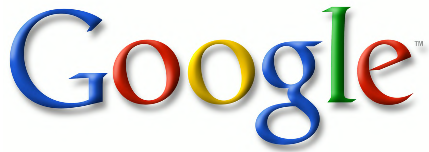

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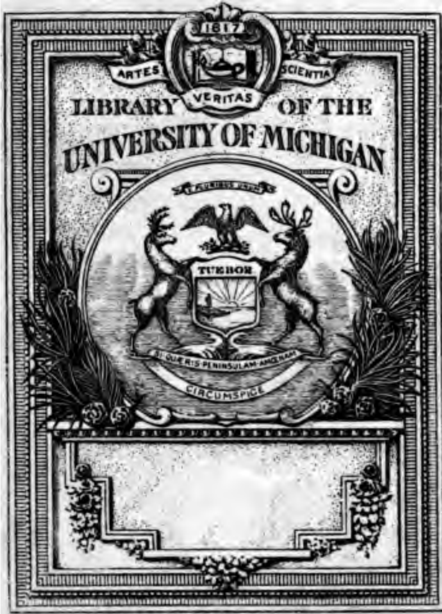
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TALKS ON RELIGION

TALKS ON RELIGION

A COLLECTIVE INQUIRY

RECORDED BY

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
91 AND 93 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
LONDON, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA
1908

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THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, U. S. A.

Dedicated

TO THE ONE

WHOSE CONSECRATED LIFE FIRST MADE ME SEEK

THE SECRET OF RELIGION

190412

PREFACE

LAST winter it was my good fortune to take part in a series of meetings whose personnel and aims were alike noteworthy. The company, drawn partly from among the professors of a great university, partly from the business, literary, and ecclesiastic life of the city at large, represented many widely varying types of character and mental outlook. Not a few bore international reputations and nearly all had attained distinction in their own fields; all had known the discipline of exact thinking. It is therefore the more significant that the purpose of these meetings was the re-examination of the fundamentals of religion. The following pages are a record of this collective inquiry.

This book thus differs from many others cast in the same literary form. It is not the work or thought of one man. It is a faithful transcript of actual conversations between men whose names are withheld but whose occupations are given. No argument has been advanced for the purpose of refutation. Every

opinion put forward was honestly advocated. It is true that I have had to rely upon my own memory, and have been often keenly conscious of my failure to reproduce adequately the style and manner of the participants. But it is believed that no substantial injustice has been done the views themselves.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

NEW YORK, February 17, 1908.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE DIALOGUE

A — "THE MATHEMATICIAN"
A Professor of Mathematics and Student of Religion

B — "THE HISTORIAN"
A Professor of History, well known for his researches into the history of the Middle Ages and the part played therein by the Church

C — "THE PHILOSOPHER"
A Professor of Philosophy

D — "THE ZOOLOGIST"
A Professor of Zoology

E — "THE AUTHOR"
A Writer and Orientalist, best known for his translations from the Upanishads

F — "THE CLERGYMAN"
A Clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church

G — "THE EDITOR"
A Member of the Society of Friends by birth and education; a Man of Business by force of circumstances; a Student and Editor of a religious Journal by avocation

H — "THE BIOLOGIST"
A Professor of Biology

I — "The Social Philosopher"
A Professor of Philosophy, much interested in Socialism

J — "The Banker"
A Banker and Man of Business, formerly an officer in the United States Army

K — "The Pragmatist"
A Professor of Philosophy and one of the foremost exponents of Individualism and Pragmatism

L — "The Anthropologist"
A Professor of Anthropology

M — "The Oxonian"
A Professor of Philosophy, much interested in Psychology, and an earnest Churchman

N — "The Logician"
An Instructor of Logic

O — "The Youth"
An Assistant in Philosophy

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If you would malign another's faith, remember your own. If you cannot understand his belief, stop and consider. Can you understand your own? Do you know whence came these emotions that have risen and made your faith?

The faiths are all brothers, all born of the same mystery. There are older and younger, stronger and weaker, some babble in strange tongues maybe, different from your finer speech. But what of that? Are they the less children of the Great Father for that? Surely if there be the unforgivable offence, the sin against the Holy Ghost, it is this, to deny the truth that lies in all the faiths.

Religion is the music of the infinite echoed from the hearts of men.

H. Fielding Hall.

TALKS ON RELIGION

A COLLECTIVE INQUIRY

I

THE NATURE OF THE INQUIRY—ASPECTS OF RELIGION

THE twelve men assembled in the Mathematician's rooms presented unusual contrasts. They included professors of several opposing schools of philosophy, the rector of an influential city parish, an Orientalist and writer on Eastern religions, an historian who had done much to clarify our knowledge of the Middle Ages, an editor of a religious journal, a banker, and men who had helped to make more than one branch of modern science. Diverse as had been their achievements, they were drawn together by an interest rarely expressed, but common to them all, and had accepted the Mathematician's invitation to re-examine together the fundamentals of religion. It was the latter's task to outline the scope and character of this collective inquiry and to open the discussion. That he was conscious of its difficulty was evident in the some-

what constrained and formal manner in which he began.

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "As I think you all know, the inquiry which we are about to inaugurate has its immediate origin in some conversations I had with our friend B—, the Historian. Each of us had been interested during the summer in studying the problems of the relation of Church and State, now such a vital question in Protestant England no less than in Catholic France, and from comparing views on these matters, we were led to a discussion of religion itself and the present conditions surrounding religious thought. It seemed to us that these contrasted very favourably with those of former years; that the dogmatism of theology and the reaction from it in the materialism of science were alike breaking down; and that with the emancipation of the intellect from these two opposing limitations had come both the recognition of religion as a fact worthy of most earnest study, and also the possibility of a new view of religion itself. The new view thus made possible seemed to us characterised by directness, simplicity, and the scientific spirit — the single search for truth and its frank expression as each sees it.

"Yet the complexity of the emotions which fringe religious phenomena, the infinite variety of colouring given to religious perception by the mind and char-

acter of those who experience it, make it by no means easy to arrive at a clear intellectual concept of the religious principle, or of religion itself as a universal rather than a personal fact. There is too much that is personal which must be eliminated, too much that is only fragmentary in ourselves which must be compared with the fragments in others and synthesised into a whole, to make such an inquiry promising to a man working alone. Therefore, it seemed to Professor B— and myself that it would be of both interest and value to get together a number of men from the scientific, philosophic, and ecclesiastic worlds, and see if in such a meeting of many opinions truer and broader concepts might not be arrived at than we could compass alone. Of this attempt I am the more hopeful because I believe that even where such discussions admit of no single synthetic statement, co-ordinating all the views expressed, there is yet always a certain subconscious synthesis, and that the truth is pointed by these varying expressions as the spokes of a wheel point to the nave.

"The object of discussion is thus Religion not religions. This distinction is important, for though a knowledge of Religion may be sought through a study of religions, the former is a fundamental tendency or principle, while the latter are for the most part formal systems of thought and life. The consideration of a definite religious system leads to the

analysis of its particular claims, the personality of its founder, the local conditions of its origin; the mistakes of its promulgators, its priests, and external policy as an institution, its effect upon history and civilisation. These concern our problem and may well receive attention, but they are not the problem itself. And indeed they seem to me to tend more to the older view of religion from which I desire to escape than to the new which I believe men generally are now beginning to take. For from such study we are led to look upon a religion as something imposed upon us from without and exterior to our own hearts and natures.

"Religion itself, however, the religious spirit or religious aspiration, is the most intimately inherent emotion and fact of human life. It appears in many forms and in varying degree of development, but there is no people of whom we have any record — no race or tribe, however primitive — wholly without it. It is not only the most inherent but the most universal of human characteristics. Therefore it is primarily as a psychological or anthropological phenomenon, as an ever present and fundamental fact and factor in human life, that we seek to consider the subject of religion.

"Man is not set over against the universe but is included in it. Thus religion as a fundamental fact of human life is of necessity a cosmic fact and

factor, of moment whether great or less. As religion is intimately personal on the one hand it is cosmic on the other, and religious feeling or perception seems invariably accompanied by the sense that these facts are cosmic and universal, and that in touching them our own limitations are transcended into unison with their infinitude. Has this feeling justification, and if so, can its justification be revealed? To these questions science has as yet given but little attention, and now offers no reply; the answer of the religious teacher has always been, 'Yes, but by experience not argument.'

"In a former conversation with the Historian he accused me of over intellectualising religious emotion and aspiration. Such is by no means my desire, and in proposing an intellectual discussion of the fundamentals of religion I am keenly aware of the difficulties that confront us. Indeed it is probable that I view the functions and power of the intellect in such matters as more strictly limited than would meet with your general assent. For it seems to me that the philosophic attempt to reconcile all differences and seek a fundamental *intellectual* unity, presupposes a highly doubtful scheme of the universe and of man's constitution, — namely, that the intellect is the all inclusive perceptive faculty. An all inclusive perception must reconcile all differences, but it may be that religious perception transcends

the plane of the intellect and that the contradictions we discover in our mental views are unified not in intellectual but in religious perception and experience. This seems the more likely in that religious teaching is full of paradox, full of those Janus faced words which mean one thing to those whom James has called the 'twice born,' another to the man in the street. And, moreover, these Janus faced words are given to us as typical of life itself, and of the transformation religion makes therein.

"But whether I tend to over emphasise or belittle the intellectual element in religion, I certainly hold that religious phenomena present a wide field for intellectual inquiry, and that such discussions as I trust these will be can greatly clarify our ideas on many points. Among others I would suggest the following as part of the ground I would like to see covered.

"1. The analysis and separation of the many complex elements which are indiscriminately called religious and which are presented by and enter into religious phenomena. As an illustration of what I mean I may cite the matter in James's 'Varieties of Religious Experience' and in particular the descriptions of conversions. The excess of emotion there so frequently in evidence certainly fringes the religious experience, but is it an inherent element of that experience? Is it more than the reaction upon the

personality of a new and profoundly impressive insight? And does not religious feeling more often still than excite the emotional nature? In brief, what is the relation of emotion to religion? And what the relation of those other human elements through which religious feeling seeks expression?

"2. Through the study and comparison of religions and religious teachings a common part or basis may be revealed — the highest common factor of them all — and this may perhaps justly be taken as the basis of the religious life. The sifting of this from extraneous elements of custom and dogma should be of the utmost value.

"3. By an examination of primitive myths and superstitions an insight may be sought into the way in which the religious sentiment, or in lower orders perhaps more commonly the emotions of fear and wonder, are given mental form and imagery, and thus, in their simplest aspect, we may inquire into those tendencies in the mind which lead to all religious formalisation and dogma.

"4. The tracing of the action of these formalising tendencies through the evolution and growth of different religious systems, — most easily studied perhaps in the development of the Christian Church, and the effect it has had upon our civilisation.

"From my own consideration of these questions I am led to the opinion that the answers to the first

two will show the tendency of religious perception to cause us to look for joy and rest as well as for support and strength to an inner world, describable variously as of ideals and principles or of cosmic law; felt, though intangible, to be more real and permanent than the outer world around us. And on the other hand that the second two reveal with equal clearness the tendency of the personality and the effect of fear to cause us to desire a more visible support (the feeling of security given by the dollar in your pocket), and that this tendency is largely instrumental in building up the institutional church. Between these two opposing tendencies it seems to me the drama of religion finds its setting.

"There are those here to-night who are eminently qualified to deal each with some one or other of these various aspects. We might go around the circle of those present, and find in the life-work of each some special point of view we can in turn adopt and try to co-ordinate and synthesise with all the others.

"But above all I am desirous that the results of our inquiry should not be prejudiced in advance. As representatives of our professions we perhaps would speak in one way — as individuals, though having this professional knowledge, we may well speak in another. It is this last that is alone of value. For we are seeking to get behind the conven-

tional forms and mental imagery of religious views to religion itself. And part of the value of such a meeting of many different lines of thought is that it will help us to eliminate from the result the special colouring of any one. Therefore I trust we may speak personally as well as impersonally; remembering that new light may lie not only in an analysis of the psychology of religious expression, but also in a synthesis of religious feeling.

"I think this should make clear what I hope these meetings will accomplish, and that I have now done my part. Certainly I have talked enough. Perhaps the Historian will tell us if I misrepresented him in what I said at first, and further suggest some line of discussion with which to begin."

THE HISTORIAN: "I think the Mathematician has given about the gist of our original conversation. There is so much indefiniteness in talk on religious subjects that it is pretty hard to know what anybody else means by what they say, even if you do occasionally know what you mean yourself. It is this indefiniteness which I would like to see attacked. Nearly anything would do to start with, — you could hardly miss it from any point, — but perhaps we could begin by seeing how far apart we are on the main subject of the nature of religion by each trying to define it. That ought to be interesting — and varied."

This meeting with general approval it was suggested that the Historian begin.

THE HISTORIAN: "As author of the suggestion I suppose I can hardly refuse, yet it is just because I have not myself any satisfactory definition that I proposed we all consider it.

"Religion seems to be a sort of feeling or emotion which some men possess and which others do not. It appears very unequally distributed among us, and I imagine myself to be about as barren of it as most people."

Here a late comer entered, and with a silent nod to the party took a vacant seat. The Historian broke off and greeted him:

"I wish, K—, you had come earlier or later. Five minutes later would have done. But now you find me in the happy position of giving an explanation of what I have just said I have neither experience nor knowledge. If you ask why I was selected to begin I must refer you to these other gentlemen."

The Historian was here encouraged to continue by being reminded of the silence that would fall upon history were it only to explain what it knew, and after a little further chaff he picked up the thread of his thought.

THE HISTORIAN: "Religion appears to me an unrational emotion, more akin to the æsthetic sense than to any other. It is a going out of the emo-

tional nature similar to that which is produced by the appreciation of a beautiful vase. Some men can appreciate beauty and some cannot. It is largely a matter of temperament. And it is as irrational or rather as unrational as falling in love. No one can tell you why he fell in love. He may think he can, but you know perfectly well it was not a reasoned process at all. The emotional side of his nature dominated his reason, and the origin of his state and actions is in this going out of his emotions and not in the least in his intellect. An intellectual religion is a phrase one occasionally hears, and it seems to me to be just as sensible as an intellectual falling in love.

"Those whose temperaments cause such a going out of the emotional nature in religious matters find a satisfaction and a value in it which is to them its justification. It also is unrational. In fact, most of life is unrational. We like to call ourselves rational beings, and I suppose once in a while we are. But really it is very infrequent. Most of the time we are acting from some motive which is quite unreasoned, if not entirely illogical, and, taking men generally, not one per cent of their pleasures and satisfactions are intellectual. As I said, I do not know what the satisfaction of religious feeling is, but those who 'have religion' seem to find it real enough, and that it gives values which justify themselves.

"I think that is about my view of religious feeling. James's book, to which the Mathematician alluded, interested me greatly, for it seemed to me to present the facts more clearly than anything I have seen, and to put them on the psychological basis where I think they belong. The records there given are full of this unrational emotional element, this unreasoned satisfaction and sense of value. How close these religious emotions are to the æsthetic appreciation of beauty, to love and to charity, on the one side, or to sensuality, cruelty, and hatred on the other, is a further question upon which the history of Christianity and of Europe might profitably be consulted."

Some little discussion followed the Historian's talk, and then the Philosopher, being next in order, was asked to give his views. He began by referring to the many definitions of religion which had been attempted in the past and which had been made the subject of much philosophic argument and debate. He himself had once tried to defend the definition of religion as the giving of cosmic significance to human emotions. He thought, however, that the mere repetition of such definitions as these and their discussion from a purely logical point of view would contribute little towards the purposes of the present meeting, and that some more personal expression was desirable, even if difficult. He then continued somewhat as follows:

THE PHILOSOPHER: "When one begins to look about him and reflect upon the life in which he finds himself, he sees first a world of mechanism, a world of physical forces and phenomena, in which and upon which he must act and which react upon him. His education, his training, his whole experience, have made him familiar with this world; indeed, his existence itself depends upon his at least partial mastery of and obedience to the laws of the mechanism of life. He sees himself in a great net of mechanism, binding him not only to physical nature but to his fellows; a mechanism operative in moral and social life as in purely animal or physical life. So his first view of the world is that of a mechanical world, of facts and forces, all bound together, all acting and reacting one upon the other, and of which he is a part.

"But as he reflects further, particularly as he pays heed to his own emotions and feelings, the facts of his own consciousness, he realises that this is not only a world of mechanism but also a world of values. He finds some things valuable to him and others not, and this seemingly quite apart from the effect of these things upon the external mechanism of life, — or better, perhaps, valuable to him without conscious reference to the mechanism of life. He finds himself not only in a factual world, but in a sentient world — a world of meanings, of purposes, of

ideals; of feelings and emotions, and values. These feelings and sense of values may, when viewed externally, appear to originate in and be purely personal to the man himself. But when and as experienced, intimately personal as they are, they are something more than personal. They bring with them a sense of universal, of cosmic, significance and import. The search for the explanation and support of this cosmic significance of human emotions and values seems to me the basis of religion.

"In my view, therefore, religion is concerned with the world of values in contradistinction to the world of mechanism. It co-ordinates or seeks to co-ordinate all the non-mechanical sentient side of man's life, his emotions and aspirations and ideals, with a cosmic life or world of the same elements and nature. In this co-ordination the man seeks both support and explanation of himself.

"There is one other thing in regard to the relation of this religious world of values to the mechanical world which seems to me significant and characteristic, — and that is the sense of the pre-eminence of the former — the feeling that between these two worlds there is a causal relation and that mastery of the world of values gives mastery of the world of mechanism. It is an unreasoned feeling, but it seems both genuine and widespread."

When the Philosopher had finished, the Mathe-

matician pointed out that while the Historian had spoken of religion as an opening of the emotional nature akin to the appreciation of beauty or the passion of love, the last speaker had added the rational or intellectual element of the desire to co-ordinate these feelings with cosmic principles and to seek their explanation in a world of ideals and values whose laws must be as definite as those of the mechanical world, and in which man lived fully as vitally and consciously as in the world of facts. The two views were thus in no way contradictory, but one enriched and supplemented the other, as he believed all genuine views of life would be found to do. He then asked D—, a Professor of Zoology, to take up the subject.

THE ZOOLOGIST: "It may seem strange for a scientist to hold the views I do — or indeed to state any views at all upon such a question, but — "

THE MATHEMATICIAN (interrupting him): "But after all, D—, despite your being a scientist, you are a man like the rest of us, and religion must concern the man whether it touches the scientist or not."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "Quite so. As I was about to say, I think most of us have passed through very much the same general experience regarding religious matters. As boys we were taught the elements of Christianity; were brought up in one or another of the Christian sects; were told of God and of heaven

and of hell, and generally given the idea that this was religion and the basis of morality. I think most of us accepted this as we accepted other things told us, or that we learned in childhood without reasoning or thinking about it at all, and that though it lay there in our minds as we matured, we paid small attention to it, finding it really touched our lives but little.) We took our place in the world of men and facts around us, and our work and duties absorbed us more and more till this early religious training was quite overlaid. To the extent that we later thought of it we found it primitive and unsatisfactory. It was neither the basis of our own lives nor of the lives of those we met. Our code was not this code, our ethics not founded on any such system of future rewards and punishments. These things might be — but we, and others, acted as though they were not. Our lives were simpler, more direct and material. Certain things we felt right and did, certain other things wrong and tried to avoid. If we questioned the origin of these feelings there seemed to be a more immediate rational explanation of them than that they were taught two thousand years ago, or that the one way led to hell and the other to heaven. In short, we had outgrown the forms of our childhood, and religion and conduct were for us divorced.

"But while we were outgrowing certain forms we

were growing into certain perceptions and feelings. We were studying nature or life itself, and the immensity and grandeur of *what is* were laying their hold upon us. (The immeasurable lapse of time, the infinitude of space, the mighty rush and swirl of cosmic energy, the infinite richness and variety of nature, the myriad forms of organic life, and, perhaps more than all else, the slow, sure march of evolution and the immobility of law, were opening our consciousness to new perceptions and emotions.) It is these emotions which typify for me to-day religious feeling, as I think they do for many other scientific men, and I offer as my definition of religion what Haeckel has called 'cosmic emotion.'"

The Zoologist had spoken with earnestness and conviction, and when he had finished there was a moment's pause. The Mathematician, a little regretful of his somewhat flippant interruption of the Zoologist's introduction, thanked him for his contribution, and his neighbour E—, the Author, took up the talk. The Author was a graduate of the Indian Civil Service and had not only spent much time in India but had continued a profound student of Eastern literatures and religions. It was rather expected, therefore, that what he would say would reflect the mysticism and colouring of the Upanishads, but he chose at first to draw from the more generally familiar sources of Tolstoi and Plato a view of re-

ligion which should include action and the will as well as emotion.

The Author: "The Zoologist's quotation from Haeckel recalls a definition of religion which Tolstoi has offered: 'The relation which a man believes himself to hold to the universe, and to its source, is his religion,' and he adds that in this sense every one has a religion, as every one believes himself to hold some relation to the universe.

"Tolstoi recognises three such attitudes toward the universe:

"1. What he calls the 'savage' attitude (not necessarily that of any race we call savage), — where a man is fighting against the universe, for his own hand; the attitude of the single contestant;

"2. What he calls the 'pagan' attitude, — where a man lives for a certain group or tribe or society, or even for the whole of humanity, and is willing to subordinate his personal weal, his personal views, to the weal of such a society;

"3. What he calls the 'Christian' attitude — taking the text 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me' (John iv, 34) as a keynote, he enlarges on the attitude of one who believes he is in the world 'to do the will of Him that sent him,' and gives himself up to obedience to this will.

"This comes close to my own idea of religion. Just as our muscular forces come in relation with

the universal force of gravitation, and all our physical life is thereby possible, so I believe our spiritual forces are in relation with a universal divine will, which we touch inwardly and directly through our own wills; and in obedience to this will lies our possibility of spiritual well-being and growth. As Dante says: 'In His will is our peace.'

