky), I was met this morning by the sounds of funeral bells, and the sudden recollection that it was the Eve of All Souls. The peasants along the roads are going to visit their dead; and the little desolate village cemeteries must be full of the bitter scent of their chrysanthemum garlands, all soaked like the faded vines, the fallen leaves, in the death of the summer. I know it all so well; know it moreover, as feeling. I feel profoundly united to something in it all, in these rites, these creeds which are alien to me. And thinking of Father Tyrrell, and the whole of this discussion about beliefs and believing, it comes home to me that every one of us with any imaginative sensitiveness and historical culture (and more and more as both of them

increase) *must* in this manner partake in the religions of other folk, of other times, and vaguely, even in the dim forgotten ones. Partake not in Christianity only, but in the Paganism beyond it; worship Apollo, Apollo cleansed of his oracle-shop venality and trickery, clarified to the pure poetry of sun-kissed Delphic rocks and of filleted Pheidian gravity and loveliness; Apollo and Demeter quite as much as Jesus and Mary. They are all cherished, the Divine Ones, believed in as shrined in our spirit, as shrines, also, of our spirit.

And is this not enough?

XX

I fear not. Religion, with whatever of Art and of contemplative thought it has allied itself, is born not of Man's strength but of his weakness. It is, essentially, the category of our thinking (if thinking we may call it) where wishes are fulfilled; fulfilled not by imposing our will upon realities, or creating a world of noble appearances, but by brooding over those wishes, those wants and achings in our own heart. Religion provides for the mortal want which cannot provide for itself: it promises more of whatsoever is stinted—more love, more justice, more life; the very promise arising from the felt insufficiency. The understanding and sympathy which it brings is born of the loneliness of

the lonely; the balm which it pours into the wounds is made of their smarting; as in Browning's poem, the strength which cows the tyrant is but his victim's weakness.

Above all, Religion ministers to one of our deepest needs: it gives the sense of reciprocity. Herein it is different from what we call Poetry or Art. If I get aesthetic and moral satisfaction by contemplating such qualities and associations as are lovable in, let us say, Apollo or St Francis, *it is I who do all the loving.* Apollo or St Francis can do me good, but through my own doing, since I have to a certain extent, made or re-made him. But human hearts are not to be satisfied by their own conscious activities, and human creatures bring into religious contemplation that need, that habit of reciprocity obtaining among themselves. They want not only to love, but to be loved. They do not seek consolation from mere refreshing loveliness and nobility. The consolation they crave is that given to him whom his mother comforteth. For them love must be loving and being loved. And all devoutness turns to some lover-like or filial relation. Thus far the human need for reciprocity. But, at the same time, religious persons require also community of feeling, or the illusion, the feeling, of community of feeling. They would indeed like to be the best beloved child, but they also want other children, brethren, with whom to love in company. For human creatures

feel insecure and lost by themselves. They require almost as much as light and bodily warmth, the sense that others are thinking and feeling like themselves; a want, this of community of feeling, so deep in us all that we satisfy it all through our daily life by the most obvious hoodwinkings and ostrich-like proceedings. For it is tiring, tiring like a low temperature, to know oneself alone in a way of thinking or feeling, and to muster up the energy requisite to go on with that thought or that feeling uncompanioned. . . .

This need for community or companionship is satisfied by that (considerably fictitious and misleading) abstraction, the Church; and by the thought of millions of fellow-creatures who are known to agree in our thought and feeling, or perhaps merely who are *not* supposed to be disagreeing therewith! The other poor little brethren gathered with us under the Madonna's cloak (as in Pier della Francesca's fresco and the Venetian gate reliefs) keep us warm quite as much as the great mantle itself; and are, perhaps, only one-half less imaginary than the great gracious Mother herself.

That cloak of the Madonna is the church of brick and mortar, as well as the abstract church militant or triumphant; the concrete church whose aesthetic unity of plan, of lighting and enclosure, makes us think that the old crones and fleshly-looking priests are

feeling and thinking as we do! And that material edifice satisfies us by the sense that if we have carried our sorrows there, every one else has done, and is doing, so; the empty nave and aisles, the dusty corners where glimmer shrine lamps are full of sorrowing desires. We feel that; and we do not feel (for feeling selects what it likes) that all these sorrows and desires would in reality conflict with our own quite as much as concord with them. We forget in that church how, in the houses and streets and the fields, burdens are not only shared, but, the heavier and more numerous they are, also cruelly loaded on other shoulders. There is in religion, whether in the brick and mortar church or in the abstract Christianity or Catholicism, much of that diffuse emotion, suggestive but unlabelled, which music awakens, and of which each can appropriate and share (or think that he shares) whatever he pleases.