"Therefore, religion seems to me a matter of the will; a putting our wills into relation with the divine will, and an obedience thereto. Compare Plato, who in the Apology makes Socrates say that he had always been conscious of a godlike voice within him, stopping him if he were about to do anything not rightly; or compare the Katha Upanishad: 'The dearer is one thing, the better is another. These two draw a man in opposite ways. It is well for him who follows the better. He fails of his goal who follows the dearer.'

"So I think religion is the will in action — the free and determinative choice between the better and the dearer, between what is felt to be right and what is felt to be pleasant."

The Mathematician: "I take it, then, that you are adding, to the definitions previously given, the ethical element."

Upon this it was as though a stone had been thrown into a hornet's nest. There was an immediate buzz of query and protestation. Religion was

one thing, ethics another. Yet was it after all so certain that they were separate? True, there are many possible bases for ethics, many a moral man would call himself without religion, yet was not perhaps ethics itself that man's religion? Again, was, or was not, religion always accompanied by a system of ethics? The Author had spoken of the action of the will, the choice between good and bad as constituting the greater and more vital part of life. Surely this was not actually the case. Such deliberate choice was rare. Most of our actions were determined by habit. But this habit must have had its origin in such choice. To appeal to habit was but to push the determinative action of the will into the past, not to remove either it or its paramount importance. So argument pressed on argument from around the circle. It was evident these men had won their intellectual liberty too hardly to suffer even the suggestion that religion and morals were bound together. The word "religion" when used by another still carried the implication of religious forms and dogmas, and the unprovable but oft quoted theological corollary that an attack upon religious dogmas was an attack upon morality still lingered in their minds.

Finally the Author succeeded in making it clear that no such connotation was intended and no such actual meaning existed in what he had said, but

nevertheless an emotion or feeling which did not touch the will, could not, in his judgment, properly be given as a definition of religion. The essence of a man's religion was shown through his will, neither through his mind nor his emotions.

THE CLERGYMAN: "I do not know whether it is because I am unaccustomed to just this sort of discussion (having been for so long outside the academic atmosphere) that it seems to me we have been talking more of the philosophy of religion than of religion itself. The search for an explanation of our sense of values, the emotions we experience in contemplating nature, the determinative choice and action of the will, all appear to me as elements in the philosophy of religion.

"Religion itself I view as a relation, — a relation between man and God. I use the term 'God' because it is the most familiar to me and the best I know. Yet it may have different connotations in the minds of others. For myself, I would be willing to accept the views of Sir Oliver Lodge, which appeared recently in the *Hibbert Journal.* I think with him that as we look out upon life, upon its richness and variety, and its wonderful order and law, that it is impossible for us to believe that our own consciousness and intelligence — yours and mine, just as they are — are the highest type which exists. I know for myself I cannot believe this, nor does it seem to

me logical or to be believed. I am willing that my use of the term 'God' should be taken as the synthesis of all this range of higher intelligence — of all that is beyond and above us. If you care for a definition, how would this do? — Religion is the instinctive alliance between God and man, by which the highest image of human possibilities is revealed, and help to perfection is received.

"Religion from this point of view, as the relation of man to what is above him, is also expressive of and expresses itself through 'the climbing instinct,' as James Russell Lowell called it — the instinct or power which operates to raise and better us, to lift us into the likeness of something higher. And this instinct is a prime deposit in our nature.

> Nor did'st Thou reck what image man might make
> Of his own shadow on the flowing world;
> The climbing instinct was enough for Thee.

"I find certain religious practices of great assistance in producing a higher spiritual consciousness — especially prayer. Prayer is the greatest assistance and satisfaction of my life, the deepest happiness. It not only strengthens me by giving me the feeling of a divine companionship, but it relates me to all mankind by the noblest and most powerful sense of fraternity and serviceableness."

THE ANTHROPOLOGIST: "I would like to ask you, Mr. F—, whether you would exclude the relation

of a dog to his master from your definition of religion as a relation. I have been very much interested in what you have said and in particular in your use of the word 'relation.' In writing of the earlier expressions of the religious instinct we have been much puzzled what word to use. I have been inclined to use 'attitude' but I think your use of the word 'relation' is perhaps the better, if it includes such a relationship as I have instanced."

The Clergyman: "Yes, I think it might, so far as that is a relationship of an inferior to a superior intelligence. But it is, of course, difficult to say what the relation of a dog to his master really is."

The Anthropologist: "That is the trouble with pushing such an analogy. None of us knows what is actually going on in the dog's mind and so what his attitude really is. But the simile is suggestive in some ways."

The Mathematician: "Has not *Manitouism* recently been proposed for the designation of the belief in a higher power than man himself — or for the simplest form of religious belief?"

The Anthropologist: "Manitouism has been suggested, but it is in fact by no means a crude or primitive form of belief. It is a very complete system. 'Belief in spirits' has been used to denote the early expression of religion, but very likely that also is not the beginning."

The Pragmatist: "The Clergyman defines religion as a relation, but to me that seems very indefinite. There are so many types of relation and surely not all of them are religions. Again, a relation may be entirely unconscious, and I take it that a man unconscious of his religion would not be called religious."

The Zoologist: "It is perhaps more the sense of this relation than the relation itself which is one's religion."

The Mathematician: "I imagine the Clergyman included the sense or consciousness of the relation in his use of that term. Surely all men must be in some relation to God, and it would seem to be the extent to which they were conscious of this and made it a personal rather than impersonal relation that determined the nature of their religion. Am I right in this, Mr. F—?"

The Clergyman: "Certainly, I intended to include awareness of this relationship. And its active character, from one side at least, I indicated by what I said of the climbing instinct and of prayer."

The Pragmatist: "But I am puzzled also by your view of religion as a climbing instinct. Does not this contradict the most characteristic feeling of religious emotion and experience? I mean the sense of peace, of permanence, indeed of absolute

inertia, neither desiring anything else nor, indeed, with any thought of anything else?"

THE EDITOR: "Is not this the temporary result which the climbing instinct has sought? It reaches its momentary satisfaction in this peaceful state and sense of enlightenment or union with something higher. Falling from this, it starts to climb again — or, as it becomes familiar with this state, new heights open before it."

THE PRAGMATIST: "But even so, this state is, properly speaking, more truly a religious condition than is the struggle which led to it. And in many cases there was no such struggle. This feeling came as an unexpected vision. Then, too, in my own case I do not find the synthesis of feeling, the unification of life and action which others speak of, as the result of religion. On the contrary, action becomes more complicated, more perplexing. With increased religious knowledge it seems more difficult to live, not simpler."

There was some little discussion of this point and then G—, the Editor, was asked to give his views.

THE EDITOR: "I had been trying earlier in the evening to formulate my own definition of religion, and I found in listening to our friend the Clergyman that I not only agree with all he has said but had actually used his words to express the main

idea, namely, 'Religion is the relation between man and God.'

"What different persons mean by God varies greatly. Consequently their religions differ. I happen to know, for example, that my idea of God is different from the Clergyman's, and so what religion means to me is different from what it means to him.

"To go back a moment to what the Historian said, when he spoke of the emotion or instinct we all possess but in varying degree, he likened it to the æsthetic instinct, and he spoke of the emotion we felt when we gazed at a beautiful vase. He also likened it to love, which we feel for a person. But in each of these illustrations there is an *object* towards which the emotion is directed. In the description of the religious instinct, however, he said nothing about its object: the thing or being toward which it is directed. I think this, however, is the essence of the question. We all acknowledge the existence of the religious instinct, but its character, the character of the religion itself, is largely determined by the character of its object. So I do not think we can arrive at a very clear idea of religion unless, in addition to an analysis of the instinct itself, we take into account the nature of the objects toward which it turns. It is the difference in these latter which seems to me really determinative."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Do you think, G—, that the ultimate objects of religious feeling are themselves and in essence so different in different people? Or do you think that these differences are in reality more an affair of words than of fact, — simply different mental expressions for the same thing? As the same light will receive different colouring coming through different glasses. In the latter case they would not seem as important as in the former."

THE EDITOR: "They seem to me of vital importance, indeed determinative, as I said, of the whole character of a man's religion. A man who believes in an anthropomorphic God, as did many of the saints of the Middle Ages whose lives and visions are recorded for us, has a very different religion from one whose view of the Deity is purely pantheistic: the religion of the fetich worshipper is not that of the Hindoo contemplating Parabrahm. The differences, alike in men and in their religions, consist in the different nature of the objects to which they turn their desires or to which their emotions respond."

THE PHILOSOPHER: "I think, Mr. G—, you are in a philosophically untenable position. On the one hand you define religion as a relation, and on the other you say its character is determined by the object to which we are related, and that differences in this object necessitate differences in the relation.

I think that is a *non-sequitur*. We are often in the same relation to different objects. I am the brother of two different people. The relation of love exists between a man and many different types of character and existence. It is a most common psychological fact that the true character of an object has very little to do with the emotions we may entertain toward it. In other words — though of course not all objects can be viewed as entering into all relations — the character of the object and the character of the relation are philosophically quite distinct."

The Editor: "I suppose that is so, and that my view would require restatement, if it is to avoid these pitfalls of philosophy for the trapping of the unwary. Nevertheless I stick to my contention — that the relation which a man feels to exist between him and God and the nature or character which he ascribes to God are the two fundamental and determining elements of his religion. The first element had already been brought out by the Clergyman. I wanted to suggest the second as equally important."

The Biologist: "The Clergyman spoke of religion as the climbing instinct — the instinct or power by which we seek to broaden and lift the individual life. That is not religion, but life itself. It is as manifest in the amœba as in man. It is an underlying principle of evolution, a fundamental factor in all growth and life. I do not see that it is neces-

sarily at all a conscious process, and it certainly is not confined to humanity."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I doubt whether it is necessary or desirable to so confine our view of religion. Indeed, if religion is as fundamental as some of us feel it to be, it would be an almost inevitable consequence that in one way or another it ran through all life."

THE BIOLOGIST: "That is what I think we should try and get at. Religion is not love, it is not emotion, it is not awe, it is not the choice and action of the will, but something which causes these, itself beneath them, more inherent and basic. Ordinary love, for example, is not sexual union, nor the desire for such union, but is a phenomenon which has developed from these through long periods of evolution. We can thus trace the growth and evolution of sexual attraction and of love back through these primary facts of animal life to relations between reproductive cells, and back of these again to chemical and physical properties. Can we do the same with religion? What is the basis of religious attraction? What is the natural fundamental fact or law or force underlying these religious feelings and causing them? Those are the questions which I think are the vital ones. What is back of man's religious feeling? What its origin, its cause, its significance?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Can we not find such a

basis for religion — what is in essence a physical basis — along the lines suggested by the Philosopher when he said we lived in a world of values as well as in a world of facts? I know that is the intellectual justification I give my own religious aspiration. There is no need to assume the inner world of values, of aspirations, ideals, and moral law to be totally immaterial and without physical basis. On the contrary, I think common sense requires us to postulate a physical basis for it, and that much is gained by doing so. It may simply be a different kind of matter subject to different laws; as the ether which is the physical basis of light and electricity and magnetism is a different kind of matter from this chair. Man to-day is living in both worlds, partly conscious in both worlds, though his consciousness of the inner world seems very dim and blind, so that perhaps instinct and feeling better describe it than consciousness. But blind as it is, this feeling brings, as the Zoologist said, the sense of the greater richness and value and vitality of the inner world, the sense that in some way it is higher and better for us if we could only come to full consciousness and mastery of it.

"More than this, it seems to me as though there was a certain compulsion toward this inner life, not only the sense that we 'ought' to value such insight as we have gained of it and to follow our

feeling of its laws, but as though, willy nilly, the tide of life was pushing us in that direction. I understand that you biologists hold the earliest form of animal life to have been aquatic. There must have been a time when it became amphibious and passed thence to living in the air — matter in quite a different form. So it seems to me of the outer world and the inner world, and that it is possible that religion can find a physical basis in the evolution of man from one to the other."

When the Mathematician stopped, L— rose to go, for it was then late. This put an end to the discussion, and, after arranging to meet a month later, the party adjourned.

II

CHRISTIANITY AND NATURE

THE month had passed, and the Mathematician's friends were again gathered in his rooms, the Anthropologist alone having deserted them. At the hour set the thread of the inquiry was resumed.

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "At our last meeting we compared the meanings each of us attached to the word 'religion.' I think we all were interested to see how these supplemented each other. Religion was viewed (1) as a going out of the emotions akin to love or the appreciation of beauty; (2) as founded upon the search for the support and explanation of man's sense of values; (3) as cosmic emotion — those feelings which stir in us when we look upon the majesty of nature; (4) as the unison of the personal will with a cosmic or divine will, the free choice of the better rather than the dearer; (5) as a relation between God and man, expressing itself both in the climbing instinct, prayer and service, and in strength and satisfaction; (6) as having its beginnings, or its parallel, far back of the life of man, and illustrated in such a relation as that of a dog to

its master; (7) as something more basic than any of these, lying behind them as their cause, and founded in the meaning of life itself.

"Interesting as this comparison was, and necessary as it also was for us to bring our individual views to some common focus, I think we felt as though it were but an introduction, and that we would fail of our purpose if we did not come to closer grips with the subject itself than such debate upon words and terms. I have, therefore, asked the Clergyman to start the discussion by speaking to us of Christianity, as illustrative of what religion means to him. He has been good enough to agree to do so, though I regret I was unable to give him such time for preparation as he, perhaps, would have liked. With his presentment before us we can lay aside the philosophic method of debate and adopt the scientific procedure of inquiry instead. Here is a religion. What is its meaning to me? What does it involve? What presuppose? What imply? With this, by way of introduction and review, I will ask Mr. F— to begin."

THE CLERGYMAN: "It was a kindly instinct that led Professor A— to speak of the short time given me for preparation. But in fact there was ample opportunity to formulate my talk if I had known just what was desired. I had thought at first of writing a brief paper, but upon reflection I found that this would grow under my hand until it became

an essay and criticism upon theology, which I would not wish to inflict upon you.

"Indeed, I doubt if any outside the clergy are aware how impossible it is to find an authoritative exposition of the principles and beliefs of the Episcopal Church. There is no single compendium of theological teaching, and if I were to attempt to give such here, I could only support my views by reference to a great variety of early Christian writers who contributed each some one or other element in the historic development of the Church. I am sure that that is not what you would wish me to do, and, indeed, it would be equally repugnant to me, for it is just this freedom from authoritative interpretation that seems to me distinctive of Protestant Christianity; and even in the Roman Church you will find authoritative pronouncements withheld on many points, and in consequence, great diversity of opinion among its members. I am aware that upon this question of authority there are wide differences among my colleagues. My Bishop, for example, told us this week that every member of the clergy should have a definite theological system well grounded in the history of the Church, though, I believe, he did not extend this requirement to the laity. But I would like it clearly understood that for myself I cannot pretend to present here an authoritative teaching, but can only give you my own views, — what religion means to me.

"First, then, as I look out upon life, upon this marvellous universe, with its wonderful balances and harmonies and law, I am compelled to believe in a guiding intelligence behind it and animating it. To believe the universe the result of chance, some 'fortuitous concourse of atoms,' seems to me, as St. George Mivart said, as absurd as to suppose that if one threw down at random the contents of a child's box of letters they would be found arranged so as to spell a beautiful poem. Such a thing is not thinkable, and the richer and more wonderful you, gentlemen, show us nature to be, the stronger is my conviction of the intelligence supporting it. This intelligence I deem infinite — infinitely transcending my own, yet supporting and related to my own. And the logical necessity for the existence of this intelligence is the logical necessity for the existence of God.

"Next, it seems to me that the universe is not still, but in motion; in constant change and growth; that through these myriads of changing forms of life there is manifest not only intelligence, but an intelligence directed toward a definite end, — a co-ordinated thought and will whose end is righteousness. As the words of a spoken sentence, one by one, reveal the thought behind them, so is the end of their sequence the complete expression of that thought. Thus, as the psalmist has phrased it, 'the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handi-

work.' The end of life, of that long evolutionary chain you have taught us to see, is righteousness — the fulfilment of the thought of God. There is thus a constant progress toward the spiritual.

"Again, as we look back either into human history or upon the lower forms of life we see the beginning, the germ of the present in the past. The great strides forward we have taken, the wonderful development and betterment, all had their origin in the past and were in a certain sense already present in the past. So to-day we have within us the germ of the future, of the progress yet to be toward a higher consciousness; toward a broader, freer, nobler life. And in a sense this is already present in us. It waits only for us to recognise it; for us to lay joyous hold upon what we can be and are to be; and to realise and express it in our thoughts and acts.

"This leads me to my view of man and of human life. I think we should view the personal man as but a scaffolding upon which we build the spiritual man. This is what St. Paul called the 'new man,' born from above, for we build it in the likeness of what is beyond and above us; in the likeness of our vision of God, of the ideals we sense but have not reached, of our strivings, our aspirations, and our prayers. We are building this whenever we seek unison with God, and, as I defined religion as the relation between man and God, so I would define a

religious act as something done with the idea and purpose of strengthening this relation and establishing a closer unison. To go to church may or may not be a religious act, according to the motive which takes us there. To help a comrade, to sacrifice ourselves, to do good to those around us, — these are equally religious acts. Indeed, any act is religious if it is done from love of good, from the desire for unison with the spirit of love and righteousness, as an expression of the relation between man and God, or with the thought of unity with God and a looking to Him. Every such act is an act of construction. There follows from it a change and a growth of moral fibre.

" It is not alone the scientist whose attitude toward life is a question. Consciously or unconsciously we are always questioning the great universal life around us and answering our questions in our acts. According to our questions are our lives, and these can be divided into two great classes, — those who ask: What can life give to me? and those who ask: What can I give to life? The first is the attitude of the sensualist and the huckster. The second seems to me the attitude of the religious man. There is no bargaining in religion; no thought of gain in a gift of love. And in return life gives us ourselves; builds for us a spiritual self in which we can know it and God.

"Perhaps the most remarkable thing in the entire history of the Christian Church is the rapidity with which it departed from the teachings of Jesus and ran off the track. It is remarkable (though explicable enough when one considers the environment of the Church in the first centuries of its existence) how early Christianity was paganised; for that is precisely what happened. Jesus gathered around Him a handful of simple folk — fishermen and the like, who had neither special insight nor learning — and talked with them of the love of God and the service of God and man; putting forward the ideal of giving to life and to others rather than of taking for oneself, and promising, as the result, knowledge and communion of the spirit with God. There was no system, no rites of propitiation or of sacrifice. There was a life, lived clearly and strongly, of service and of worship — of union with God.

"Within two centuries this had changed. One by one the older forms of ritual, prevalent in the Jewish or ancient pagan faiths, had been ingrafted upon Christianity, changed in appearance, but still recognisable. Particularly was this true with the idea of sacrifice. The gods of the Romans and the Jehovah of the Jews had alike been worshipped with sacrifices, and so deep grained had this become that Christianity could only be accepted by viewing Christ as the perpetual sacrifice. In the ritual of the mass

this was taught and emphasised. Yet to me this seems foreign to the whole spirit of Christianity.

"I remember to have been impressed with this thought when I visited the Public Library at Boston, and saw Sargent's mural paintings. One represents Egyptian and Assyrian nature-worships as the background for the Mosaic law, and as a preface to the prophets of Israel. The picture is full of monstrous astronomical, animal, and human symbols of fiery devotion to the instincts of the flesh, which give place to the dignified figures of Hebrew prophets, standing in a row underneath the symbolic confusion of cruder faiths. The prophets, human, isolated, rapt, represent conscience and the mind in communion with God — so ethical religion is shown emerging from sacrificial religion. At the other end of the hall, in a lunette, is Jesus the Christ. But under what guise is He depicted! He who showed that religion was Love, who placed above all the law and the prophets the love of God and the love of man, who taught us the way of service and the path of the spirit, who said of Himself that He was the way, the truth, and the life, is shown to us as dead and limp, hanging on the cross, with angels catching the blood which drips from His hands. Here is a return to sacrificial religion.

"This sacrificial system, ingrafted on Christianity, conceals and distorts its meaning. Such a rep-

resentation is Byzantine Christianity and Roman Christianity, but it is not the Christianity of Galilee — not the religion of Jesus, for that was the fulfilment of the prophetic, ethical ideal. Christianity is not concerned with the dead, but the living. The essential teaching of Jesus is not that His body died to ransom us, but that His spirit lives to inspire us.

"The God of Christ's teaching is not only the spirit of righteousness, but a Heavenly Father, to be approached freely and unafraid, requiring no mediator, no sacrifices, asking no gift but our love. For if we love God we will seek union with Him. And seeking union we will fulfil His will. I have never been able to see that Jesus taught a sacrificial system; on the contrary He opposed its idea and its effects. In many ways the liberal Christianity of to-day is nearer Christ than the Church has ever been before.

"I have taken more time than I had intended, and I am by no means sure that this is the sort of talk you wished to hear from me. I believe, however, that the points I have so inadequately touched upon will repay consideration."

The Mathematician: "You have given us, Mr. F—, just what we wanted to focus our thought, and we are all much indebted to you. For my own part, I would like a fuller discussion upon many of the

points you have raised. Indeed, so suggestive are they that it is hard to know where to begin, unless we take them up in the order of your presentation. You commenced, if I remember rightly, by giving us certain logical arguments for the existence of a guiding intelligence behind life as we see it (whether we ascribe this intelligence to a pantheistic or a personal God), and the inevitable corollary that man is in relation to this intelligence and power for righteousness. Now I have often wondered whether any one's religious life was in fact founded on such arguments. I confess it seems to me that these reasons are more frequently constructed to convince others than ourselves, and that it would be well to label them plainly 'for export only.' In saying this I am not attacking the validity of the argument, but its necessity and actual usefulness. Is it not true in your case, as I know it is in mine, that your religious feeling is founded on something far more fundamental in your nature than is argument? Does it not rest upon an interior instinct or direct perception, a simple turning of your nature, as obvious and as much a matter of fact to you as is the fact (not that an argument is true, but) that you think at all? It seems to me that religious feeling is fully as fundamental as thought itself, and that to attempt to base it upon an argument is a purely artificial proceeding, indulged in only because we can-

not impart to others the real basis of our own certainty."

THE CLERGYMAN: "I am not sure that I have entirely grasped your thought. I would agree that religious feeling is very fundamental, but I know my mind also seeks its intellectual justification."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "That is a way the mind has. It insists upon an intellectual and logical explanation of all sorts of things — such as love and honour and unselfishness, or the appreciation of a sunset, or one's enjoyment of music — things which it is impossible to prove have a logical explanation. And if we do not satisfy the mind it is quite likely to deny these things altogether and persuade us we do not see what we do. In consequence I think we get into the habit of concocting explanations for the mind; feeding it reasons, so as to be left in peace. But really it seems to me a pandering to a sort of mental piggishness, a vanity of intellect which is quite unwarranted. Who was the mythological personage who fed on his or her children? Whoever it was is a good image of the mind, seeking to absorb what it has no concern with and devouring instead its own thoughts."

THE EDITOR: "As I understand you, Mr. F—, you implied that the end of the religious life, or salvation, was a matter of unity with God, and that this end might be attained in various ways — in fact

by any consistent life devoted to the love of God and service of God. Would you be willing to say that while the teaching of Jesus constituted one such way — I am sure you would say the best way — that the path taught by others might reach the same goal? That is, that Krishna and Buddha and other great religious teachers might have been looking to the same God as did Jesus, and teaching their disciples practices suited to their lives and times, which led to the same union that Jesus inculcated?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "Yes, I see no reason why one should not think that. But I consider the Christian idea of God more active, more in accord with the vigour of the human will and with the scientific history of the universe than the Buddhist idea of God."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I doubt whether many Western thinkers appreciate just what the Buddhist concept is. I know Max Müller never did."

THE HISTORIAN: "I have been most interested in what you have said, Mr. F—, and particularly in your allusion to the speed with which Christianity jumped the track, and, I would add, the completeness and the thoroughness with which it departed from its original spirit. This has been a source of constant wonder to me, as I think it is to every student of history, and this wonder deepens, as we follow the history of the Church through the Middle

Ages, into the most profound admiration of the capacity of the Church fathers to misinterpret and to misrepresent. The crimes that have been committed in the name of Christianity! The aggression abroad, the extortion at home, the cruelty, torture, and murder, the magnification of pomp and splendour, the ambition for worldly power and the unswerving relentlessness of a beast of prey; what one of these was not preached and practised in the name of Christ by the Church which claimed to follow Him! You speak of the paganising of the Christian ceremony, but what can we say of the 'Christianising' of the human heart — the instilling of black fear of death, the making of a free man a cringing coward before the thought of eternal torture — torture whose meaning the Church daily showed him in life? The Church spread a pall over human life which lingers even to this day. For what other race fears death as do we?

"The more reverently we view the life and teaching of Jesus, the more we marvel at such phenomena as these. As you have said, the edifice of dogma built upon such simple foundations is sufficiently astounding, but this complete moral reversal is unequalled."

The Author: "I do not think we should overlook the other side of the picture. If the history of the Church presents such dark blots, it is also

full of very inspiring acts of heroism and nobility. The faith that produced the martyrs cannot be said to have inculcated only fear of death. Read the records of the Jesuit Missionaries in Asia, in Africa, or among the Indians in America. Moreover, even when the Church was at its worst, there never lacked those who sought to follow the example of Jesus, and who had that inner illumination which comes from living one's beliefs. Remember that St. Francis of Assisi, for example, was leading his followers to poverty, meekness, and the imitation of Christ, while Innocent III was magnifying the pomp and power of the Papal chair."

THE CLERGYMAN: "Naturally there are two sides to a religion that was officially inculcated as a transaction, but which saints discovered was a life."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I wonder if our biologists would not see in this an example of Mendel's law of hybrids. It would seem that from one point of view at least Jesus's mission and teaching was premature. The world at large, or at least those Western people to whom His message came, had not evolved either ethically or spiritually to the point where they could assimilate such ideals. Something, however, in the manner of their presentment, or in the political and social conditions of the times, led to their adoption. The result was a genuine hybrid

— a bastard product, full of hyprocrisy and pretence, showing the worst features of both parents, as half-breeds seem to do. Yet, as hybrids also do, breeding progeny, pure-blooded and true to each parent, as well as hybrids like itself.

"In the light of this analogy we would expect the Middle Ages to present precisely the phenomenon described. First we would have the hypocritical churchman; sensuality and ambition masked as religion. And on either side we would have reversions to the true types. On the one hand the genuine pagan, with the pagan strength and virtues, as well as the pagan vices; the worshipper of physical strength and courage; the warrior and the adventurer, fearing neither God nor man. On the other we would have the genuine Christian, such men as St. Francis of Assisi, and the long unbroken line of Christian mystics like him, whose lives were often obscure and little known, but whose aspiration and piety light the history of Christianity.

"We would also have an explanation of certain present day features. For as our ethical standards have gradually been raised we have become more and more capable of assimilating Christ's teaching. Our Christianity is, I believe, far less of a hybrid than it was in the past centuries. Indeed, I am beginning to think, not only, as Mr. F— said, that we are nearer now to the right view of Jesus's mean-

ing than ever before, but that the real Christian era may still be to come."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "I would like to ask what warrant you have for the belief in a power in nature which makes for righteousness? Or where you see this vast improvement of which you speak?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "Surely that must be evident. Compare the condition of the world to-day with what it was a thousand years ago. Does one need any other argument than that simple contrast?"

THE HISTORIAN: "I think, Dr. I—, you will have to grant us that we are better than we were. The very fact that we are discussing such questions may be taken as proof of it, for consider the fate that would have been meted to us a few centuries ago. I will grant you the faults of our civilisation, but every student of history must acknowledge its improvement upon the past. Indeed I think the most remarkable thing about our civilisation and the thought of the world to-day, is the increase in the spirit of brotherliness and of unity. Personally I do not believe that Christianity is entitled to the credit for this, — as one sometimes hears stated, — but it is none the less noteworthy."

THE AUTHOR: "I quite agree with you, Professor B—. Our postal and telegraph system, our railways and steamships, the constant interchange in commerce and science, and even in war, have unified

the nations as they never were before, and our daily newspaper brings us the thought and happenings of the whole world. I think this is leading to something quite new in history, namely, the consciousness of humanity as a whole, or of the world thought and life as a single unit. I believe it an immense gain to have approached such a wider consciousness."

The Social Philosopher: "I must confess that you gentlemen have failed to convince me. I asked what warrant you had for believing in a power which makes for good in *nature;* for advocating a moral quality and uplifting element in natural process and universal law. You have all replied by speaking of the change in our civilisation and the condition of man. Now it seems to me that even there there are very weak points in the argument. I might, for example, point out that as one civilisation has arisen, another has declined. Simply because we ourselves have risen from barbarism in the last few thousand years, is no good reason for assuming that the whole human race has done the same. What of the civilisations of Babylon, of India, China, and Egypt? Truly our own lot may be better to-day than was our ancestors' a thousand or five thousand years ago, but is the same true of the Egyptian fellaheen? And we all know that every Irishman was once a king!

"But, granting the improvement in man's condi-

tion, does it not seem to you that man's place in nature is very small, and that Nature herself, 'red in tooth and claw,' is far from moral, but rather cruel and relentless? Is our boasted evolution a moral evolution? Or a moral process? And even granted that the assumed greater value of the more complex organisms justified the means by which they are evolved, — even granting that, is not animate nature itself lost in the great sweep of the inanimate universe? What is man's life compared to this vast mechanism? A speck of mould upon a grain of sand. Where is the moral element in this universe of chemistry and physics and mechanics? In a cooling sun that will wipe life away as the rising tide scours the shore?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I am afraid I have lost the thread of your argument. Why is it that I must find morality in natural processes?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Because you and Mr. F— are basing your religious feeling upon such a faith. You speak of the power which makes for good in nature and seek to unite yourselves therewith. I am questioning the existence of such a power."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Let us then put the matter in another way. Whether or no law is moral, you will grant me that this is a universe of law? That throughout inanimate as well as animate na-

ture things act and react according to one law or another?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Yes. Well?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "And that the difference between things is a difference in the laws which they obey? The matter of this chair differs from the iron of the lamp, in that one obeys one set of laws and the other another. The one will unite with oxygen and burn in the air, the other will not. The distinction between them, and the character of each, is wholly a matter of laws which they obey. Evolution, for example, is a gradual change in the laws obeyed by the evolving type?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Yes, but how does that touch the problem?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "In this way. Man, whether in a moral universe or not, is then in a universe of law. Within limits he has the definite choice of the way in which he will act and react upon his surroundings. In other words, he can himself determine the laws he will obey. And the laws he obeys determine what he is and what he becomes. He is at each moment determining his own evolution. If he chooses to obey the laws of selfishness, of lethargy, of pleasure, he becomes one thing, selfish, lethargic, and pleasure-loving. If, on the other hand, he obeys the spiritual and moral laws of aspiration and effort and unselfishness, he becomes the

moral and spiritual man of which the Clergyman spoke. In either case he unifies himself with a definite principle and law."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Perhaps; but I do not think the identification of oneself with mere law is calculated to arouse enthusiasm as an end and object for life. No, I prefer to follow my own ideals; to recognise them as my own; small, perhaps, and very feeble set over against the might of nature, but high and noble, or, at all events, what seem good to me. This is what I wish to win and work for — the only thing for which it is worth while to give one's life."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I do not believe we differ as much as I thought at first. Only it seems to me you are not warranted in severing yourself from nature. You yourself are in the universe and part of it. If you think, there is thought in the world. To that extent at least the universe is thinking. If there are aspirations and ideals and morality in your heart, there is aspiration and moral law in nature. It may be great or it may be small, but it is there."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "That is just the point. The extent to which moral law is manifest in the universe is far too small to justify us in assuming that its ends are moral ends, or that it works to good. Great, big, blundering, clumsy thing that it is!"

The Zoologist: "I entirely agree with what the Social Philosopher has been saying. From a biological point of view at least, there is little ground for idealising nature's processes. If, for example, one takes the biological idea of 'good,' that is, that which tends to fulfil the two first biological laws of preservation of individual life and the preservation of the species, one sees waste and evil on all sides. One need only appeal to the familiar examples of blight and storm, earthquake and hurricane, which in sheer wanton destruction undo the long, slow work of years; or to the cruelty of this cannibalistic scheme whereby life feeds on life; or again to the process of reproduction itself. Consider, for instance, the poor little tape-worm, which has to lay three hundred million eggs that one may survive and come to fruition."

The Editor: "It may like it for all you know. For my own part I don't see much loss."

The Zoologist: "That is your point of view. But how about the point of view of the two hundred and ninety-nine million, nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine embryos which do not survive?"

The Author: "Is not survival a more or less relative term? Those two hundred million odd embryos you speak of had existence of a kind, and then passed away. What more do you or I? Is it

not possible to draw an analogy from humanity itself? Perhaps to some higher order of intelligence looking down upon man's life, it may seem that only the geniuses of the human race have in any real sense lived; or, as you put it, reached fruition and survived. How many millions of men have been born to produce one genius! How rare they are! Yet how barren that civilisation whose history is without them!

"We do not feel this to be an immoral arrangement. And though so few ever really live, yet all profit and share in the life of those who do. As a civilisation flowers in its geniuses, so does their work contain its seed, its gift to the ages and to all mankind. The great artists and the great writers have synthesised for us an epoch and a people, have recorded them with a discernment and a breadth of view we never reached, but in which now we share.

"I think we get truer views of life when we look thus at the things we know than when we try to imagine the psychology of insects or animals."

THE BANKER: "I would like to ask the Zoologist a question. Both he, in his illustrations, and the Social Philosopher, in alluding to a cooling sun, made the assumption that the preservation of life is the highest good. What right have you to put this 'biological good' in place of our ordinary moral concepts as a criterion of moral law?"

The Zoologist: "This right: that I believe we can trace all our moral concepts as evolutionary products from biological principles. Take, for example, the second 'great commandment' taught by Jesus: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' This is a law of self-preservation for all animals that live in packs. The safety and well-being of one depends upon the well-being and strength of the whole. If the pack is diseased in health or reduced in numbers, then every individual in it is in danger. It 'pays' to share alike. I think all our ethical standards are derivable in the same fashion."

The Mathematician: "That is an extremely interesting thesis. But has it occurred to you what an extraordinary type of 'entire agreement' exists between what you have been saying and the views of Dr. I—, which you championed? While Dr. I— maintained that morality and ideals existed only in man, you would show us that they are, in fact, biological law. Now, if I believed there was really any great difference between my views and those of Dr. I—, I would claim that you were my ally rather than his. But for the present I fail to see why it is necessary to assume that the universe is either moral or immoral. Why is it touched by morality at all? Are not morality and immorality smaller things, applicable to a finite part, but losing their significance when extended to the infinite whole?"

The Clergyman: "Your idea is that of 'a splendid, unethical God'?"

The Social Philosopher: "But is not that admission very dangerous to the whole religious point of view? Is not the characteristic of the ordinary religious faith the belief that man's ideals are universal laws? That good is permanent and will prevail? Does not your fundamental attitude require this assumption, and once departed from do you know where you will end?"

The Mathematician: "I fear I do not. But whether dangerous or no, this is the way it looks for the moment, and we will see where it leads us by following it, even if we do so with misgivings. Let me elaborate my thought for a moment. What is the origin of our ethical feeling? You speak of it as an ideal held within our own hearts, and to which nature is more or less antagonistic. The Zoologist says the same, yet finds the origin of that ideal in natural biological law. Now it seems to me that an act of ours is moral or immoral according as it is or is not in accordance with our evolution. The picture of the next step, as it were, in that evolution is held in our hearts as an ideal, as our ethical and moral standard. Equally true is it that this next step is in the same general direction as the previous ones (as our evolution must be continuous), so it is natural for us to find

the origin of these ethical standards in biological efficiency.

"The standard of ethics is thus not fixed for all types of life, but varies according to place in the evolutionary scale. If morality is thus an adjustment of the individual to evolution — that is, to a universal process, or the relation of the part to the whole — it seems absurd to speak of the processes themselves, or the whole itself, as either moral or immoral. Have we not now an escape from our difficulties? The religious instinct appears again as a desire for union with God, with the great moving breath of life, which plays through us and through all creatures. Because this stream of life flows through us in a given direction, we call this direction good or moral, while in reality it is only good for us at this point. It is not the constancy of the direction that is essential, but the continuity of the current."

THE HISTORIAN: "I also see no reason for attributing moral responsibility to natural law. Things are as they are. Nobody thinks of questioning the morality of a proposition of geometry, nor considering that an injustice is done to 2 because 2 and 2 don't make 5, or some other number more than 4. It takes three hundred million eggs to make a tapeworm. Well, that's a question of fact. It is no more immoral than that it should take three eggs to

make a cake. Tape-worms are more expensive than cakes, that is all, and on the whole I 'm glad they are. Perhaps in time nature will be unable to afford them altogether. Nor do I see any valid ground of objection on the part of the eggs. They have had whatever kind of life a tape-worm's egg is supposed to have. One of them goes on and becomes a tape-worm. Perhaps, from the sad picture you have drawn of its lot as a parent, it wishes that it had not!"

THE ZOOLOGIST: "My poor tape-worm!"

THE HISTORIAN: "Yes, I find it very difficult to grow sentimental over the fate of those eggs. Unrealised possibilities? Why, the world is full of them. Were it not, the world would end. What are you and what am I? And they are not half so sad as would be their absence. Think for a moment of there being nothing more within us, nothing that we had not worked out and fulfilled.

"But the whole trouble is the importation of a set of ideas into an environment where they do not belong. Drummond's 'Natural Law in the Spiritual World' is the sort of thing I mean; a reasoning from analogies which do not exist, and the consequent falsification of both religion and science."

THE BANKER: "I wonder whether if the Zoologist had the power he would alter the death rate in tape-worms' eggs."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "I don't believe I would!"

THE BANKER: "Then in this particular, at all events, nature's practice does not differ from your own ethical standard? True, you might regret the short-sightedness of the eggs, who could be assumed to view their death as a personal misfortune, but still you would realise that it was best for the world as a whole and would act as nature does. Granted this, I think your illustration fails to help your contention of nature's immorality."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "I spoke of nature's waste and cruelty."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Wasteful of what? Force never dies, nor energy, nor does matter lessen, or consciousness or feeling ever cease. The form alone changes. And from each form some new thing is gained. Cruel? It surely seems so. But in our own lives would we be without what we have gained from suffering? I suspect much of the cruelty is only apparent; an importation of our own ideas such as the Historian spoke of. My window there, for instance, looks across into a small, old, rickety, two-story building, the ground floor of which is a sweat-shop and the rooms above crowded by a washer-woman and a large family of children, swarming around her tubs and stove. Such surroundings would be misery to me, and I was at first inclined to be somewhat sentimental over their hard fate. But as I have watched them I realise that in truth they are

quite satisfied with their dwelling, and would be as unhappy here as I would be there. I was reading my own sensitiveness and desire for privacy into them, who had none of it."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "I do not think I can agree with you in such a view as that. Nor can I view nature as anything but the great, blundering, senseless thing it is. It seems to me a far sounder attitude, and also a worthier one, to recognise our ideals as ours, dwelling in our own hearts. Is that not enough for a man? Do we need to bolster up our faith and support of them by attributing them also to nature? Is it not far more splendid to stand alone, if necessary, 'thanking whatever gods may be for my unconquerable soul'?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "'*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.*' It is a foolish theatrical sort of splendour. If a man finds his ideals in opposition to nature, opposed to the whole current of human life and universal law, it is time for him to get a new set of ideals. Let us play the game."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "You, then, would only fight on the winning side?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "Yes — if you wish to put it so — for what can stand against God? And to assume that all of God's universe is evil because you differ from it is absurd."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Is not the difference be-

tween you really one of dualism versus monism; the Churchman finding all things work together for good, and the Socialist seeing man alone as a saving moral force in a blind universe of cruelty and waste?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "But was not the attitude of all religious teachers essentially dualistic in the same fashion? Which one of them idealised human life as you have done to-night? It was to save men from the misery and cruelty of life, to enable them to overcome nature, that Christ taught. And what was the meaning of Buddha's message of renunciation and the way of liberation?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "Buddha! Buddha is too mythical!"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "No more mythical than Jesus."

THE CLERGYMAN: "I have no patience with this false pessimistic idealism. A lot of New England transcendentalists sat in their studies, or their gardens, and hatched ideals. They could think of more reforms in ten minutes than human collective effort could bring about in a century, and they condemned men for not changing everything with a bang. When later they did what they ought to have done at first, and looked out upon the great world as it is, they set up a mighty clamour because the world did not fit their theories. Why should it? Thank God, this universe is bigger and better than your brain or

mine. As Ruskin said: 'Whenever people don't look at Nature, they always think they can improve her.'

"Do you know what you ought to do? Stop living on your own thoughts, stop spinning arguments around your soul till you can neither see nor feel the great true heart of Nature. Get out of your corner and do something. Do something for your fellows. Do you know the most optimistic place in this great city? Down in the settlement on R— Street. There in the slums, in contact with life and its problems — side by side with the hardship and pain and suffering — there, those who work learn to know human nature and life as it is. There pessimists become optimists."

III

EVOLUTION AND ETHICS—COLLECTIVE LIFE AND CONSCIOUSNESS

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "In the discussion following the Clergyman's talk at our last meeting, the question arose as to the propriety of attributing any moral element to nature. Man finds within his own heart certain ethical standards and moral ideals. Are these only the expression in him of a moral law acting throughout all the universe? Or does their presence in man serve to differentiate him from the rest of nature, and set him, as a moral being, in opposition to natural law and natural forces, to play a lone hand for his own ideals?

"Each of these views found its advocates; as did many intermediate shades of opinion. Of these latter, one of the most interesting and suggestive was put forward by Professor D—. He stated that, as a zoologist, he was forced to view nature as cruel and wasteful, and that he could see no conformity to moral ideals in its processes. Yet, while thus advocating the essential immorality of natural conditions, he asserted that our moral ideals were themselves but

the evolutionary derivatives of biological principles. As the tenor of the discussion did not then admit of the elaboration of this latter theory or the attempt to reconcile the two statements (which I confess seem to me inconsistent), I have asked him to start our discussion this evening by giving us the logical development of his doctrine, and to trace for us the origin and evolution of our ethical concepts from the biological standpoint."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "I think Professor A— is putting a rather doubtful construction upon one part of what I said, and that the antithesis he mentions does not really exist in my view. It will, however, probably be more fruitful not to attempt a retrospective explanation of what I did or did not say, but to speak afresh directly to the subject given me. This subject may be stated as the 'Natural History of Ethics'; that is, the nature of human ideas of right and wrong as clarified by the evolutionary development of these ideas.

"Really there are two subjects or subdivisions of the whole problem. The first is the historical justification of human standards. The second is the relation of 'natural' or 'biological' ethics to the other elements that enter into the modern complex — religion. Here I would have to trespass upon the territory of the anthropologists, of Professor L—, and others."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I do not think that any of us need fear trespassing upon the ground of others. Indeed, our points of view are so different that trespass is almost impossible, however much we may talk upon the same theme. So I trust you will not let this restrict your presentation."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "Thank you, but I may find I have quite enough to do to develop my first heading.