Whereas to make one's sanctuaries for oneself and dwell in them alone; to shape an Apollo of the ivory and gold of order and lucidity, throwing away all the baser material; to paint a Madonna on the pure gold ground of whatever great love oneself may ever have felt—that is a rare, a difficult, and to the taste of most human creatures, an unprofitable business. They do not want contemplative visions, but authorised delusions and miracles. Religion deals in miracles because it ministers to helpless

hopefulness. In both senses of Goethe's ambiguous words :

> "*Das Unzulängliche*
> *Hier wird's Ereigniss.*"

Through it not only is the unattainable attained, but in the ordinary sense of that German word, the *insufficient* is made sufficing. For one of the functions of religion is to furnish not only the impossible that man cannot reach, but also the mere *more*, demanded by his poverty and hunger : like Jesus, Religion does not only raise the Dead and make the Blind to see ; it turns the water at Cana into wine, and feeds great multitudes with seven loaves and a few little fishes. The want becomes belief in its own satisfaction.

That any one should feel what religion must be, and yet not have it, is a surprise to the genuine believers among one's friends ; and, at times, alas, a source of vain hopes and disappointed misunderstanding. If you feel religion like that, they will sometimes say, Why, then you *are* religious. Alas, dear friends, it is because I feel what religion is, all that it gives and saves, that I know that religion must be made by Man.

XXI

Psychological analysis and observation will teach us more and more to reinstate the (in our spiritual

life) *negative* factor, which is often stronger than the positive factor, although hidden by the positive factor's greater . . . well, by the positive factor's *positiveness*. Thus, under the positive heading "Will-to-Believe" there comes in an all-important neglected negation, "the Will-Not-to-Disbelieve."

This is, I think, one of the dominant instincts of the soul, because removal from a position of habitual thought to another is one of the most disruptive and painful efforts (judging by the feeling of it, I might have said of *bodily* efforts) we can be called on to make; disruptive and painful in proportion as our thought is organic and organised; rooted in our nature and rich in ramifications. It happens sometimes that we can watch ourselves, obliged to make this effort, and shirking it with the unreasoning ingenuity which shirks all kinds of discomforts: we are holding on, shrinking, and, at the same time that we cling to the old, laying hold of something else and shifting our intellectual weight on to that. We get to think the other thought, but only by averting our eyes from its otherness; calling it by the same name in order to keep up the comfortable, life-saving sense of familiarity; or else stealthily moving, on to that new and hated bit of spiritual ground, our pet Lares, or our favourite heirlooms.

It is not the pleasure or advantage of what we have not yet enjoyed, it is the habit of what in many

cases we may have almost ceased to enjoy which is at the bottom of much "will-to-believe." Thus, as remarked, will-to-believe can, in nine cases out of ten, be analysed down into *will-not-to-disbelieve.*

It would seem to be thus with Modernists: they will give up the unity and tradition of the Church, if only they may consider themselves as the repositories of that tradition and the restorers of that unity. They will give up Christianity if only . . . well, if only you leave them Christ. Or, rather, they will give up Christ if only you will leave them the name of Christ.

And naturally; for that name of Christ has become for them, not the poor thing they themselves mean by *symbol*, but what psychology means by that term: an "open sesame" for certain emotional phenomena.

XXII

Will-not-to-Disbelieve, clinging to habitual and beloved practices and formulas; Will-to-Contemplate, craving for whatever helps, by ready-made and time-enriched symbol, to steady without imprisoning our thought of righteousness and beauty and harmony, of all wherewith present reality whets, without satisfying, our hunger; *Will* (and this is the most difficult to unravel) Will or Wish, mistaken for its own fulfil-

ment, lover's dream, mystic's prayer, which is its own fancied and felt realisation; wish for immortality, salvation, for God, creating in man's thought another world, a state of being redeemed, and a deity according to our heart's desire. All these are the various kinds of "Will-to-believe" which arrest Father Tyrrell and his fellow-Modernists on those scientific roads converging towards absolute freedom of thought. But besides these, or mingled in them, or perhaps summing them up while separate ("not a third sound but a star") there is the *Will-not-to-leave-the-Church.*

The Church: not merely a certain body of beliefs; not merely the Church spiritual in the psychological not *transcendental* sense; but the Church historical, human, social: the Church made of fellow-worshippers, nay, the Church of brick and mortar, or ashlar or marble; the Church which is the visible æsthetic equivalent, in its uplifting or brooding forms, in its serenity of white light or its soothing mystery of darkness, of all the soul has ever imagined of moral peace, lucidity and harmony; the Church which, in the squallidest countries, is alone swept and garnished and purified with incense, and in the poorest has vessels of silver, and fresh-washed linen; the Church where the dead have lain for centuries under the slabs, and into which all the ages of man have entered, and knelt, or been carried as infants or as corpses.