"A living thing, as long as it remains, or exists as a living thing, *must* maintain certain definite relations to the environment. It is 'conditioned' very definitely by external nature. For example, let us consider the *Amœba,* a tiny little mass of living matter, consisting of but a single cell and nearly as primitive as any living thing can be. Yet it *must,* to exist, provide for the introduction into itself of (*a*) matter, for the repair of its substance; and (*b*) energy, with the matter, to be converted into its 'vital' energy. That is to say, it *must,* if it is to exist, look after its immediate individual welfare, be *egoistic.* This is the first and great commandment of Nature, by which the most primitive as well as the highest forms of life are conditioned: 'preserve thyself.'

"A second commandment of Nature is: 'perpetuate thyself.' Whatever may be the cause of reproduction (and Biology offers some very definite statements on this subject), the conditions are such

that an individual of a species *must* make more like itself.

"Nature does not tolerate any forms that ignore their 'duty' to the species — *individualism* is not permitted to reach its logical extreme. And often the obedience to Nature's second mandate runs directly counter to individual interests. Nevertheless, there are now no species that place individual before racial welfare. For if such there were at any time, these have died as species. Nature does not approve of 'race-suicide.'

"Thus at the very beginnings of life, as in its most complex forms, we see these two laws ruthlessly enforced — 'preserve thyself' and 'preserve thy kind.' The violation of either entails the blotting out of the form that disobeys. But already we see evidence of the wider end dominating the narrower, the preservation of the race taking precedence over the preservation of the individual.

"When, now, we pass to such an organism as the *Hydra*, the small fresh-water polyp, a relative of the jelly-fish and coral, we find, not one cell, but a large number of these little organic units, arranged in two layers; — an outer layer, lined by an inner one. Here we have a new cell environment and in consequence a new type of 'conditioned' existence. Each cell must maintain itself. But there is something more that the cells must do. They must work

not only for themselves but for their fellows, and their fellows in turn must work for them.

"The outer cells provide for the relating of the whole mass of cells to the environment. In return for this they are relieved of the feeding functions, as they receive supplies from the inner layer, that feeds not only for itself but also for the outer protective layer. Thus we have a primitive community, composed, so to speak, of two groups or castes, a soldier class and an agricultural class, while of course there are those cell units that have as their special task the reproduction or perpetuation of the whole colony.

"Thus no cell is entirely sufficient unto itself. It must, it is true, carry on the same essential vital activities as a solitary amœba. But now, it also owes a duty to the other members of its colony, who, in turn, are specialised for other tasks and owe duties to it. Interdependence of differentiated units replaces the independent egoism of solitary forms. Altruism is a direct result of association and differentiation.

"From this brief sketch two things should be clear: First, how an individuality of an higher order is established by the union and specialisation of first order individuals. And, second, what 'duties' of mutual support and co-operation are imposed upon the primary units by such social relations. Let us now extend our view to higher groups, and consider

such communities as are formed by wolves, or ants, bees, wasps, and the like.

"Here, as in the case of the cells in the polyp, we see the same mutual dependence or interdependence of units, the same subordination of the individual to the common good in which all must share. A pack of wolves will hunt as a unit, and pull down together what one would be powerless to overcome. The welfare of each depends upon the welfare of the whole. No matter how well fed and strong a single wolf may be, if his pack is feeble and diminished he is himself in danger. It pays to share the kill; and that pack whose members put aside their personal quarrels on the chase will survive in competition with those who do not. To care for one's fellow, to love one's neighbour as oneself, is a commandment founded upon biological efficiency. It does not contradict, but both supplements and is necessary to, the other commandment of self-preservation.

"Yet there are times when these two commandments conflict, when the preservation of the community demands the sacrifice of the individual. Here the lower orders of nature present us with most striking instances of altruism and self-sacrifice. Consider, for example, the life of the royal bee. You all know how the life of the hive centres around its queen, who lays all the eggs, and upon whom thus

rests the perpetuation of the entire colony. There cannot be two queens in a single hive — if there are, civil war results and one or the other is killed. Yet 'princess' bees must be raised, both to guard against the hive being left through accident without a queen, and also to lead the swarms and to furnish queens to the new hives. Here then would be a danger of internal dissention and strife were it not that the princess bees provide for their own death. The royal larvæ construct only imperfect cocoons, leaving open a space where they may be stung to death if unneeded. In a way it is suicide. But it is the same kind of suicide that the soldier commits in storming a battery, going himself to certain death that others may survive, — or that a union may endure.

"Human society is no less an organism than is a pack of wolves or a hive of bees. There is among men to-day the same specialisation and differentiation of task and power and function as we saw among the cells of the simple hydra. Men are not independent, but interdependent; and the laws of the biological efficiency of organisms apply to our civilisations, as to our bodies. We have seen that these laws require of the individual two things — the discharge of two kinds of duties, the one egoistic, the other altruistic; — he must provide for his own welfare and for the welfare of his fellows. And if these two clash, his duty to himself and his duty to the

whole of which he is a part, then the wider end takes precedence over the narrower.

"This is, in briefest outline, what I believe to be the 'historical justification of our human standards.' It does not matter at all whether the wolf and the bee act as they do consciously or unconsciously; whether generosity and self-sacrifice with them be blind and compelled, or deliberate and willed; the point that is of importance is this: those forms of life which obey these laws survive; those that disobey die. And this has been as true of men as of animals. The savage may not have seen why he should do this and avoid that, but the fact remains that only those tribes survived who consciously or unconsciously obeyed these mandates of Nature. Our ethical standards are what they are because of this fact. They are in every way similar to all other evolutionary characteristics.

"From this view it will be seen that many of our human terms receive very precise definition. Right is what furthers both individual interests and the interests of the whole group. Wrong is the reverse. Good is what is useful. Evil is that which interferes with the discharge of personal or social functions.

"Let me now turn for a moment to my second heading and consider the relation of this natural system of ethics to the other elements that enter into

the religious complex. As a result of the causes I have attempted to outline, primitive man finds himself with certain feelings of compulsion toward this or that course, — often toward a self-sacrifice he cannot explain on rational and immediate grounds. He is living under tribal order and law, and the compulsion he is familiar with is the power and authority of his chief — enforced with club and spear. Therefore it is natural for him to ascribe this inner instinct to some external authority, — the will of some god or spirit chief.

"I think that we can even see how he comes by this latter idea. For in dreams he sees his friends and enemies, and talks and acts with them. Thus he is led to a belief in another world than the outer one around him. Moreover, he still sees in dreams those who have died, and thus he is led to think of their continued existence. From this the idea of disembodied spirits and of immortality is formed. Thence the path is plain, and all natural forces, as well as all that happens to the man himself, are viewed as the activity of some one or other of these spirit chiefs and heroes. Gradually greater and greater power is ascribed to them. As man moulds ships, so the gods mould mountains, send rain and drought at will, and play with lightning and with storm, until finally the notion of an omnipotent God, as well as an omniscient one, completes the series."

THE EDITOR: "Is not this a pretty cold view of life?"

THE ZOOLOGIST: "It does not matter whether it is cold or not, provided it is true."

THE EDITOR: "Many things are true, yet none contains all the truth. What I mean to ask is this: Suppose we grant you all that you have said, what follows? In what way does this bear upon religion? Have you in it a view of life which satisfies you, or which helps you to live?"

THE ZOOLOGIST: "Yes, I have. I suppose to some it would seem cold, but to me it is sufficient. If I find the basis for my conduct and ethical ideals in the very laws of life, what is surer or more fundamental? If it is not a religious view in the usual sense it certainly arouses in me that cosmic emotion which I put forward as the basis of religion. Indeed, that is just what I tried to make clear: that these were the facts which it seemed to me did underlie first ethics and then religion."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Let us then look again at certain of their implications. As I understood you, you began by considering the life of the single cell, which acted as though subject to but two desires: self-preservation and the preservation of its kind, which last you spoke of as being in one form or another really an act of self-sacrifice. From this you passed to a consideration of more complex organ-

isms, such as the jelly-fish. Here you showed that while each component cell carried on its own life, it still so co-ordinated itself to its fellows and to the whole of which it is a part that the higher single life of this whole became possible. This co-ordination you showed to be at once egoistic and altruistic in character, and you put it forward as the basis of our present ethical ideals, tracing its action through the communities of insects and animals to primitive and civilised man.

"Now I would like to ask a question. Is it a legitimate inference that, as the co-ordination of the cells of the jelly-fish enabled each to live with the richer, fuller life of the whole, so obedience to ethical standards would lead man to a higher, wider type of consciousness and existence than that of his present separate personality? Does not your argument suggest that man is part of a far greater whole; that ethics and religion co-ordinate him with that whole and should enable him to broaden and deepen his life and consciousness until it is one with that higher consciousness of which his is but an element?"

THE ZOOLOGIST: "We must remember, however, that there can be nothing to this higher complex that is not in the elements themselves."

THE AUTHOR: "Surely you do not mean that. The combinations of elements may be totally different from any one of the constituent parts."

The Zoologist: "Certainly. All I said was that this whole was compounded from the elements. Whatever the whole is must be made up from something in the elements."

The Social Philosopher: "But is even that certain? May not the properties of a whole be quite distinct from the properties of its parts, even when taken together?"

The Mathematician: "Bolzano's example of a drinking glass would illustrate. Viewed as a whole we perceive it holds water. Conceive it as a collection of broken parts and no such inference is plain."

The Zoologist: "I am quite willing to take your illustration as my own. A drinking glass can only be formed from elements capable of being so placed together that there are no gaps. This is a property which must be present in the element, namely: that they fit one into the other; though you will notice that this is a meaningless characteristic when a single element is alone considered. Anything that is not in some way in the elements themselves can be no more than a mere abstraction."

The Social Philosopher: "How about the water itself? Its characteristic property of wetness is absent from both the hydrogen and oxygen which form it. Or, better still, consider a clock and the ability to tell time. Surely time is not a mere abstraction. Yet you will not find it compounded from

the brass and steel. Again, to take the Mathematician's point, are we not all familiar with the difference between mass psychology and that of the individual? Consider the way in which a mob is moved to frenzy — to panic or to rage, or any emotional excitement. Think of the mob ferocity; the lynchings, the burnings, the torturings, which are nothing but the manifestations of this mob frenzy, while the individuals comprising it may be of themselves quite mild mannered quiet people. These are not mere abstractions."

THE EDITOR: "Is it not probable that to each individual amœba the jelly-fish is a mere abstraction?"

THE ZOOLOGIST: "I would contend that aqueosity is in fact a property already present in the hydrogen and oxygen, and certainly everything that is done in a lynching is done by individuals. In that sense the mob *is* a mere abstraction. The coming together of many men and their reaction one upon the other bring out what would otherwise not have been revealed. But it was there, nevertheless. Indeed, I think this is a matter of considerable importance, too often overlooked. Whatever is present in the highest organism *must* also have been present, and *always* present, in element, in the cells which compose it. The continuity of the germ plasm makes this certain."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "You mean?"

THE ZOOLOGIST: "I mean '*ex nihilo nihil fit.*' Moreover, acquired characteristics are not transmitted. You do not inherit from your father, but from that common line of life which made him what he is first, and then you what you are. 'Natural selection' and other such evolutionary factors do not create, they eliminate. They are the judges of what forms shall endure. They do not produce those forms. Therefore we are forced to view all forms as present in some way in the cells from which they spring."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "*Present* they doubtless are, but still unrealised and unmanifest, — present as potentialities, — and evolution would appear to be the layer by layer unfoldment of their content. But does not this still further point my question? If all forms of life are pre-existent as potentialities in the single cell, then man must also be the image of the universe, contain within himself all the powers of the whole, present and realisable though unrealised. And you have shown us that at least certain of these possibilities can be manifested, new and higher forms of life realised, by such a co-ordination as you have said ethics and religion in fact are. In this view, then, ethics would appear as something more than preservative. It would be itself a dynamic principle, — the actual machinery of growth. Do we not, in this, return very close to the Clergyman's definition of religion as 'the climbing instinct,'

whereby the consciousness and life of man is constantly being widened and raised?"

THE ZOOLOGIST: "In a way I think we do. But I would prefer to say that we become more efficient, than that our consciousness is raised. I do not know that the wolf in the pack has a different or higher type of consciousness than the one who hunts alone."

THE CLERGYMAN: "But why talk about wolves and bees? Surely we know more of ourselves than we do of amœbas and wolves. And is it not, — well, let us say a humorous conceit to argue seriously that religion is or is not creative because a lone wolf acts about as his brothers in a pack do? Have we not difficulties enough when we begin with and confine ourselves to man?"

THE ZOOLOGIST: "It is precisely because we have so many difficulties when we do confine ourselves to man that it becomes necessary for us to take a broader view. And I do not at all agree with you that we know more of ourselves than of lower orders of life. There is nothing more misleading than introspection, as current religious psychology amply demonstrates."

THE PHILOSOPHER: "I agree with the Clergyman. Personally I can see better in a lighted room than in the dark. My own mind is lit for me, the mind of a wolf is not."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Is it not wise to look in

both directions — both inward at our own hearts and minds, and outward upon the workings of nature? These two views seem to me to supplement and correct each other. Thus though I am inclined to think our zoologists too materialistic in their conception of life and of heredity, taking too little account of the enormous influence of mental and moral environment, which is in fact a moral heredity, it seems to me there is a grandeur and a universality in the view Professor D— has just presented which I would be sorry to lose. Does it not both enrich and clarify our ordinary thought of ethical standards to see them as at once evolutionary products and evolutionary forces? To view them as the deposit in the consciousness of long ages of experience? Think thus of Nature sifting the hearts of her children, breeding brotherhood in us as we breed horses for speed or wind. We may not see why we should act thus or so, why we should feel this right and that wrong. Hereditary tendencies are rarely reasoned, and the deeper any principle is ingrained in our character the less obvious is its cause. The explanation of our ethical standards cannot be found in any immediate benefit, in any cheap clap-trap of honesty being the best policy. They would never have been produced by the conditions of a given moment, nor can they find their sanction in the present. Their causes extend back into the past to the origin of life itself.

Their production required the age long integration of successive lives, their justification and their end must ever be beyond us. They are the past acting in us, the present also moulding the time and forms that are to be. They are the will of nature, the evolutionary stream itself, the breath of life. This is what I conceive the Zoologist's presentation to mean, and it seems to me to contain elements we cannot well do without. But after all it is only half the story, and I would wish with Mr. F— to look at these things directly as we find them in our own hearts. Unreasoned they may there be, but they are not fruitless there. And we do not need to speculate upon their fruit. We can one and all know of our own experience the enrichment that results from altruism and unselfish effort. Indeed, I believe we can know it in no other manner. So there surely I think it more profitable to study ourselves than 'our brothers the wolves.'"

The Social Philosopher: "It seems to me the study of external nature simply emphasises the fact that we can only find ethics and religious ideals in our own hearts. I fail entirely to see this moral element in nature of which you talk so much. You seem to me almost deliberately to distort the facts. Because two thugs can kill and rob more safely and lucratively working together than alone, the law does not on that account sanctify their partnership. Yet

you are presenting such a conspiracy of murder as a marvellous example of natural religion among the wolves. As for the heroic suicide of the princess bees, as well look upon little Prince Arthur's murder by John Lackland as suicide, because of Arthur's supreme self-sacrifice in being young and helpless. Your beehive is about as healthful a place for supernumerary royal heirs as is the harem of the Sultan of Turkey; and for a like reason. But I do not remember to have heard this infant mortality lauded as a peculiarly moral and uplifting circumstance designed to inculcate religious truths and divine ideals of mercy and justice. It is really time you biologists began to do some clear thinking. Why can you not be content to look at life directly, and courageously accept man's splendid isolation as a moral being? Why must you creep and crawl and seek a false support in nature where it can not be found? Is it not far more splendid to follow our ideals because they are ours, than thus to endeavour to bolster them up by external props?"

THE BIOLOGIST: "I do not think it is Professor D— who should be accused of hazy thinking because you have drawn these inferences from what he has said. His thesis shows that we are what we are as the result of natural processes — and his argument accounts for the cruelty and selfishness in us as well as for the altruism. It is exactly as easy to deduce

the one as the other from the first biological principle of self-preservation. When this is directed to the preservation of the individual we have selfishness, when to the preservation of the common-life stream, of which the individual is an expression, we have altruism. Neither seems to me the basis of religion. But as for 'man's splendid isolation as a moral being' I have not an idea what those words mean. Have you?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It seems to me that Professor D—'s point is a rather subtile one, and what he has said to-night should in justice be taken in connection with the views expressed at our last meeting. He is not arguing for nature's morality, but is tracing the evolution and growth of man's ethical sentiment and standards from biological principles. We are in danger of forgetting again that man is not outside but *in* the universe and his ideals are thus of necessity factors and powers in the universe, which, however small or large, must be taken into account, and must have a cause, and origin, and connection with other factors. This seems to me the great value of the scientific and biological view of man — that it emphasises his oneness with other forms of life. Yet I have confessed to thinking it only half the picture, and to viewing the action of external nature more as corrective than creative. However, it is not my ideas that are now in question,

and perhaps Dr. I— will tell us where he gets his ideals if they are not bred in him by life itself."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "From my own soul."

THE CLERGYMAN: "But where did your soul get them?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "From God, if you like. But I want to go back once more to the very basis of this biological view. What right have you to speak of the tendency to self-preservation as the fundamental or first law of biology? Is that not an exploded theory? It has long since been abandoned in psychology and the tendency to, or law of, self-satisfaction has been substituted for it. Is it not time that biology should abandon such an outworn postulate, that so obviously says either too much or too little according to the place in the scale of evolution to which you are applying it? Animals, for example, are not thinking of preserving life, but of satisfying their hunger, thirst, or other wants. The moth when it flies to the flame is not seeking to preserve its life or to lose it, but solely to satisfy its desires. Again, with man, we find many things placed before the desire for self-preservation — his love of the ideal, of truth, of beauty, and the lust for it, or of duty and the austerities of religion — all these have been chosen by man deliberately before the continuance of his personal existence. And to one such deliberate choice we have a hundred unrea-

soned ones. Really it seems to me that self-preservation is more commonly lost sight of than remembered, and even when remembered it is treated as of little moment compared with the satisfaction of ourselves — whatever this may mean to the self and the time in question."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "Yes, you can state it as self-satisfaction, if you so desire — though it is evident one cannot satisfy oneself when one has ceased to exist. Or we can give it an even more general and precise description as the necessity of reacting in the proper manner to the environment; that is, the tendency toward equilibrium, or the rectification of difference of potential, involving organism and environment."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "That, of course, is more subtile, but I do not know that it is more accurate. I doubt if the proper reaction toward the environment does always tend to rectify difference of potential. It may tend to increase, not diminish it, and I believe this is particularly the case where one is striving to follow one's own ideals without all this kow-towing to Nature. Why should we worship Nature? Great, big, clumsy, blundering thing! Caught red-handed in its idiotic incompetency! Cruel! Wasteful! Remorseless! We should curse Nature, not worship it. Or, better still, we should be snobbish to Nature. Use it and despise it."

THE PHILOSOPHER: "It seems to me that not enough account is taken of reflection and the part it plays in this subject. It is as reflective beings that we are religious or irreligious, or that religion touches us at all. I follow the zoologists entirely so long as they are dealing with the lower orders of life — from which we must assume the power of reflection to be absent. Here nature rules. The organism itself acts and reacts according to completely understandable laws; as we can conceive an automaton would. It is a mechanical scheme of life, and the problems it presents are of the same order as those of physics, or chemistry, or mathematics; and the tentative solutions arrived at are about as satisfactory in the one science as in the others. All this I follow.

"I follow also the mechanical explanation of how these simple forms combine into forms more complex. I see how the dynamic principles, underlying this co-ordination, correspond in some fashion to certain sociological and ethical principles that unite us to our fellow-men. But none of this seems to me the basis of religion. Nor do I at all agree with the second part of Professor D—'s talk."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "You mean that somewhere in the evolutionary scale — perhaps with man himself — a new faculty or power comes into play, the power of reflection? And that religion is con-

cerned with this, not with that mechanical, automatic action and reaction between the pure animal and his environment?"

THE PHILOSOPHER: "That is exactly my meaning. With the power of reflection comes the possibility of error, which till then did not exist (an automaton cannot be mistaken); but there comes also the possibility of a deeper and truer discernment. As reflective beings we look within our own hearts and see ideals and desires. We look out upon life around us and we see both richness of content and inexorableness of law. Seeking satisfaction we realise the universe has set down certain prescriptions, not of our making. Joyously, enthusiastically we accept them. This is to me the basis of the religious attitude."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "And if we do not accept them?"

THE PHILOSOPHER: "Then your attitude toward life is not religious. The essence of religion is to play the game, not to dispute the rules."

IV

POWER, WORTH, AND REALITY

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It will be remembered that at our last meeting the Zoologist developed the theory that ethics and religion were, in fact, founded on biological principles, and could be viewed as evolutionary derivatives from the fundamental laws of self-preservation and the perpetuation of the species. In this view, Nature herself — whether moral or immoral — is seen as inculcating morals and religion in her children, by the simple expedient of letting those die that are without them; so that the religious principles are the principles of effectiveness in life as it is; and the religious attitude the attitude of acceptance of universal law. To this thesis Dr. I—, our Social Philosopher, raised two objections: first, that self-preservation was by no means a fundamental law or tendency, and second, that the universe, as it is, is very far from acceptable. I have, therefore, asked Dr. I— to start our talk this evening by a more detailed exposition of his views."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "I am sorry, but I did not understand that you wished me to speak to

any given point, and therefore I am afraid what I had intended to say bears very indirectly upon the question which was at issue in our last meeting."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I did not mean to limit you at all, and would much rather have a constructive exposition of your own opinions than a criticism of what has been already said. You remember that at our first meeting you remained silent, so we have still to hear even your definition of religion."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "It was that which I had meant to present to-night, so, if you are willing, I would ask you to consider what we may call:

"*A Definition of Religion, Based upon an Examination of the Various Forms of Religious Belief.*

"We may construct a definition of a term such as religion in two ways: first, by introspective analysis of the experience to which we apply the term in our own life; secondly, by observation of the experiences and practices to which others have applied the term.

"Religion means to me something very simple — it means *the emotional attitude that results from a blending of the two feelings of dependence upon a higher power than my own, and respect for a higher worth than my own.* These feelings of dependence and reverence, or of fear and admiration, can only be blended in one way, namely, by being directed toward a single object in which are united the attributes of superior power and of superior worth. I can think

of the object of my religious attitude as a personal God or as something very different, but so long as the object, whatever else it may be, is an identity of a deeper reality and a higher or more perfect ideal, it inspires the religious emotion.

"If I should be led to believe that the universe, or any power in the universe, on which I am primarily dependent, should lack this superior worth or value, my attitude toward that object would cease at once to be religious, even though I might deem it necessary to pray or sacrifice to it, or in other ways manifest my fear and sense of dependence. If, on the other hand, I should become convinced that my ideal of perfection was nothing more than an ideal, and was nowhere embodied or realised in the universe or in any existent power on which I depended, why then also the name 'religion' would cease to be applicable to my attitude toward that ideal. In short, any doubt as to the identity of power and worth of the real and the ideal is a doubt of the objective truth of religion, and destructive of that subjective religious attitude in which the feelings of reverence and dependence are always blended.

"Turning now from this definition of religion, a definition based wholly upon introspection, let us examine the various types of religion that actually exist or have existed. And here a single meaning for the term seems hard to find. In the first place, we can-

not say that religion is the belief in one God, because that would bar out the polytheistic religions; nor, secondly, can we say that it is a belief in a personal God, for that would bar out the great systems of pantheism, which have at least a *de facto* right to be called religions; nor, thirdly, may we even define religion as a belief in Gods, one or many, personal or impersonal, for that would bar out Buddhism, which is properly an atheistic religion, and in which the ideal condition of being, called Nirvana, is the object toward which the religious attitude is directed, thus taking the place of the God or Gods of the theistic and pantheistic religions. All these definitions seem, indeed, to be too narrow; but if, on the other hand, we define religion as the 'climbing instinct,' as the 'sense of aspiration,' as the 'recognition of the supernatural or the unknowable,' as the 'feeling of obligation,' as 'cosmic emotion,' or as 'sheer undifferentiated and hysterical emotion of any sort,' we make the definition so broad as to lack the specific qualities which mark it off from the merely ethical or æsthetical attitude. And yet, if we return for a moment to the five types of religion indicated above, I think we shall see that there is one and only one fundamental characteristic common to all, which will, therefore, serve us as the meaning of the term 'religion.'

"These religions were: first, Monotheism, the be-

lief in one personal God; second, Polytheism, the belief in several personal Gods; third, Pantheism, the belief in an impersonal God; fourth, Fetichism, the belief in many impersonal Gods or rather forces; and fifthly, Buddhism, the belief in a supremely real and perfect state or condition of being. Now all the theistic religions attribute to the being or beings called God not only superior power, but superior virtue. Even the fetich is not, I suppose, a mere power, but possesses something that may inspire respect or admiration as well as fear. While in the case of Buddhism, Nirvana, although not an entity or God, is a mode or condition of existence that possesses the distinctly Godlike duality of aspect in being at once more real and more perfect than what we know in nature. Is it, then, too much to say that an examination of religions leads us to the same conception as that which resulted from introspection, namely, the conception of religion as a blend of the feelings of reverence and dependence directed to an object in which, whatever its particular nature may be, worth and power are blended? We may note, parenthetically, in justification of this view, that there are two distinct types of the ceremonial expressions of the religious attitude that correspond perfectly to the duality of that attitude and of its object, that is, praise and prayer. In praise we direct our attention to the ideal or value aspect of

the divine, while in prayer the feeling of dependence upon a superior power is predominant.

"I suppose it is true that in the more primitive religions, as typified by Fetichism and the lower forms of ordinary Polytheism, the element of respect is overwhelmingly dominated by the sense of fear and the desire of gain. Perhaps it may be held that in some cases the objects of the religious attitude are in no sense superior, but even inferior in moral worth, to the men who worship them, and that consequently the definition that I have proposed would be inapplicable. And I should admit that many features of primitive religion would better deserve the name either of demon-worship or mere supernaturalism, and that it is very probable that religion has originated from a sort of pseudo-science or magic, in which various esoteric rites are performed with a view to controlling in that way those natural forces which men have not yet learned to understand and control by ordinary methods. What seems to me certain, however, is the fact that as religion develops from this pre-religious stage to higher and higher forms, there is a steady increase in the ethical element. The Gods become with increasing distinctness the depositories of tribal or racial ideals. And by this I do not mean merely that the morality ascribed to the Gods becomes more perfect as their human worshippers become more perfect, a truth which every-

body will admit, but that the moral side of their nature becomes more nearly equal in importance to their physical side; the advocates of religion appeal less and less to man's fear of supernatural powers and more and more to his reverence for superhuman worth and perfection.

"It is customary to testify to this view by pointing to the Hebrew religion as being superior, not only to the other Semitic cults, but even to the religion of the Greeks, in that Jehovah was recognised as being primarily a God of righteousness; and this of course is true, though it is only fair to remember that the Greeks, in ascribing to their Gods a lack of enthusiasm for bourgeois standards of morality, by no means meant to imply that they were seriously lacking in æsthetical or even in ethical attributes.

"Now the highest point to which a religion could develop would be, I suppose, the belief in one infinite and omnipresent Reality, that possessed or embodied at the same time the ideal of infinite perfection. The two essential aspects of deity, that is, power and worth, would then be of quite co-ordinate importance, and each would be at a maximum. And if we disregard the question of the actual truth or falsity of such a belief, I suppose that most of us would agree that it is only this monotheistic type of religion that we should care for. Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out that the development of religion

did not cease when it attained to its highest perfection (that is, the recognition of the equal importance of the ethical and metaphysical aspects of deity), but passed over on the other side, so that we now have in several quarters the curious conception of God as an ideal being, lacking, however, all objective reality.

"This view of God, or the object of religious emotion, as not of necessity real, but only ideally perfect, dates from Kant's somewhat ambiguous system of Practical Reason. In the early nineteenth century, the French philosopher, Vacherot, explicitly states that perfection and existence are incompatible, and that religion must content itself with a God that is unreal. Professor Santayana, of Harvard, who is at present the chief exponent of this view, goes further and maintains that it is not only a necessity, but a positive benefit for religion to divorce itself from ontology altogether. Just as our appreciation of the character of Hamlet is hampered by an irrelevant curiosity as to whether any such person really existed, so, Santayana tells us, religion is vulgarised and destroyed by demanding that its ideals be embodied in the realm of existence. This sharp severance of the ideal from the real, and the consequent banishment of the objects of reverence from the world of actualities, seem to me to characterise the religious attitude of a steadily growing class of thoughtful men and women. And for this reason I believe

Professor Santayana's writings upon religion deserve a more critical consideration than they are at present generally receiving.

"Note that this final stage of religion is in exact logical antithesis to its first stage. In the first stage the gods exist as powers, but they are lacking in worth — religion is identified with propitiatory rites or magic. In the last stage the gods possess perfection and ideal significance, but lack existence. Religion is identified with poetry. And between the magic from which religion springs and the poetry and symbolism in which it has here culminated, there is room for all the stages that may be found in its development. Both of these extremes are equally far from the ideal craved by the religious consciousness. For mere reverence for ideals without an accompanying feeling of dependence upon a power not ourselves, in which they are embodied, is as truly irreligion as is the feeling of dependence on supernatural powers which lack moral worth. But these two forms of irreligion seem to me to mark out quite perfectly, as I have said, the opposite limits between which all religions may and must be placed. And it is because they illustrate and approximately verify the conception of religion embodied in my definition, as well as for the intrinsic significance I believe them to possess, that I have spoken of them here."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "As I understand your

thesis you begin by defining religion as a sense of dependence and reverence upon that which has power and worth. You substantiate this, first by introspection and then by an examination of known religions. In the historical sequence of these latter you find an evolution through three broad divisions. In the first, exemplified by Fetichism, the aspect of power is predominant and the aspect of worth is negligible. In the second, exemplified by Monism, the two aspects have become equal in the concept of an omnipotent power of infinite worth. In the third, put forward by Santayana and certain modern idealists, you find the aspect of worth still perfect, but the aspect of power non-existent — as the object of reverence has become purely an ideal, toward which you cannot feel a sense of dependence. The result of this evolution of religion is that you feel all that is best in you to be severed from the universe at large and your own life to be left without support precisely where you most desire it.

"Now in this the crux of the matter is the denial of reality to the ideal.

"I have never been able to appreciate the philosophic anxiety as to the *reality* of a given object. Everything that is is real. A reflection is a real reflection, a lie is a real lie, any concept a real concept. The trouble arises when we try to classify our perfectly real concepts, and in particular when we try

to ascribe physical existence to that whose existence is not physical. I confess it seems to me as though much thought was very loose in this matter, and as though there was a tendency to confuse physical existence with reality, or at least to view the former as a necessary attribute of the latter, while in fact it is no such thing. I do not question the reality of my keys because they are not in the pocket where I first searched for them. Neither should I question the reality of any object because I find it in the realm of the heart and the mind rather than of the body. If one is to discuss reality at all, one must adopt some other criterion than the department of life in which a thing is found. It seems to me that the most useful test is that of effectiveness — the pragmatic test, if you like: what does this object effect? what difference does it make? If it has any effect, or makes any difference, then it is certainly real.

"Judged by this, or, it seems to me, by any other test, our ideals are both real and effective, — the most dynamic of all forces. Ideals are not static pictures which we gaze upon unmoved; but powers which possess us, compel our acts, and mould our lives. Honour, Loyalty, Patriotism, these are ideals, yet what is more real, what more dynamic, more compelling? What stronger incentive have we than our ideals? What is there for which men lay down their lives so readily, or which has made such history?

Surely patriotism is more effective as a spur, more sure as a support, than dollars or whips or any material agency could ever be."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Ideals are real as ideals, but only as ideals. We crave something more than this and would see them embodied in the external universe. A man thirsting in the desert would have the ideal of water, which would certainly be real as an ideal, and which would be effective in shaping his action. But what he wants is water — real water which can assuage his thirst."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "You make there several points, all of which show themselves to my mind with a little different colouring. I hardly think we can regard our ideals as made by ourselves, but rather as chosen by ourselves — a selection from powers already in life and in the universe, which we choose to light and guide our personal existence, and by so doing we augment what we have chosen. It would seem to me that the inner world, of ideals and aspirations and religious feeling, existed as independently of our personalities as does the outer physical world — the difference between them being one of dimensionality, so that in the physical world a thing is either in *or* without our bodies, but in the spiritual world it is both in and without at the same time. We live in an atmosphere of ideals as truly as in an atmosphere of air. Each is impalpable and invis-

ible, yet each supports and nourishes, the one the inner man and the other the outer. Only in the former there is a greater selective action of what we shall take and what we shall reject, and we grow into the likeness of what we take.

"You have contrasted the ideal of water with the reality which the thirsty man craves. In this case the craving is for physical nourishment, and physical reality is demanded of that which would fulfil it. But the religious craving is for spiritual nourishment, and spiritual reality is what is demanded in its object. There it is that the ideals we hold to can support and strengthen us. Strengthening the spirit they strengthen the whole man, leading him through pain and privation and hardship, under which he would otherwise sink. This is not some idealistic theory, but a fact to which the history of every great struggle bears witness. It therefore seems to me but a half truth to view ideals as a craving, and not recognise that they are also the fulfilment of that craving.

"Again, you demand the embodiment in the external universe of the object of religious feeling. In one way I do so also, in that I believe there is the hunger in every man's heart to embody and express the ideal he loves, or the Will of the Father to whom he turns; to express it and to make it, through himself, a living power in the physical world as it is in

the spiritual world. To the extent to which they have been embodied in the great teachers of the race, ideals have been objective physical realities — but beyond that it seems to me unreasonable to go. Why should we demand of an ideal the same type of reality and existence as that of a stone wall?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "It may be unreasonable, but I am quite sure it is the fact that we *crave* other types of reality in the object of religious feeling, — the stone wall reality, as well as the reality of our ideals. And when either of these types of reality is absent or obscured, then our religious faith suffers. Take Huxley as an illustration, and recall what he said as to the loss of religion through an acquaintance with science, which shows us nature as immoral. Remember his statement that there could be no such thing as a 'natural religion' and that there was nothing in nature which jibed with our own ideals. Huxley lost his religion as soon as he felt that the world of space and time showed no power making for righteousness, or gave no echo back of his own ideals. He did not, therefore, abandon his ideals. On the contrary, he held to them the more firmly, and felt it the more incumbent upon him to champion them with all his strength. But he ceased to be religious."

THE OXONIAN: "Huxley claimed to have lost

what he all the time had in his breast pocket. I say advisedly his *breast* pocket."

THE AUTHOR: "I think the objects of religion actually possess both types of reality, and that the deeper we look into life the more convinced we are of this. It seems to me that it is a very one-sided science which sees nature as immoral, — one-sided, short-sighted, and illogical. Indeed, is not the man holding Santayana's view in the position of one moved by patriotism, after deciding that he has no country?"

THE LOGICIAN: "It is just that sense of having a country, of being part of a larger whole, that seems to me the essence of religion, in contradistinction to morality."

THE EDITOR: "I know that it is the fashion nowadays for you philosophers to insist upon a divorce between ethics and religion, and you are all up in arms at once when the two are considered identical or coterminous. Yet I wish you would explain to me how you ever would have known anything of ethics or morals except through religion. There never would have been any such things. The human race must have had some idea of God before ethics, which are the laws governing one's relations to God, and the way one must act to reach God, could ever have been established. Once in existence as a part of the world's heritage of ideals, it seems to me you

seize upon them and coldly show the door to religion which gave them birth."

The Logician: "I understood that the Zoologist took up that point at your last meeting and endeavoured to show that religion was a later development than ethics, the latter being directly founded in biology. But is it not also true that we find all sorts of moral ideas associated with different religions? And that this diversity is so wide that it is almost necessary to conclude that religion has nothing to do with morality?"

The Mathematician: "I think the Editor's point is not that religion precedes ethics, but that the two are, in reality, always tied together; — religion, let us say, as a sense of a relation between man and what is beyond him, ethics as the working out, or expression of that relation in his life and acts. This in no way contradicts the Zoologist's view of ethics as biological efficiency, if we think of the end of the evolutionary process as union with God. But it shows us, what I think was in the Editor's mind, that it may be quite misleading to divorce, in thought, what in experience are so closely united."

The Editor: "That was exactly my point. But I did not mean to divert the conversation and would like to return.

"I understood you to say, Dr. I—, that the evolution of religion has followed the line of development

you so clearly described, with the result that we have reached the *impasse* set forth by Santayana. Do you mean that the main current of religious evolution has, in your judgment, itself reached this hopeless point, or do you think Santayana represents merely an offshoot, — an eddy, leading to some stagnant backwater?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "I would like to believe the latter. Upon the surface of things, with such knowledge as I now possess, I am forced to give partial assent to Santayana's view, in that I do not see any other support for my aspirations than that which my ideals themselves furnish. But I am always hoping to come to some deeper insight; that the development of science, or the later evolution of religious thought, will bring to the surface some hitherto unnoticed facts; will put the whole external universe in some new and more moral light; and that the reality and power our hearts crave will be restored to the objects of our worship."

THE EDITOR: "Dr. I—, if you will pardon a personal question, I should like very much to know whether you do not really have two theories about religion; one, a very interesting hypothesis, which you put forth for argumentative purposes when discussing these things with your friends; and another very different theory, which is the working hypothesis upon which you base your conduct

and your life. I suspect we would not differ very much from this 'private view,' which seems to shine out almost unconsciously from much that you say."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "No, I hardly think I am guilty of that charge; though probably I have a vague faith that things are better than they appear on the surface to be."

THE AUTHOR: "It seems to me there is a fundamental fallacy in the thought that religions evolve. It is quite true that we see in the world the three broad divisions of religious feeling which Dr. I— has described, but nowhere do we see the evolution of a religion from a lower to a higher form; as, for example, we can trace the evolution of biological organisms. Is it not now generally recognised that the doctrine of evolution has been too broadly stated and too indiscriminately applied? Undoubtedly there are wide fields in which the law of evolution is supreme, and where it is the key to any intelligent view of the facts. But I believe there are other fields where there is no such gradual unfoldment; indeed, many classes of phenomena which remain forever unchanged; which are to-day as they have always been, and always will be, as long as there are phenomena at all. True religion seems to me to belong to this latter class."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "I do not understand

you. The religions of man are the most varied phenomena he presents."

The Author: "Yes, but I was speaking of true religion, — religion as a *fact* in life, as the relation of man to the Divine. The external expressions of this in the formal religious systems of history have indeed been very diverse. But they have not evolved one into the other, nor do I see any evidences of that life in external religions which would cause them to evolve from lower to higher. Rather do I think they have all been different expressions of the same spiritual facts; given to the different races of mankind by those whose genius enabled them to see those facts. Consider the religions of China, of Egypt, of Chaldea, and of India. Widely different as are their external forms, and the symbols which they use, it still requires but a very little knowledge of them to see the underlying unity they all possess, the constant reference back to the same spiritual facts."

The Social Philosopher: "This may be quite true of the world's great religions, but it certainly is not true when we consider the whole range of religious expression from primitive Fetichism to the present day."

The Mathematician: "As I understand the Author's thought, he is now viewing religion as 'that small old Path that leads to the Eternal'; itself endless and eternal, stretching from the infinite past

to the infinite future, always present and always the same. As always there have been those upon each stage of this path, there has always been in the world every shade of religious truth. But one could not say that the expressions of these evolved one into the other."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "How about the evolution of the Jewish faith?"

THE AUTHOR: "That was by borrowing; first from the Egyptians, then from the Chaldeans."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It would seem to me that the faith of any given people might well be considered to have evolved, — just as one would move from one part of a path to another. Borrowing might well be an instrument in evolution."

THE AUTHOR: "Yes, but that is different. External religions themselves do not grow purer and higher. Rather do they degenerate from their initial revelation with the lapse of time. So that the further back toward its source we go in any religion, the purer and more spiritual does it become."

THE EDITOR: "What better example is there of this than Christianity?"

THE AUTHOR: "Yes, it is an admirable illustration. There is first the purely spiritual teaching of Jesus — the description of the laws of spiritual life recorded from direct experience. Then there is the step down to the teaching of his disciples — purest

in John and in Paul, who were in a sense independent witnesses, with first hand experience of their own in at least part of the teaching. From there on, down through the Church Fathers to the present day, we have a gradual decadence both in understanding and in expression."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "But now there is again an upward swing of the pendulum. Did we not agree that we were nearer now to an understanding of Christ's teaching than ever before?"

THE AUTHOR: "Yes, but that is because there is to-day a new revelation. Only it is manifesting now all over the world, in many individuals and in many ways, rather than in one supreme exponent. In science, in literature, in art, above all, in Christianity itself, this new spirit breathes — this new divine revelation, this new feeling of spiritual law. The very fact that we are gathered here this evening is evidence of it; and, however imperfectly we sense or express it, our own hearts and minds are illumined by this new light."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "That is a matter upon which the Clergyman should have something to say. Mr. F—, we have heard nothing from you all the evening."

THE CLERGYMAN: "Well, I hardly know just what to say. As I listened to our friend, Dr. I—, I was inclined to agree with each point as he made

it, because each was so beautifully presented and was made to seem so logical and simple. But the end was not pleasing, was it? And it left a rather bad taste in one's mouth. It made me think of Heine's Hegelian looking out of the window into the night and finding no other thing to say than 'I am God.' That seems, — well, let us say, — inadequate, does it not, and not very appreciative of either the beauty and majesty of existence, or of that sense of proportion science claims to give us — to pick out just one point to emphasise. Is not the difficulty Dr. I— presents to us the old one between transcendence and immanence? I think that this disappears as soon as we take a psychological rather than a metaphysical point of view, and seek for ideals in facts."

THE OXONIAN: "Hear! Hear!"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "You know I have been immensely interested in these discussions because it is the first time in my experience that a thing, which was perfectly patent and obvious to my mind is objected to and denied by others, in possession of the same facts as myself, and of equally trained perceptions. It is such a plain matter of fact that we do not find what we reverence in external life, but in our own ideals. It is equally evident that we crave external and objective power in the objects of our religious faith — but that this craving is not satisfied. I should like to believe in

such a power in the universe, but, where is it? How can I believe in its objective existence?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "Why, how can you *help* believing in it when its presence is thrust at you in every moment of life? You see the evidence everywhere and in everybody. Human life, even the most degraded, is a living testimonial to it. You cannot look into the heart of any one, even those you think the most wicked and depraved, without seeing, deep within, strange gleams of light and life and force, which sparkle like the facets of a gem. It is not, perhaps, a gem of the most perfect water; we can recognise its flaws, its irregularities, its lack of polish. But still it is a jewel, and he knows little of men's hearts who does not see it. And it is as much a force as it is a light, — a force needing only to be set free, — already struggling for expression, and making for the fulfilment of those ideals which are its light, and of which you speak so much.

"Whence come these? To me they are unmistakable evidences of the existence of God as a spiritual, yet objective power. The very fact that we have ideals is evidence of God, and if I remember rightly, you yourself so implied when asked, some meetings since, of the origin of your soul's standards.

"Human life, however, seems to me only one evidence among many. Everywhere in nature the same lesson is taught. We only need to stop reasoning

about it, stop all our metaphysical hair-splitting and look at life and nature as they are. We will indeed be dull if we cannot then see their beauty and their worth as well as their power.

"Why is it that you think these attributes belong only to your ideals? Let us remember that the universe is considerably older than we are; that before man's mind assumed the responsibility of running the whole universe it had been in existence for some time, and that a good deal had been accomplished. This should really be considered, and for my own part, I know that it fills me not only with respect and reverence, but with a deep and abiding sense of power.