XXIII

The day before yesterday, one of the first wintry afternoons, I went, towards twilight, into some churches, and preferably into those humbler ones where piety glides in at dusk to mysterious little services which are not obligatory,

In that half light, with only a few candles on the altar or lamps before shrines, one feels oneself cradled in the unsubstantial Church, not the stone and brick which assert themselves by day, but the shadowy spaces which they hollow out and enclose, the real church of the spirit, not of the body. The people who have stolen in one by one, barely lifting the leather door curtain, do not take heed of one another; and when each has sat or knelt down among the empty benches, he sees, in that gloom, only the mystic golden blaze of the altar and the vestments. But they feel that they are not alone: they are side by side with unseen fellow-creatures stripped by this darkness of all vain work-a-day personality, reduced to mere similar souls, suffering or hopeful, human, with a common human need for sympathy or consolation; the human being in its weakness and sadness, the ghosts that lurks in each of us, but shrouded in the majestic impersonal forms of that church, of its half-visible aisles and arches. And even if custom blunt

and leaves things scarcely noticed, there must be peace and rest and refreshment to be brought back from these places; the sense of those other men and women unseen, nameless, and almost shapeless, who murmur or chant the same (even unheard) words of supplication or thanksgiving, must leave the certainty that there is, brooding like the dusky architecture, shining out mysteriously like the distant altar, a great Reality who hears and answers. The visible church is, I have often felt, the shape of the invisible God. How much more must not the prayers of these unseen fellow-worshippers become the assurance of that God's listening and understanding!

These are feelings in which, by the power of Art and of whatever human sympathy one may possess, even such an unbeliever as has never believed, can for a moment participate. What must not be the longing for all this of one who has participated without suspicion of his own fancy's share; the longing for that certainty such as neither act nor imagination brings, the certainty that this is not the illusion of the Creature, but the reality of the Divine; what must not be the longing for the faith that there is Something—Something inexpressibly greater than all longings—at the other end of these human supplications and actions of thanks!

In the flash, the quiver of sympathy, by which we glance into a soul's depths, as we sometimes glance

by a lightning's quivering flash into the veined and opaline heart of a great cloud mass—in that transient but unforgettable comprehension of Catholic Christianity's gifts to its believers, how foolish and grotesque becomes our surprise that Modernists like Father Tyrrell should not have gone further; how respectful becomes our amazement that they should have gone so far from the full unreasoned acceptance of all these things which the poor human heart has fashioned for its comfort during the innumerable ages.

XXIV

At the bottom of Modernism (and there was a Protestant Modernism long before we ever heard of a Catholic one) is the recognition that the power, the human value, of religion is not in its doctrines. A dogma is but a pattern of words, conveying different meanings, or no meaning at all, to those who honestly accept it as an emotional spell or a disciplinary word of command. For emotion is directly communicable, because it depends upon imitation of an attitude, or action, or merely a gesture. Moods and habits can be got secondhand and yet be genuine and efficacious. The antique mysteries, with their cymbal and torch, bound their initiates in a unity of feeling and habits far more real than any community of dogma. Com-

munion with other worshippers is probably a large part of the supposed union with the divinity, whether that divinity be called Demeter, or Isis, or Christ. Hence the all-importance of rites and of words which, having lost any definite meaning to the intellect, have become so many *open sesames* to the emotions. This side of religion has the further advantage of being taught less by the priest than by the mother; its essentials have been handed on by the emotional selection of kinships and surroundings. The archtype of such religious influence are the family rites of Paganism and Judaism. The specialised priesthood of Christianity has taken over some of their potency; but a good deal may have got lost in the transfer. Reading St Augustine, one has the impression that Christianity must have seemed a kind of Rationalism; and, for all its appeal to individual hope and fear, have caused a wrench, a sense of emotional diminution, to the convert from the old gods. And in our times the loss of ritual communion with one's fellowmen, the loss, also, of the sacramental framework of all human life, has once more left the days and the soul of man empty and desolate even as the material world had become with the death of paganism; a world shorn of divinity, "die entgötterte Natur" of Schiller's poem.