"What of this power? What is it that made life grow, and kept the stars in their appointed course? What is it that put the light of your ideals within your heart and makes them fruitful? Whence comes their power over you? Whence your aspiration? Whence, indeed, your craving that power be possessed by worth? Why it seems to me the whole of nature is an open book, in whose pages we may find endless proofs of what you seek — endless evidence of the one great central fact of God's existence, of His power, and of His worth."

THE OXONIAN: "The great importance of what Mr. F— has just said is that it changes our whole attitude toward religion and religious controversy.

We no longer think of the essentials of religion as things we should like to have, but, possibly, for reasons of the intellect, have no right to. We no longer think of them as in the region of possible doubt. Their sphere becomes the sphere of our actual experience, which we cannot doubt. Professor Huxley, for instance, imagined that he had lost religion, but he had it all the while in the very facts of his nature.

"Our ideals are facts. Our inspirations are facts. Take, for example, a college student, loafing across the campus, hands in pockets, a cigarette hanging from nerveless lips. Yet two months later he leads a gallant fight and meets an heroic death in the war in Cuba. Where was this heroism? Where, in the first case, the ideals and moral power which supported him in the second? Or, again, take a fellow coming up the stairs to such a meeting as this; and let him be stopped by some inspector of mental luggage, some custom-house official of reason's domain, who examines what he has with him. How easily we would all have been passed through! 'Nothing to declare.' Dr. I— would doubtless have been made to pay duty on his thesis, but which of the rest of us had with him then the ideas he has since expressed? No cross section of the mind would have shown them. In this I do not mean to point to any subconscious self; but only to the bare fact of in-

spiration, the fact that ideals and ideas that were not in us now are.

"We find these things within us, yet they do not come from our conscious selves, they come from a source, let us call it the undersoul, and as we reverence our ideals we must reverence the source thereof.

"As I remember the discussion between the Mathematician and our Social Philosopher this also gives us a resolution of their differences. For it may be said that every ideal is not only an existence, but has a real power behind it.

"There is a power that makes for the fulfilment of the ideal. By this I merely mean that in ourselves and in nature there are many tendencies in that direction, alongside of others, which, no doubt, are in a contrary direction. Moral and religious life consists in identifying ourselves with the one sort and, so far as in us lies, in vanquishing the other. For in the religious sense all the tendencies that make for the good are united into a single conception, a single principle of good.

"In ourselves these tendencies are not wholly to be identified with our own deliberate will. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit approves itself as essentially true in experience. There is a power not ourselves within ourselves, what St. Paul calls 'the power that worketh in us.' We can only invite its presence,

assume toward it a receptive attitude, welcome it when it comes. This is essentially the attitude of prayer.

"All this may be quite conformable to psychology and physiology, but it is none the less the essential fact upon which spiritual religion rests. Whether the power that makes for the ideal, what we may call *the living ideal,* is literally personal, or whether personality is only a symbol for it, is a question that need not disturb the spiritual attitude in question. The gist of the matter is that, both in the world without and in the world within, there is undeniable power making for good, calling on us to unite ourselves with it, to be its instrument. No doubt this leaves weighty problems still to be solved, but it puts the fundaments of religion beyond the shadow of doubt.

"This view makes experience supreme. But, meanwhile, it admits the fitness of symbolism as a means of interpreting for the spirit the facts of its life."

The Clergyman: "I think that Mr. M— has just expressed the attitude toward religion and the existence of God in which the clergy find themselves. So often they are asked the *reason* for their belief and are almost puzzled what answer to make, — the fact itself is so obvious. Indeed, so plain a matter of experience is it with us — experience of spiritual

law — that one could almost bring against our attitude the charge that it had ceased to be religion in that it required no faith."

THE OXONIAN: "I remember a conversation some years ago with Mr. F—, in which the question arose whether we must not say that the treasures of reason and conscience that now exist must have come from a source that possessed reason and conscience; whether it was not impossible that the river could rise higher than its source. At that time I questioned the conclusion; but afterwards reflected that the prime fact was that there actually was in the process of the universe the tendency that has wrought these results and still is working them, a true fountain of good. That fact calls for our co-operation and devotion, and makes all differences on other items secondary."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I most heartily agree to the view Mr. M— has so illumined for us, and which seems to me to take us far toward a solution of our difficulties. Not only do I believe there is a power which makes for the fulfilment of the ideal, but I believe this power is the most real and vital thing in life — is, in fact, the great flow of existence, the evolutionary stream itself, or the power behind that stream, as the attraction of the earth is behind the flow of water. It seems to me that it is our ideals which cause our growth, and as we grow

our ideals grow also — always beyond and above us, always lighting for us the next step on our path.

"Another thought that comes to me is this: Parallel to the evolution of religion which Dr. I— traced, consider the evolution of man. At first we find him little better than the animals, living, as they do, in direct contact and dependence upon external nature. His struggles, his satisfactions, his pains, and his pleasures alike come to him from the physical world. His thoughts, his emotions, his hopes, and his fears alike have their origin there, and are circumscribed thereby. His existence is almost completely wrapped up in external physical nature, and there it is that he feels the reality of his God. This is the period of Fetichism or of nature worship.

"But though the *power* of the object of his worship is thus felt to lie in the physical world upon which he depends, the *nature* of his God transcends the physical, in that it possesses worth which is not physical. This worth is in a certain sense the image of man's next step, the prototype of those virtues toward which his heart is already turning and which he is, in time, himself to embody.

"Consider now the present stage of our evolution. No longer are we in close and direct contact with the powers of external nature. Truly we de-

pend upon them, but our dependence is remote and seldom in our consciousness. The centre and circumference of our lives have alike passed inwards from the external physical world to the inner mental and emotional world. It is there that we now depend for our existence. It is there that we labor, there that we enjoy and suffer. Indeed, the outer world is only of value to us as it affects this inner world; as it reacts upon our inner life which now is the seat of reality. Just as when man centres his life in the physical world he finds there the reality of his worship; so we, whose lives are centred in the mental world, find in that the keenest sense of the reality of that which we worship. In each case we ascribe the power of our God to that realm of life upon which we most closely depend. And in each case the *worth* of our worship is something which transcends our world and leads us on, as our ideals now lead us beyond the mental to the spiritual world, unlocking for us ever higher realms of life, ever deepening realities."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Almost you convince me. And yet — Why, man, think of the cruelty of life! Think of the misery and pain and death! Think of child labour and the death rate among the children, and think of those child slaves in the Southern mills."

The Editor: " There are two sides to that child labour question. We hear much of the evils of child labour, but I am not sure that the results of child idleness are not worse. It is certainly idleness and not labour that fills our children's courts and houses of correction and produces our criminals. I was talking recently with a man, a clergyman, by the way, who had lived long in a Southern mill town and studied the question at first hand. He thought we in the North had a very distorted idea of the actual conditions. For the most part the work of the children is very light, requiring their presence only at intervals; between which times they are usually playing in the yard, and there is one man whose special duty it is to call them in when they are needed.

" But what I think must be particularly considered is the previous condition of these children. From year's end to year's end the greater number of them had never had enough to eat. They belonged to poor families living back in the mountains, with practically no means of support. The coming of the mills was a God-send to them. Whole families packed up and moved into the mill town, where they could now, for the first time, get employment, and where they could get food. The father and mother would both work, and the older children help. Perhaps it is hard on these children, but it is no harder, in the

long run, than was their previous life. And by their work the family could save a little money — often enough to send the younger children to school and, in more than one case that I heard of, to college.

"I think that even in such cases as this, if we are fair, and look at things broadly as they really are, we will see the action of bettering forces, a gradual but sure improvement."

The Social Philosopher: "But you certainly cannot call the high death rate among these children a good thing. I do not see that the statistics jibe with your theory. It seems to me little short of murder."

The Editor: "I asked my friend about that. He told me that he could not recall one fatal accident to any child."

The Social Philosopher: "Yet the statistics show the death rate far higher among these children than the normal, far higher than among the adult workers. Surely even your optimism cannot defend such a condition as that, or see in it anything but the cruel evil it is."

The Banker: "I should imagine, from what we have been told of the antecedents of these children, that the death rate among them would naturally be higher than among those who were better nourished. But are we warranted in this constant assumption

that death is cruel? Let us for a moment postulate immortality. Is there then any necessary evil in death? We must know more of what lies either side of death before we can speak of a high death rate as an evil thing."

V

MYSTICISM AND FAITH

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I am sorry to say that neither the Historian nor the Social Philosopher can be with us to-night, and, indeed, I have small hope of seeing our Biologist. For, though he promised to come if he could, I know he is presenting a paper before the Society for Experimental Biology, and I fear there is little chance of his being let off in time to join us. Therefore, we had best wait no longer.

"You remember that, at our last meeting, the Social Philosopher defined religion as a commingled sense of dependence and reverence directed toward that which had both power and worth. This he supported by an appeal to introspection, as well as by an examination of historic systems. It appeared that the evolution of religion had been away from the sense of power, while the sense of worth had augmented, so that in certain quarters to-day religion was identified with poetry and considered purely a question of ideals. This led to a good deal of discussion of the reality and power of the ideal—'its independence of us and its power over us.' The

opinion was expressed that man found the power of his religion in that department of life where his own existence was centred. As in his evolution the centre of his life had passed from the physical to the mental and emotional worlds, so had his religion become more subjective, more a matter of the inner life than the outer; but it was none the less real, none the less powerful, and none the less a universal fact in the latter case than in the former.

"In the course of this discussion the Oxonian ably defended the existence of inspiration as a fact of experience, and of a power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness.

"I have asked him to open our discussion for us this evening."

The Oxonian: "The Mathematician truly asked me to give you a lead, but he did not tell me upon what to speak. As I have been privileged to attend but one other meeting I find myself in something of a quandary. There are four subjects, into any one of which I might plunge; which I shall choose I leave to you. For you can judge which fits best with your previous discussions. These are: first, The Nature of the Religious Sentiment; second, The Problem of Evil, to which the Social Philosopher referred last time — that is, the fact so baffling to any one who would worship the supreme power in the universe that to it is due pain and sin and hid-

eousness quite as truly as good. The third subject is Mysticism; and the fourth is The Place of the Church in this Age."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "They all four fit in admirably. The central purpose of all these meetings is to arrive at some clearer idea of the nature of the religious sentiment. The apparent evil in the world is a difficulty which has constantly been voiced, notably by the Social Philosopher, and, though mysticism itself has received no direct discussion, the mystic point of view is one that has very frequently been adopted, and I know appeals strongly to more than one of us. Your fourth subject, the function of the Church in the present age, has also been touched upon. Indeed, it was a discussion of this which led to the wider inquiries we have since pursued. It is, therefore, plain that you cannot choose one, and reject the other three; for whichever you selected you would leave unsaid the greater part of what we wish to hear. Obviously, you must speak to us upon all four."

THE OXONIAN: "Any one of them is an ambitious undertaking for a single evening."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "The night is young."

THE OXONIAN: "Well, as you will. There is a certain unity among the four, and it may be of interest to present them in sequence.

"If I am asked what is the nature of the religious

sentiment, my answer would turn on the words *Spirit* and *Faith*. Faith is a need of the spirit. 'The Spirit' and 'Spiritual' are terms constantly used, but we should, most of us, be puzzled to say exactly what they mean. I shall not attempt to give a complete definition, but should like to begin with those facts of human nature which form the basis or rudiments of what we call Spirit.

"Unlike the brutes a man thinks and feels when he does not have to. To use the language we have all learned by heart, we live by responding to our environment. The brute responds to the particular exigency of the environment, its particular action upon him, and then he is, as it were, released until the next call comes. The dog is hungry and searches for food. But when he has eaten he curls himself up and sleeps, forgetful of his past hunger, of all his past activity. The brute's actions are complete in themselves. There is no aftermath. Of course there are instincts that act persistently, making birds migrate, and the like, but at least we may say that the animal's emotional nature responds to particular calls and then relapses into a neutral and colourless state.

"It is man in whose nature chords of feeling are struck that continue to sound when the environment speaks to him no longer. So subtle and enduring are our moods that they continue beyond our memory of their origin. Indeed, we sometimes stop and ask

ourselves, Why is it that I am depressed? What is the thought or sight that cast me down or that elated me? Not infrequently when we have found it it is quite trivial, out of all proportion to the effect which it produced, so insignificant that it is set aside as soon as recognised. Yet the mood has endured. Human nature has an extraordinary susceptibility to these prolonged reverberations of feeling.

"Now this is what creates the need for religion. A man can see, or the hemispheres of his brain enable him to imagine, wide stretches of environment, destined, it may be, to affect him in the future, filled to his imagination with vague portent, but to which he does not know how to make present response. This leaves him in some degree of that disturbing uncertainty that seizes us when we feel environing forces but do not know what 'reaction' to make. The cause of his depression was trivial, yet he is still cast down — where can he look for comfort? The barren spaces of existence absorb his imaginings and make his loneliness known to him. Where can he find companionship? The power of nature, its vastness and impersonality, fill him with terror; where can he turn for support, where win faith and trust with which to stand against these?

"The representative faculty must solve the problem it has created. It must enable him to represent

the fateful potentialities, of which for the first time he has become aware, in such form that he can at once react appropriately to them and not be left wholly at a loss. If we never had time to muse, religion would not arise. If we never had time to look about us, to grow conscious of our weakness in the presence of complex circumstance and doubtful futurity, we should never want to know the character, the *spirit* of those forces and futures, that we might propitiate, or trust, or rejoice in them. In other words, the imagination must condense or epitomise in one object all the thousand and one facts of life and the world; it must conceive a *government* of these facts, so that the spirit can thereafter treat with the government and so save itself from the desolate perplexity of having to deal in imagination and feeling with the myriad facts themselves. It must synthesise the larger environment which looms so portentously in man's consciousness, yet of which the brute seems unaware.

"When we have such a unified object of the religious sense, we have something to which we can, as it were, 'react.' Now if we discover that in the nature of things there is such a central fact which the spirit may confront, then this is a world in which the religious need is met. To this we can take our joy and our sorrow. In this we can place our faith, and find in this synthesising representative power

the basis for a trust which will still the reverberations of our fears.

"This brings me to my second topic. The trouble is that the government of the world seems not wholly beneficent. Evil flows from it as well as good. The thought that good and evil are indifferent to this central power is intolerable to the religious sense. Nor will our need admit a power greater than that in which we trust, capable of overruling its decrees, thwarting its will. Our faith must be justified, our trust complete.

"I need not enter here upon a prolonged discussion of the ancient problem of evil. It is enough to say that even from a naturalistic point of view, making no doubtful assumptions in metaphysics or in history, we can answer the problem so far as the religious sense presses for an answer. Good flows from the nature of things, and evil flows from the nature of things; but what it concerns us to note is that *superiority* flows from the nature of things; — the fact that the good is *better* than the evil. The nature of things fixes both human need and the conditions of its fulfilment, and so decrees the moral law and paints the ideal. Our natures flow from the nature of things. So Goethe was right in saying that virtue proceeded from the heart of nature. And so it is fitting that in the tragedy of Æschylus that which is known as Earth has also the name of

Righteousness. The ideal itself is a product of the universe, as is the heart of man and all that yearns and aspires therein. To follow nature is to assert our own.

"Therefore we can rest in this: that though both good and evil are present in the universe, the universe is not indifferent to them; that the good is better than the evil is also in the universe, a force making for righteousness.

"I said that the essentials for a religion were Spirit and Faith. Faith is simply trust, trust in the supreme power, trust in the central fact. Now the mystical mood of mind is simply faith or trust in its utter completeness. Mysticism is essentially a moral and spiritual phenomenon. We are no longer perplexed or made desolate by the need of responding in spirit to the thousand-fold intricate and dubious facts of the inner world. We have seen the guiding thread, recognised the law, conformed to the Governance. The One delivers us from the many. To the One, in scientific parlance, the spirit can 'react.' That reaction is the self-abandonment of mysticism, the union with that which is supreme. All religion is a quest for the One in the many. Therefore the mystic attitude is the consummation of religion.

"This consummation is wrought in the human spirit by Faith and by Love. In the early stages of religious feeling man turns to the supreme for the

benefits he can receive; as a dog turns to his master for food or for safety. Later this attitude changes. The thought of self lessens. We seek this central power of life not with the hope of the benefactions that flow therefrom, but as we seek one we love, for companionship and for itself. We learn first to depend, then to reverence, and then to love. With love comes the desire for union, and from the desire is born the fact and the experience — the mystic union with the core of things.

"I would be very glad to hear what you think of these views."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "But you have not yet spoken on your fourth topic. Will you not continue?"

THE OXONIAN: "This was to be an evening of talk, not of monologue. I think you must let me postpone my remaining subject."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "If we are sure it is only a postponement, let it be as you wish. You certainly have given us ample matter for consideration; and sometimes it is true that if we have too broad a field, discussion falters from the very richness of possibility. I am very glad, however, that we made you present these three subjects as a single sequence, for I think they tend to clarify one another. In particular it seems to me we must view the religious need in the light of its satisfaction. We frequently

hear arguments, for the existence of a supreme power of good, drawn from the craving of the human heart, and I confess that these arguments in a way impress me. I suppose, for example, it could be assumed that if water had never existed, no form of life could ever have developed which would need water, and that thus the thirst is evidence of the existence of that which will satisfy it. Yet this argument from our necessities involves so many doubtful factors that it is far from conclusive. We must demonstrate that this is indeed a necessity of our being, not some dreamed-of luxury, and even when we have done this it remains to find the satisfaction we have shown needful. Therefore no reasoning from our needs, however valid, can be either so convincing or so desirable as the direct satisfaction of those needs in experience. This is what mysticism does for its followers. In the inner union with the heart of things, the satisfaction of the religious craving becomes a fact of immediate experience. So, though the craving of the heart may be the origin of religion, the experience of the mystic is its justification.

"Do you not think with me that, taken alone, your first argument is rather cold?"

THE OXONIAN: "It is purely psychological; yes."

THE EDITOR: "But few have the experience you tell us characterises the mystic. Until this comes have we not the need for such arguments as Mr. M—

has given? The early stage of mysticism, as of all religion, must be a matter of faith; and does not faith largely consist in trusting these cravings of the heart? In the belief that if we persist we *will* experience their satisfaction?"

THE PHILOSOPHER: "We are getting down to some very fundamental thinking, and I am finding my own views much clearer than they were. One thing that struck me particularly is the parallel between this thesis of M—'s and that which the Zoologist gave us two meetings ago. I do not know whether it was as noticeable to the rest of you as it was to me, but I found myself thinking of it continually as M— was talking, and that I was again compelled to agree with the scientists — whom I despise."

THE OXONIAN: "That is very interesting. I wish I had heard the Zoologist."

THE PHILOSOPHER: "Approaching religion from a purely biological point of view, his presentation was from the scientific standpoint, while yours was from that of the psychologist and the mystic. Yet the thread of the two discourses seemed to me the same; and still more marked was the similarity of the general conclusions reached: that our chief good lay in an acceptance of the universe as it is; in as close a union with its spirit and its laws as we can compass. As I said before, we find the attainment

of our desires hedged around by certain restrictions, not of our own making, but inherent in life itself. Let us accept them joyfully, enthusiastically, and in obedience to them let us become one with them. Let us unite ourselves to Life.

"All this is clearer to me than it was, and seems more fundamental, more truly the basis of a religious attitude. But there are certain problems which it does not solve. We need either a wider basis or to build further upon what we have. For certain facts of experience, certain common phenomena of religious feeling are co-ordinated and organised in neither science nor ethics, nor do I see how they are correlated with the basic principles we are considering. I mean such a desire as that which we all have to play providence to those we love; to our children, to our wives, and even to our friends. We long to stand between them and life, to shield and guard them, to keep them from the rigour of these restrictions, even from the very union which we are now viewing as an ultimate satisfaction of our hearts' craving. How are we to explain and organise such desires as these? Or again, when we have done our utmost, or when in advance we get some heartsick perception of how impotent we are in the face of nature, of how life sweeps away the safeguards which we try to rear, and how light and permeable is the shield our love and thought at best can furnish, what

a longing there is then to take all this, all our fears and premonitions, our love and our loved ones, and lay them all in the hands of God. We call upon Him to do what we can not. Yet what is it we are asking? For God to shield from God? For Life, whose heart we seek, to keep us from Itself? What is the organisation of this?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "You ask the explanation of human pain and fear; of the tragedy and pathos of love. It would need a far wiser man than I to answer you, and yet I think the secret lies in that reproach of Jesus to his disciples, when terrified by the storm they called upon him to awake and save, 'Oh, ye of little faith.' Even when we have learned to trust ourselves to Fate, to see that it is in our power to gain from all that can come to us, whether of joy or sorrow, even then we fear to trust those we love to the same great current."

THE EDITOR: "Here you touch upon an element which I brought up before, and which it seems to me we will have sooner or later to consider in a manner more commensurate with its importance; that is, the element of faith. I believe the Oxonian defined mysticism as faith in its utter completeness, or, perhaps, as the consciousness following this act of faith. But whatever words were used, he certainly meant that faith was a prerequisite, and I believe it to be a prerequisite in all religions. All religious teaching

that I know anything about requires us to transfer the basis of our lives from dependence upon external things to dependence upon spiritual law, or upon some form of providence. Spiritual experience, the illumination of the saint, the sense of union with God to which the mystic attains, all these are the results of such a reversal of basis. And for this, faith, and great faith, is indisputably needed. Indeed, I think faith is not only the first factor in the religious life, but one which is constantly required; which, in fact, underlies all progress; for every step in advance is away from the known and into the unknown."

The Zoologist: "I must hold that, so far as we have any record, faith has not led to progress but to stagnation. Progress seems rather to have resulted from the restless seeking of those who were without faith, who did *not* believe, and so continued their search."

The Mathematician: "See how even the mighty fall! Is not this the fallacy of the undistributed middle in which we, logicians, theologians, and scientists alike are now snared? 'There lies more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds.' There is a faith in formulas, in common beliefs, in the fashions of the time; but there is something far more fundamental than these, — a faith in truth, in law, in the heart and essence of life. But for his

faith in truth and in law no man would seek for truth, let alone being discontented with its popular counterfeits. The greater faith prevents the lesser. But it is the greater faith that is operative in true religion, so far as religion is lived; as I believe it is in science, so far as science is the search for truth. Popular science and popular religion alike present the static adherence to an external formula, which you justly say leads to stagnation, but which is rather too mean and poor a thing to designate as faith."

The Editor: "It is your 'greater' faith to which I refer."

The Zoologist: "But must not science be the guide in this? I do not think we are compelled to grant your contention that faith in the existence of a solution underlies all our questioning. We may be prompted by sheer curiosity. But assuming that there always is such a faith, then I would say that it is valuable so far as it is scientific — so far, that is, as it is a faith based upon scientific observation and inference, so far as science is its guiding principle.

"A man on the edge of a precipice may, if he is sufficiently crazy, have the 'faith' that he could throw himself over in safety. It would be a rank delusion, though his faith in it might be supreme. To act upon a faith like this would be simple suicide,

and in general an unguided faith is a danger both to the man holding it and to everyone in the neighbourhood. The only safe guide for faith is science. Certainly the vague, hazy concepts of the mystic are no trustworthy substitute."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "There I agree with you only in part. I grant you that faith must be guided. Indeed, I suspect, in order properly to be called faith, it must both be guided by experience and rooted therein. But there is no particular reason why this experience should be in the history of the body rather than of the spirit. Just so far as science confines itself to the physical world its usefulness as a guide is limited to things physical. It is, as it were, the common organised experience of things physical, and, unless our individual experience is deeper than that of mankind at large, we would be very foolish to disregard this guide in the world where it operates — in the world of precipices and falling bodies, and shock of contact.

"But the experiences of the spirit modern science has not organised. So in the inner world physical science can help us only by correspondence and analogy. The guide to our faith must be direct experience, either of our own or of those who have entered there before us. And this is mysticism. Mysticism is the philosophy of direct experience — immediate, individual, and incommunicable, save through ex-

perience. I quite agree with you that the 'concepts' of the mystic are frequently vague and distorted. They are only the mental interpretation of something which is beyond the mind; the shadows thrown on the screen of the brain by the soul in the Light of the Heavens. But the experience itself is not vague, nor is the faith it inculcates wandering and undirected. Let us remember also that science is only useful as it guides us to experience. The experience itself is what is of value, both in the outer and in the inner worlds. The description of that experience is of very secondary moment."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "I am unconvinced. I think, with the Philosopher, that there is a certain parallel between the biological view of ethics, which I tried to present, and this which Mr. M— has given us to-night. But, frankly, that parallel confirms me in the opinion that the former is adequate; that there is no need to talk about mysticism; that all that is of value here is science, or capable of explanation in scientific terms rather than in the vague nomenclature of mysticism and religion."

THE OXONIAN: "No, I could never agree to that. Science can never fulfil the function of religion. Its terms and methods can never replace those of mysticism. They are opposite poles. Their ends are totally distinct. Science is always analytical, always dissecting; as a botanist pulls a rose to pieces to

examine its petals and stamens under his microscope, and in the process the subtle beauty which kindles us is lost. I remember an aphorism of a friend of mine which is apposite here. He said: 'Mechanics is the science of force, with the Force left out; Biology is the science of life, with the Life left out; Ethics is the science of morality, with the Morale left out.' Religion, on the other hand, cares little for explanation, but is always kindling; always seeking and cherishing, in what it meets, that inner quickening spark which can kindle our hearts. The difference is well illustrated in two men: Carlyle and John Stuart Mill; Mill, a painstaking, conscientious, thorough analyst, longing to be kindled, loving a woman who could kindle him, and admiring Carlyle for his vivifying power, but withal himself 'dry as dust'; Carlyle dramatic, living, kindling the imagination and the heart, but despising Mill's analytic power which he, Carlyle, had not."

THE CLERGYMAN: "The mystic sees with the closed eye; the scientist with the open. Science and analysis are constantly enriching the facts upon which the inner eye will now or later look. Religion means more to us the more we learn, and I believe we in the Church should be very grateful to you men of science who have so broadened and clarified our outlook."

The Mathematician: "Surely both are necessary. I certainly would be the last to advocate either outer or inner blindness. I want the whole of life; vision wherever vision is possible, consciousness and experience on every plane of my being. Religion does not mean to me something which takes me away from life, but something which, as the Philosopher put it, unites me thereto, embracing and making its own all that is best, all that is quickening, wherever found.

"But we have heard nothing from the Author all the evening, and I know he has ideas in plenty on this point."

The Author: "Let my contribution be the request to Mr. M— to speak on his fourth topic, the position or function of the Church to-day. It should be very pertinent to what the Clergyman was saying of the relation of the Church to science."

The Oxonian: "You must really let me off from that this evening. The topic is too ambitious and immense. The place of the Church can not be settled at this eleventh hour — or somewhat later, as I fear it now is. Let me, instead, buttress myself with Cardinal Newman and read to you an extract from his essays in the 'Development of Christian Doctrine,' to which I referred last time. It bears more or less upon the theme the Mathematician has just advanced, the divine hospitality of religion, and particularly of Christianity. Here it is:

The phenomenon admitted on all hands is this: That great portion of what is generally received as Christian truth is, in its rudiments or in its separate parts, to be found in heathen philosophies and religions. For instance, the doctrine of a Trinity is found both in the East and in the West; so is the ceremony of washing; so is the rite of sacrifice. The doctrine of the Divine Word is Platonic; the doctrine of the Incarnation is Indian; of a divine kingdom is Judaic; of Angels and demons is Magian; the connection of sin with the body is Gnostic; celibacy is known to Bonze and Talapoin; a sacerdotal order is Egyptian; the idea of a new birth is Chinese and Eleusinian; belief in sacramental virtue is Pythagorean; and honours to the dead are a polytheism. Such is the general nature of the fact before us; Mr. Milman argues from it — "These things are in heathenism, therefore they are not Christian": we, on the contrary, prefer to say — "These things are in Christianity, therefore they are not heathen." That is, we prefer to say, and we think that Scripture bears us out in saying, that from the beginning the Moral Governor of the world has scattered the seeds of truth far and wide over its extent; that these have variously taken root, and grown up as in the wilderness, wild plants, indeed, but living; and hence that, as the inferior animals have tokens of an immaterial principle in them, yet have not souls, so the philosophies and religions of men have their life in certain true ideas, though they are not directly divine. What man is amid the brute creation, such is the Church among the schools of the world; and as Adam gave names to the animals about him, so has the Church from the first looked round upon the earth,

noting and visiting the doctrines she found there. She began in Chaldea, and then sojourned among the Canaanites, and went down into Egypt, and thence passed into Arabia, till she rested in her own land. Next she encountered the merchants of Tyre, and the wisdom of the East country, and the luxury of Sheba. Then she was carried away to Babylon, and wandered to the schools of Greece. And wherever she went, in trouble or in triumph, still she was a living spirit, the mind and voice of the Most High; "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions"; claiming to herself what they said rightly, correcting their errors, supplying their defects, completing their beginnings, expanding their surmises, and thus gradually by means of them enlarging the range and refining the sense of her own teaching. So far then from her being of doubtful credit because it resembles foreign theologies, we even hold that one special way in which Providence has imparted divine knowledge to us has been by enabling her to draw and collect it together out of the world, and, in this sense as in others, "to suck the milk of the Gentiles and to suck the breast of kings."

How far in fact this process has gone is a question of history; and we believe it has before now been grossly exaggerated and misrepresented by those who, like Mr. Milman, have thought that its existence told against Catholic doctrine; but so little antecedent difficulty have we in the matter, that we could readily grant, unless it were a question of fact not of theory, that Balaam was an Eastern sage, or a Sibyl was inspired, or Solomon learnt of the sons of Mahol, or Moses was a scholar of the Egyptian hierophants. We are not distressed to be

told that the doctrine of the angelic host came from Babylon, while we know that they did sing at the Nativity; nor that the vision of a Mediator is in Philo, if in very deed He died for us on Calvary. Nor are we afraid to allow that even after His coming the Church has been a treasure-house, giving forth things old and new, casting the gold of fresh tributaries into her refiner's fire, or stamping upon her own, as time required it, a deeper impress of her Master's image.

The distinction between these two theories is broad and obvious. The advocates of the one imply that Revelation was a single, entire, solitary act, or nearly so, introducing a certain message; whereas we, who maintain the other, consider that Divine teaching has been in fact what the analogy of nature would lead us to expect, "at sundry times and in divers manners," various, complex, progressive, and supplemental of itself. We consider the Christian doctrine, when analyzed, to appear, like the human frame, "fearfully and wonderfully made"; but they think it some one tenet or certain principles given out at one time in their fulness, without gradual enlargement before Christ's coming or elucidation afterwards. They cast off all that they also find in Pharisees or heathen; we conceive that the Church, like Aaron's rod, devours the serpents of the magicians. They are ever hunting for a fabulous primitive simplicity; we repose in Catholic fulness. They seek what never has been found; we accept and use what even they acknowledge to be a substance.*

* "Development of Christian Doctrine" by John Henry (Cardinal) Newman, pp. 380–382.

"This assimilative power of the Church, exercised upon the products of human thought in all their fulness and variety, is the natural prerogative of the Christian spirit. The Christian stress on sympathy should be interpreted as including intellectual sympathy, — imaginative sympathy. Just as Christ came to men 'that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly,' so the Church should come to them at the present day."

The Mathematician: "You have voiced my own ideal of what a Church should be: not insisting upon any language of its own, but speaking the tongue of those whom it addresses; not waiting for others to come to it, but in sympathy and brotherhood going out to them; not to convert, but to aid and to quicken, — that there may be more light. I was not familiar with that passage from Newman and it is of the greatest interest to me, for it puts forward an ideal which, as a member of the Theosophical Society, I have long held, but which one finds too seldom in the churches. I mean the universality of religious inspiration; that truth is to be found in all religions; the deepest truths in their common part. To find this common part both in historic systems of religion and in the individual aspiration of those around us, has been the object of the Theosophical Society's activities for many years. Naturally, therefore, your quotation interests me

much, both on account of its content and its source.

"If I may be permitted, however, I would like to return to another point you made in your description of mysticism. You spoke of our turning to the Spirit, first for the favours it could confer, for some material benefit or protection, but that later we learned a more selfless love, and sought union and companionship with the heart of life because of love rather than because of fear. The first of these two attitudes seems to me exactly illustrated in Christian Science, and in much of the so-called 'New Thought,' where health, happiness, and even success in business, are held out, not alone as rewards, but as primary inducements to religion. I would like to know whether you agree with me that these movements are typical of the most rudimentary religious instinct; in short, like a marriage solely for money, little above the prostitution of what is sacred to what is very low."

THE OXONIAN: "No, I do not agree with you at all. These movements contain elements that we can not afford to dispense with. As you yourself said, one's religion should unite one to life, make every part of existence better and sweeter, above all, cleaner and more healthful. The care of the body is worthy and by no means to be neglected. There is good scriptural testimony to the fact that the body is the

temple of the Holy Ghost, and that the temple is to be kept worthy and reverenced. The ideal of beauty and symmetry of development, in the body as in the mind and spirit, is that which the world owes to the culture of the Greeks; and it is one of the things toward which I think Christianity should be hospitable — should add to the long roll of sifted good in the treasure of her teaching."

THE CLERGYMAN: "Hear! hear!"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Since you won't agree with me I shall have to agree with you. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is to be aimed for by us all, and symmetry of development is infinitely to be desired. Nevertheless, do not let us seek to coin the Spirit into dollars, nor turn aspiration and prayer into fat. With your type of Christian Science I fancy I have no quarrel, but with the usual kind I have. I think with you there is deep truth in the promise of Jesus: 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.' But the kingdom of God was to be *first*. It is the reversal of emphasis which I object to in Christian Science."

THE OXONIAN: "But is it more than an appeal from a false self to a true one? We know that the real 'I' is not ill, only this thing we wrongly call ourselves. Just as in speech we are sometimes, let us say, guilty of some rudeness or absurdity, and

then suddenly check ourselves with the remark, 'Oh, I beg your pardon! I did not mean that. That is not at all my real opinion,' thus appealing from a false self to a real one, so I think the Christian Scientist checks himself when falling into a like absurdity."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Note, however, that here we appeal to the better self to do the will of the better self, not to do the will of the lower self. We do not deny the absurdity; on the contrary, we recognise it fully and seek to detach ourselves therefrom and to correct its cause."

THE OXONIAN: "That is true."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "That is my twofold objection to Christian Science; first, that it falsifies the facts, and second, that its prayer is, '*my* will not Thine be done.' Which one of us has not experienced the spiritual growth that comes from hardship, deprivation, struggle, and pain? And yet we continually treat these things as evils, and the instant they confront us we cringe and cower. The Christian Scientist invokes the soul to save his body, careless of the need of the soul, careless of the integrity of his fate."

THE CLERGYMAN: "I wish that idea of symmetry of development and the religious value of beauty and force could receive more attention in the Church. This old notion that you must starve the body to be

religious is utterly misleading. Your bodily vigour is one of your talents. One of the things you must make the most of, put out at usury, and bring both principal and interest to the service of God. Is it a trouble to have too much physical energy? Does your vitality tend to run away with you? That is no reason why you should throw it away. Everything that is worth while, that has power and force and can work, has to be mastered and controlled. But it is none the less necessary to use it and to make it as strong and efficient as we can.

"But how infinitely broader and freer our concept of Christianity is to-day than it used to be! I remember the old slur that used to be brought against us of a narrow Christianity, a narrow, one-sided view of life. But now how much better we see! How we recognise that there is nothing good foreign to the message of Jesus; that all the accumulated spiritual treasures of the world are truly our heritage; that there is no corner or cranny of life that cannot give to Christianity some new gem, and into which Christianity does not shed some new and beautifying light! Contrast the broad Christianity of to-day with the narrow theology of 'Robert Elsmere.'"

THE EDITOR: "I quite agree with you, Mr. F—, that genuine Christianity should be the teaching of the life of the soul, and that nothing foreign to the soul of man could be foreign to Christianity. Would

it not be interesting in this connection to examine again the question of what are the essentials of Christianity? What is it that gives it its light and its power? As we look back upon the narrow Christianity of which you speak, and back of that upon the history of the Church through all the Middle Ages, there seems very little in the organisation that is capable of illumination; or that could touch the soul in any way, unless it be with horror. And yet something of the kind must have been there. The flame must have been carried down unextinguished. I believe if we were really to study it, we could trace an unbroken descent, a spiritual heritage throughout the centuries, the history of the 'Church Invisible,' the history of the Illuminati. What little reading I have been able to do has confirmed me in this opinion."

VI

THE HISTORIAN'S VIEW

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It will be remembered that at our last meeting the Oxonian spoke to us of the origin and meaning of the religious sense; of the problem of evil; and of mysticism. The first of these he presented as rooted in the need of the human spirit to synthesise its environment, so infinitely wider than that of the brutes, and, in its trust in the One behind the many, to find support or relief from the prolonged reverberations of feeling which sweep over us from the mystery of life and from the vast impersonality of nature.

"The second — the problem of the existence of evil in a universe which we would believe ruled by good — could, he said, find a solution in the existence, not alone of good and evil, but of the *better;* which flows also from the nature of things, and shows us that life is not indifferent to good and evil, but sets in a steady current toward the good, the sense of which current we call the better. As we conform ourselves to this we are led to a deepening sense of trust and of love, which in their utter completeness

constitute the experience of mysticism, — the conscious union of the soul with that which is above and beyond it, and which is the consummation of religion.

"There was a fourth topic proposed — the place of the Church in the present age; but this the Oxonian begged to postpone, so that what we actually considered was personal religion, — religion as an inherent fact in the life of the individual.

"There is, however, another side to religion. Religion is also an historic fact; for around it have been built external organisations which have moulded the life of nations and played no small part in the development of the race. I have asked the Historian to speak to-night upon the historic aspect of Christianity; for, as Christianity is closest to ourselves, it is through the historic development of the Christian Church that we can most easily trace the effect of organisation upon religion, and it is this which I trust the Historian will make clearer to us.

"Will you not now begin, Professor B—. I think that all are here whom we can expect, as I regret to say the Oxonian telephoned me an hour or so ago that he would be unable to come out to-night, having had a rather nasty fall which keeps him on his back."

THE HISTORIAN: "The subject is such an immense one, and covers such a wide variety of topics,

themselves complex, that to treat it at all intelligently would require not an hour's talk, but a voluminous treatise.

"What I have to say, therefore, must be considered simply the headings for such a treatise, illustrated in one or two places by citations from the original sources; for these carry with them more of the atmosphere of the times than could be given by much description. Moreover they cannot be disputed, which is an advantage.

"In the first place we should have to consider the relation of the Church, as an historical institution, to its alleged founder. As one goes through the synoptic gospels to find out what Jesus actually taught, one is impressed most, I think, with the fragmentary character of it all. Our knowledge of Jesus's teachings is confined to a year or two of his active mission, and even the brief record which we have of this is full of repetition and more or less obvious interpolations and later additions. For the most part, the synoptical gospels contain, besides the account of miracles, fragmentary moral advice suggested by the exigencies of the occasion, or in answer to questions addressed to Jesus by his followers. He speaks of love for God as our father, and for our neighbour; of gentleness, forgiveness, humbleness, and meekness. But it is needless to say that there is no trace in his teaching of the imposing theological,

political, social, and cosmological systems which have been combined in historic Christianity.

"Thus the first chapter of our imaginary treatise might be devoted to showing that *Christianity takes its name, but neither its organisation nor its teaching, from Christ.* Jesus did not contemplate the Church, I think. It was all a very temporary thing with him. Indeed, to the reader examining the gospels for the first time, and without any knowledge of the interpretation which has been given to them, it would seem that Jesus shared the opinion of his immediate followers that the end of the world was close at hand; all things were to be fulfilled before that generation passed away, so there was no need of an ecclesiastical organisation, nor any time for one. Jesus conformed to the Jewish ritual, much as St. Francis did, in later centuries, to the Catholic; neither of them seemed to have thought of establishing a new religious sect. The possibility that his followers might become a rich and powerful order was, indeed, the nightmare of St. Francis's existence, for he could look back to similar perversions of the spiritual life in earlier centuries. Jesus, however, could hardly have imagined the foundation of a Church; nothing could have been more alien to his life of religious enthusiasm and informal well doing than a scrupulously organised hierarchy. Our next chapter, therefore, would have to consider *the*

origin and growth of organisation and the establishment of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

"Organisation came in with Paul. In his epistles we have our first suggestions of an institutional history of the Christian Church. He mentions the 'overseers' and the elders and deacons, but does not define their functions very definitely. The overseer grew into the bishop, and the elders, who were evidently suggested by the elders of the older Jewish organisation, developed into priests, subject to the bishops and offering up the body and blood of Christ at an altar. But the steps by which this transformation was accomplished will probably never be known to us completely, since the sources are too fragmentary to enable us to trace the change. Nevertheless, some data is obtainable, and the period of transition is relatively brief; for as we open the 'Unity of the Church' of Cyprian — who was the Bishop of Carthage about two centuries after the crucifixion — we find it already accomplished. The original democracy has passed away, and there is now a sharp distinction between the clergy 'whose lot is in the Lord' and the laity or people. Moreover, a still sharper line has been drawn between those who accept the 'true doctrine necessary to salvation' and those 'enemies of God' who venture to disagree in any respect. Heresies and schisms are the invention of the 'Old Enemy' of mankind who, now that he

cannot keep men back in the darkness of the old way, entraps and deceives them in the new. Once the organisation was founded, adherence to it and absolute acceptance of its teachings became immediately requisite for salvation. The concept of the one Church, embracing all 'the elect,' which was to remain the fixed and ruling idea of Christianity, and of every Christian sect, as far as one can see, had thus within two centuries completely overshadowed, if not replaced, the moral doctrines of Jesus. Here is a passage from Cyprian's own hand (I read from his 'Unity of the Church'), which shows how centrally important organisation and conformity have become for him.

Whoever is separated from the Church is separated from the promises of the Church; nor can he who forsakes the Church of Christ attain to the rewards of Christ. He is a stranger; he is profane; he is an enemy! He can no longer have God for his father who has not the Church for his mother. If any one could escape who was outside the ark of Noah, then he also may escape who shall be outside of the Church. . . . These heretics are plagues and spots of the Faith, deceiving with serpent's tongue and artful in corrupting the truth, vomiting forth deadly poisons from pestilential tongues; whose speech doth creep like a cancer, whose discourse forms a deadly poison in the heart and breast of every one. . . .

Though such a man should suffer death for confessing the name of Christ, his guilt is not washed away by

blood, nor is the grievous and inexpiable sin of discord wiped out by suffering. He who is without the Church cannot be a martyr. He cannot reach the kingdom of heaven. . . . Though they are given over to the flames and burn in the fires; though cast to the wild beasts, they lay down their lives, this shall not be a crown of faith, but a punishment of faithlessness. Such a man may be killed, but not crowned.*

"Having given such account as our sources permit of the development of the church organisation, it would be necessary next to follow its fortunes, and trace what was, in effect, *the transition of the Church from a religious to a political institution.* This would have to cover the periods in which Christianity was first opposed, then tolerated, and then accepted by the Roman Emperors; and should lead to an understanding of the position of the Church in the Middle Ages. For reasons which are not wholly clear, the government of the Roman Empire very early conceived a suspicion of the Christians, and from time to time its officials harshly persecuted the adherents of the new belief. It seems probable that they were regarded as turbulent, unruly fellows, brawlers and disturbers of the peace, seeking to overthrow the ancient religion and the ancient order, and so, of necessity, dangerous to the existent government. It must be remembered also that disrespect to the

* De Catholicae Ecclesiae unitate (Corp. SS. Ecc. Lat.), §§ 6, 10, 14.