The recognition of these facts is as essential to Modernism as its rejection of the dogmatic literalness

of uncritical ecclesiasticism. Modernists like Father Tyrrell have learned from their historical and philological and pscyhological studies not only that dogmas will not hold water, but also that their real efficacy is symbolic and ritual. And in this recognition they have overlooked that dogma is the warrant for belief, and that ritual and symbol are, after all, founded upon belief: that vast and soaring cathedral whose arches and wall-veils, and buttresses and pinnacles, draw our eyes to heaven and become themselves a vision of a heavenly Jerusalem, is based, after all, on a substrate of alleged facts; and if you pull up fact after fact, crumble one dogma after another into mere symbol, your edifice will speedily show rent after rent, and the day will come when it will strew the ground, as the pinewoods of Olympia are strewn with the column-drums of the temple of Zeus, which in its day was one of the seven wonders of the world.

There are many who think the condemnation of Modernism by the present Pope, unless promptly withdrawn, may sign the handing over of Catholicism to uneducated classes and countries, and to uneducable individuals, its banishment to such rustic "Hinterlands" as gave their names to the last votaries of what the successful Christian innovation called *Paganism*. And Father Tyrrell may prove more correct than he wished in prophesying that Chris-

tianity itself must perish unless it accepts scientific criticism.

But Catholicism and Christianity have been sound and secure, and I would almost add, sincere, only in times and in souls which could say, like Newman ("Apologia" 49), "*Dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion. I know no other sort of religion. I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion as a mere sentiment is to me a dream and a mockery.*"

XXV

These ideas which had come to me while reading Father Tyrrell's "Christianity at the Cross Roads," have been accidentally confirmed in my mind in a talk I have lately had with an extremely intelligent Roman priest. Don Erasmo—so I will call him—answers the question embodied in my last chapter, by reminding me that the Church can perfectly take back all its censure of Modernism; and, indeed, every other thing it may at any time have said when it once ceases to hold water. Triumphantly he points out that the Church fought successively against the philosophy of St Thomas, the Devotion to the Sacred Heart, and I know not what else, which it subsequently incorporated. Newman, says Don Erasmo, censured by Pius IX, was given the cardinal's hat by Leo XIII;

and Pius X has presented a principal Roman Church (in the very middle of the Corso !) to the Rosminians who had been condemned by his predecessors. "*For the Church,*" says Don Erasmo (himself talking perhaps to-day's heresy and to-morrow's orthodoxy) "*the Church is not* opinion. *It is* Life, *the very spirit of Life, and its vitality and adaptability are so marvellous that one is really forced to attribute them to the Holy Ghost.*"

[I can imagine some future Bergsonian Don Erasmo identifying the third Person of the Trinity with the Bergsonian conception of Life, with the *Evolution Créatrice* itself.]

But this erring and repenting Church, in what is it any better than any of us erring and repenting individuals ? Or better than our other institutions perpetually exchanging an old imperfection for a new one ? What is its *Life ?* Or rather, in this series of changes, of alterations and recantations, what is the unity which does the living ?

I refrained from putting this question. But Don Erasmo answered it without my formulating, when he went on to tell me that the fact of not partaking in communion at Easter (he had been lamenting that only nine per cent. of the male population of Milan accomplish this duty) constitutes secession from catholicism, because *catholicism hinges not on doctrine but on Sacrament.*

This is the explanation (though Don Erasmo is no Modernist) of the attitude of Modernism, and especially, as I have attempted to show in the foregoing chapters, of Father Tyrrell. You may *think* as differently as you please from your fellow-Christians, indeed (according to Modernism) it is quite impossible for people of different mentality and culture to think otherwise than differently, or to attach the same meaning to the same words; but you can *feel* alike, and you can *act* alike; or rather you can, by your similar action, bear witness to a presumable similarity of feeling. Moreover [and although the Modernists do not perhaps proclaim it, this is the psychological basis of all their varyings], moreover you can *feel united, feel similarity and union,* and it is such feeling of similarity and union with past and future generations, with distant unknown individuals, which is procured by the sacraments. The sacraments unite; identify not only with God, but with all those who partake in them: they enlarge the single believer's sense of living, they give the feeling of participation with the whole. So long as the Church possesses this focus of emotional union, or more correctly, this focus for the *emotion of union*, the Church is herself a unity; the Church survives, and all her changes may be regarded as those of a growing organism.

This is, I think, the Modernist point of view.

What the Modernists fail to see, exactly because themselves dominated by that very emotion, is that once dogmatic acquiescence gone, the purely subjective matter of such sacramental union will soon be mooted. And this subjective nature of the sacramental once understood, once men have seen that it is they who are making their God for themselves, what will become of the unity of the church and its vitality? Or rather, what will become of the Church at all?

END OF VOL. I.