Roman religion was equal disrespect to the Roman Emperor, as Pontifex Maximus. It would seem inevitable that reflections upon this office should be resented and punished. The punishments, however, were clearly ineffective, and at last — to be exact, in the year 311, some sixty or seventy years after Cyprian — the Emperor Galerius, beset by political misfortunes and the ravages of a terrible disease, declared that the efforts to bring the Christians back to the religion of their ancestors had failed. Many of them consented, it is true, to observe the ancient customs, but as they persisted in their former opinions, 'We see that in the present situation they neither adore and venerate the gods, nor yet worship the god of the Christians.' The Emperor permitted them, therefore, to become Christians once more, and to re-establish their places of meeting. 'Wherefore,' the Emperor concludes, 'it should be the duty of the Christians, in view of our clemency, to pray to their god for our welfare, for that of the Empire, and for their own; so that the Empire may remain intact in all its parts, and they themselves may live safely in their habitations.' * In short, it would seem as if poor Galerius felt that a certain amount of celestial electricity was being wasted and that it could not but advantage him and the Empire to encourage

* Lactantius, De mortibus persecutorum, c. 34 (Corp. SS. Ecc. Lat., xxvii).

as complete an exploitation of heavenly powers as possible.

"In this edict of Galerius Christianity is for the first time put upon a legal parity with paganism. Within a few years it had completely reversed the tables. Constantine formally accepted Christianity and actively interested himself in the Church. The first general council of Christendom was called together under his auspices in 325, and the religion which had been regarded by the earlier Emperors as a danger now became the bulwark of the state. The Christian clergy were successful in inducing the Emperors to adopt a system of strict intolerance. The 'turbulent fellows' were no longer the Christians, but those who differed from them. It was these latter who were now against the accepted forms, and so possible sources of trouble. Thus orthodoxy became a matter not only of religion, but of the state; and religious heresy was to be sought out and punished by state officials.

"The edicts issued during the next hundred years have, many of them, come down to us in the last book of the Theodosian code. It is startling to see how completely the mediæval church is sketched out in their provisions. An extract or two will, I think, help us to understand the temper of the times and the new relation of the Emperor to the Christian orthodoxy.

"An edict of 380 declares that:

We desire that all those who are under the sway of our clemency shall adhere to that religion which, according to his own testimony, coming down even to our own day, the blessed apostle Peter delivered to the Romans, namely: the doctrine which the pontiff Damasus (Bishop of Rome) and Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, a man of apostolic sanctity, accept. According to the teachings of the apostles and of the Gospel we believe in one Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the blessed Trinity alike in majesty.

We ordain that the name of Catholic Christians shall apply to all those who obey this present law. All others we judge to be mad and demented; we declare them guilty of the infamy of holding heretical doctrine; their assemblies shall not receive the name of churches. They shall first suffer the wrath of God, then the punishment which in accordance with divine judgment we shall inflict.*

"Orthodoxy and good citizenship have thus become identical. One who failed to accept the doctrine of Bishop Damasus, or suggested that the three persons of the Trinity were not alike in majesty, was not only to suffer the wrath of God, *but the punishment which the Emperor should choose to inflict.* Eight years before an edict had ordered that those who taught the doctrines of Manes should be heavily fined; those who should attend a meeting of the

* Codex Theodosianus, ed. Haemel, lib. xvi, tit. i, 2.

Manichæans should be cast out from among their fellow-men as infamous and discredited. The houses or dwelling-places in which their profane doctrines were taught should be confiscated by the government. A later decree (398) declares that:

> Clerics adhering to the Eunomian or Montanist superstition shall be excluded from all intercourse with any city or town. Should any of these heretics sojourning in the country attempt to gather the people together or collect an assembly, let them be sent into perpetual exile. . . .
>
> We command that their books, which contain the substance of their criminal teachings, be sought out with the utmost care and burnt with fire under the eyes of the magistrates. Should any one perchance be convicted of concealing, through deceit or otherwise, and of failing to produce any work of this kind, let him know that as the possessor of harmful books written with criminal intent he shall suffer capital punishment.*

"The state not only intervened to defend the doctrines of the orthodox Church, it protected and granted it privileges; the clergy were to be exempt from taxation; the churches were to enjoy the right of asylum, as pagan temples had done. The clergy were permitted to try certain cases in which their own members were involved; and so we find in the Roman law the foundations of the vast jurisdiction of the Church and of the 'benefit of clergy.'

* Codex Theodosianus, ed. Haemel, lib. xvi, tit. v, 34.

"There is much that is surprising about the situation during the fourth and fifth centuries. Christianity not only becomes the state religion, but at the same time it unconsciously prepares itself *to take the place of the state* when that shall drop away with the dissolution of the Roman Empire in the West.

"But having traced the organisation thus far, it would now be necessary to return and consider the intricate body of doctrine which had been forming during these centuries, and which explained the world and its history in the light of Christian theology. The theologians unconsciously drew their material from the widest range of sources — from the Hebraic tradition, from Egypt and Persia, from the philosophies of Greece. It would be very interesting to gather together the results of modern scholarship upon the sources of Christian belief; to trace the various streams from their confluence in Christianity to their rise in the separate national traditions and philosophies of many peoples; to weigh the influence of the North against that of Greece; to disentangle the Egyptian from the Chaldean. But all that concerns us this evening is to note that what became known as Christianity was not at all the teachings of Jesus, nor proceeded from a single source, but was first an aggregate, and then a synthesis, of the religious thought of the Mediterranean. Conceptions originally distinct and contradictory were moulded into

a seemingly homogeneous mass. The process of selection naturally involved a parallel process of rejection; and it is sad enough to see how much of that clarity which characterises the reasoning in Cicero's 'Nature of the Gods' or in Lucretius has disappeared when we reach Augustine and Orosius. In considering this doctrine we must always remember that what we now look upon as poetic imagery, to be taken figuratively or symbolically, was for centuries regarded as literal fact, as literal as the most concrete data of chemistry or physics or astronomy.

"Santayana, in his 'Life of Reason,' has given us a most instructive resumé of the philosophy of history which the Church has for fifteen hundred years used its unrivalled power to defend. He calls it 'The Christian Epic,' a brief drama of things, and I do not think I can do better than to read certain passages therefrom, which, if we force ourselves to take them literally, will give us a very fair notion of what actually constitutes the Christian view of life.

"Santayana prefaces this account by a discussion of the human needs to which such a story appeals. Here he well says that:

The brief time and narrow argument into which Christian imagination squeezes the world must seem to a speculative pantheist childish and poor, involving, as it does, a fatuous perversion of nature and history and a

ridiculous emphasis laid on local events and partial interests. Yet just this violent reduction of things to a human stature, this half-innocent, half-arrogant assumption that what is important for a man must control the whole universe, is what made Christian philosophy originally appealing and what still arouses, in certain quarters, enthusiastic belief in its beneficence and finality.

"But let me turn to the narrative itself:

There was in the beginning, so runs the Christian story, a great celestial King, wise and good, surrounded by a court of winged musicians and messengers. He had existed from all eternity, but had always intended, when the right moment should come, to create temporal beings, imperfect copies of himself in various degrees. These, of which man was the chief, began their career in the year 4004 B. C., and they would live on an indefinite time, possibly, that chronological symmetry might not be violated, until A. D. 4004. The opening and the close of this drama were marked by two magnificent tableaux. In the first, in obedience to the word of God, sun, moon, and stars, and earth with all her plants and animals, assumed their appropriate places, and nature sprang into being with all her laws. The first man was made out of clay, by a special act of God, and the first woman was fashioned from one of his ribs, extracted while he lay in a deep sleep. They were placed in an orchard where they often could see God, its owner, walking in the cool of the evening. He suffered them to range at will and eat of all the fruits he had planted save that of one tree only. But they, incited by a devil, transgressed this single prohibition, and were banished from that paradise with

a curse upon their head, — the man to live by the sweat of his brow and the woman to bear children in labour. These children possessed from the moment of conception the inordinate natures which their parents had acquired. They were born to sin and to find disorder and death everywhere within and without them.

At the same time God, lest the work of his hands should wholly perish, promised to redeem in his good season some of Adam's children and restore them to a natural life. This redemption was to come ultimately through a descendant of Eve, whose foot should bruise the head of the serpent.

Henceforth there were two spirits, two parties, or, as Saint Augustine called them, two cities in the world. The city of Satan, whatever its artifices in art, war, or philosophy, was essentially corrupt and impious. Its joy was but a comic mask and its beauty the whitening of a sepulchre. It stood condemned before God and before men's better conscience by its vanity, cruelty, and secret misery, by its ignorance of all that it truly behoved a man to know who was destined to immortality. Lost, as it seemed, within this Babylon, or visible only in its obscure and forgotten purlieus, lived on at the same time in the City of God, the society of all the souls God predestined to salvation; a city which counted its myriad transfigured citizens in heaven, and had its destinies, like its foundations, in eternity. . . .

All history was henceforth essentially nothing but the conflict between these two cities; two moralities, one natural, the other supernatural; two philosophies, one rational, the other revealed; two beauties, one corporeal, the other spiritual; two glories, one temporal, the other

eternal; two institutions, one the world, the other the Church. These, whatever their momentary alliances or compromises, were radically opposed and fundamentally alien to one another. Their conflict was to fill the ages until, when wheat and tares had long flourished together and exhausted between them the earth for whose substance they struggled, the harvest should come; the terrible day of reckoning when those who had believed the things of religion to be imaginary would behold with dismay the Lord visibly coming down through the clouds of heaven, the angels blowing their alarming trumpets, all generations of the dead rising from their graves, and judgment without appeal passed on every man, to the edification of the universal company and his own unspeakable joy or confusion. Whereupon, the blessed would enter eternal bliss with God their master, and the wicked everlasting torments with the devil whom they served.*

" This is the philosophy of history which Christianity offers. Taken out of its setting of Biblical language, and without the anæsthetic of accustomed phrase, this is the historic Christian doctrine, the explanation of existence which the Church not only has defended through the centuries, but for which it claims divine authority, and which it has sought to impose upon mankind under penalty of eternal damnation. I would ask you to supplement this picture of Santayana's by another, a fifth century 'symbol' which has come down to us unchanged and is no

* "The Life of Reason" by George Santayana, vol. iii, pp. 91-96.

more difficult of access than the English prayer-book. It is called the creed of St. Athanasius. I shall not read it, though I have it here. It is, I presume, sufficiently familiar to you all. Historically it stands for the exaltation of mere correctness of formula; salvation by correct opinion in metaphysical abstractions. Such doctrine finds, of course, no support in the teachings of Jesus, to whom all theological subtleties were alien. The sin of confounding the persons and dividing the substance, of mistaking one uncreated and one incomprehensible for three uncreateds and three incomprehensibles was unknown to him. He surely never would have recognised the description of himself which the creed offers. One paragraph alone would he have understood — 'and they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.' But what we should especially remember is, first, that this creed is one of the most characteristic products of the Catholic Church, which was eagerly seized upon by the English Protestants and made the basis of good citizenship in the eyes of the state, as it had been made the basis of salvation in the world to come. '*Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation* that he also believe rightly . . .' And, secondly, we must bear in mind that this body of metaphysical dogma is not treated as a relic of a bygone age, left, reverently perhaps, at one side by

a living, growing Church, but is to-day the official creed, required to be said by clergy and congregation alike in the English Church, and there placed as the measure of human faith and religious thought, as the Nicene and Apostles creed are in America. If to-day we interpret them symbolically rather than literally, it is through no permission of the Church, but in the face of its most bitter protests.

"But I must return to my outline. After tracing the origin of the Church as an institution, and the alliance between it and the state, after studying its theory of mankind and the universe and its interpretation of the past, it would be necessary before leaving this earlier period to speak of *monasticism,* which stood as a sort of monitor warning the Church against exclusive reliance upon administrative ability, political sagacity, and theology. In the West the contradictions between asceticism on the one hand and salvation through conformity and routine on the other were scarcely perceived. It is difficult to see why the monks sought personal hardship and suffered self-imposed penances when salvation was assured to them on easier terms. Monasticism was, perhaps, an instinctive protest against the supposed adequacy of mere correct belief and mere membership in the organisation. The secular clergy never, as I remember, protested against the monks on general principles. Indeed, as has often been pointed out,

the celibacy of the clergy was a distinct concession to monasticism.

"In judging the rôle of monasticism in the development of Europe, much would need to be said of the monasteries as occasional homes of culture superior to those which prevailed elsewhere, and of the activity of the monks, as teachers, as well as their economic rôle, which has been emphasised by Cunningham. We would have to deal also with that doctrine of St. Augustine, which identifies original sin with the attraction between the sexes, and which was made the basis of monasticism. This ungodlike, misleading, and devilish passion was put forward as the origin of all sin from the fall of Adam to the end of the world. The monk was engaged in getting woman out of his establishment and off his mind, so she naturally became for him the devil's chosen instrument to lead him from the straight and narrow path. As Luther complained, the natural instincts underlying the family were viewed as something distinctly inferior, if not downright unholy. The influence of such teachings in degrading the relations between men and women must be obvious to us all.

"After dealing with monasticism, which in its origin belongs to the fourth century, that is, to the very time when those edicts in the Theodosian code of which we have been speaking were issued, it would

be necessary to take up the transition of the Church from its dependence on the still somewhat vigorous government of the Roman Empire to its practical supremacy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when feudalism constituted the only pretence of government which western Europe enjoyed. There is a growing conviction among scholars that it is safest, on the whole, to view the mediæval Church as a *state*. As Maitland has very well said, the Church was organised like a state; it had its own law, its own courts, its own prisons; it collected its own taxes and possessed an elaborate financial and administrative system. If one were not born into the Church, as he was into the state, he was baptised into it before he could help himself; and everyone was assumed to belong to the Church in much the same way that we now assume that everyone belongs to the state. The Roman Catholic Church, then, was really the successor to the Roman Empire, and may be defined as *an international and super-national state,* imposed upon feudalised western Europe. The Pope not only claimed to be the over-lord of the Kings and even of the Emperors, but he was able to substantiate his claims in theory and not infrequently in practice. The Church was of divine origin, whereas the civil government was, after all, the invention of evil men instigated by the devil. This was well set forth by Gregory VII in a letter to Bishop Herman of Metz in

1081, apropos of the excommunication of Henry IV. Let me read you an extract from it:

Shall not an office instituted by laymen — by those even who did not know God — be subject to that office which the providence of God Almighty has instituted for his own honour and in compassion given to the world? . . . Do we not all know that Kings and princes are descendants of men who were ignorant of God, and who by arrogance, robbery, perfidy, murder, — in a word, by almost every crime, at the prompting of the prince of this world, the Devil, — strove with blind avarice and intolerable presumption to gain a mastery over their equals — that is, over mankind. . . .

Furthermore, every Christian King, when he comes to die, seeks as a poor suppliant the aid of a priest, that he may escape hell's prison, may pass from the darkness into the light, and at the judgment of God may appear absolved from the bondage of his sins. Who, in his last hour, whether layman or priest, has ever implored the aid of an earthly King for the salvation of his soul? And what King or Emperor is able, by reason of the office he holds, to rescue a Christian from the power of the devil through holy baptism, to number him among the sons of God, and to fortify him with the divine unction? Who of them can by his own words make the body and blood of our Lord — the greatest act in the Christian religion? Or who of them possesses the power of binding and loosing in heaven and on earth? From all of these considerations it is clear how greatly the priestly office excels in power. . . .

Who, therefore, of even moderate understanding, can hesitate to give priests the precedence over Kings? Then,

if Kings are to be judged by priests for their sins, by whom should they be judged with better right than by the Roman pontiff?*

"The development of the Church into a state inevitably affected the attitude of the clergy toward their functions. Their acts were no longer personal and spiritual, but official and necessary, authoritative without regard to the subjective condition of the particular officer who performed them in the name of the mighty organisation of which he was the agent. A demoralised clergy could now take refuge behind the doctrine of 'the efficacy of the sacraments in polluted hands.' This was never more insolently and instructively set forth than in an almost forgotten reply of a certain worthy Pilchdorf to the cavillings of the Waldensian heretics in the middle of the fifteenth century.

Since the sin of adultery does not take from a King the royal dignity, if otherwise he is a good prince who righteously executes justice in the earth, so neither can it take the sacerdotal dignity from the priest, if otherwise he performs the sacraments rightly and preaches the word of God. Who doubts that a licentious King is more noble than a chaste Knight, although not more holy? — No one can doubt that Nathaniel was more holy than Judas Iscariot; nevertheless Judas was more noble

* "Contra illos qui stulte dicunt imperatorem excommunicari non posse a Romano pontifice." (Gregorius VII, Registrum, lib. viii, no. 21.)

on account of the apostleship of the Lord, to which Judas and not Nathaniel was called.

But thou, heretic, wilt say: "Christ said to his disciples, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them'; therefore the priest who does not receive the Holy Ghost because he is wicked cannot absolve." Even if a wicked priest has neither charity nor the Holy Ghost as a private man, nevertheless his priesthood is worthy as far as efficacy of the sacraments goes, though he himself may be unworthy of the priesthood. . . .

For example, a red rose is equally red in the hands of an emperor or of a dirty old woman; likewise a carbuncle in the hand of a King or of a peasant; and my servant cleans the stable just as well with a rusty iron hoe as with a golden one adorned with gems. No one doubts that in the time of Elijah there were many swans in the world, but the Lord did not feed the prophet by swans, but by a black raven. It might have been pleasanter for him to have had a swan, but he was just as well fed by a raven. And though it may be pleasanter to drink nectar from a golden goblet than from an earthen vessel, the draught intoxicates just the same, wherever it comes from.*

"This reasoning is exactly similar to that which would be used to-day in case one should appeal from the decision of a judge on the ground of his private immorality. The Church was forced into exactly the same position that the state is; that is, that the

* Pilchdorffius, Contra Waldenses, xvi–xvii, in Maxima bibliotheca patrum (1677), xxv, 281 sqq.

acts of an official are valid whether he be a saint or a sinner. To the earlier doctrines of the inerrancy of the Church's views of God and man and the world, and the necessity of membership in the organisation if one would be saved, was now added the necessity of accepting *de fide* the Papal monarchy, which included in practice its elaborate judicial and financial system.

"The new era begins with the development of the national states, Aragon, England, France, and the inevitable conflict between the ever strengthening secular government and the international ecclesiastical government. The troubles fell into four main categories: First, how far was the King really subject to the Pope; secondly, how far could he tax the vast possessions of the clergy; thirdly, what classes of cases should be judged by the Church courts (especially, how extensive should be the appellate jurisdiction of the great central court of Christendom at Rome); lastly, how should the patronage in the Church be apportioned between the head of the national state and the head of the international state.

"It is impossible here to do more than hint at the problem which has faced Europe in the last five hundred years of outgrowing this most tremendous institution of the Middle Ages. It is not hard to see why the Church was ultra-conservative, was bitterly

will not follow this advice which God would approve, I must leave you to yourselves. But I am guiltless of your souls, your blood, and your goods. I have told you that you are both wrong [that is, nobles as well as peasants] and fighting for the wrong: you nobles are not fighting against Christians, for Christians would not oppose you, but suffer all. You are fighting against robbers and blasphemers of Christ's name; those that die among them shall be eternally damned. But neither are the peasants fighting Christians, but tyrants, enemies of God, and persecutors of men, murderers of the Holy Ghost. Those of them who die shall also be eternally damned. And this is God's certain judgment on you both — that I know. Do now what you will so long as you care not to save either your bodies or souls.*

"With this cheerful and complete condemnation Luther leaves them to work out the cause of social progress as best they may. Indeed, it is not till three centuries later that the very moderate demands of the peasants are accorded them.

"If the Church was intolerant of social change it was even more bitterly opposed to all growth in knowledge. The advocates of the new were demented, inspired of the devil, or wilfully perverse. This supposed necessity of denouncing science appears very early in the Church. Lactantius, a contemporary of Constantine, makes easy sport of those

* "Verlegung der 12 Artikel nebst dessen Vermahnung beydes an die Oberkeit und Bauerschaft." Luther's Werke, ed. Walch, xvi, cols. 84 sqq.

who maintain that people may live upon another side of the globe. In his 'Divine Institutes' he says:

> How can there be any one so absurd as to think that men can have their feet higher than their heads; or that in those parts of the earth instead of resting on the ground things hang down; crops and trees grow downward; rain, snow, and hail fall upward on to the earth? Who indeed can wonder at the hanging gardens which are reckoned as one of the seven wonders when the philosophers would have us believe in hanging fields and cities, seas, and mountains? . . .
>
> If you ask those who maintain these monstrous notions why everything does not fall off into the heavens on that side, they reply that it is of the nature of things that all objects having weight are borne toward the centre, and that everything is connected with the centre, like the spokes of a wheel; while light things, like clouds, smoke, and fire, are borne away from the centre and seek the heavens. I scarce know what to say of such fellows who, when once they have wandered from truth, persevere in their foolishness and defend their absurdities by new absurdities. Sometimes I imagine that their philosophising is all a joke, or that they know the truth well enough and only defend these lies in a perverse attempt to exhibit and exercise their wit.*

"Leslie Stephen, I believe, has said that there is nothing like a theological training to destroy all intellectual diffidence. The Church furnishes an extraordinary example of this, as one traverses the

* Divinae Institutiones, lib. iii, § 24 (Corp. SS. Ecc. Lat., xix), pp. 254 sqq.

long distance which separates Lactantius from Pio Nono; witness the latter's reception of a supposed refutation of Darwin's theory of evolution.

A system which is repugnant at once to history, to the traditions of all peoples, to exact science, to observed facts, and even to reason herself, would seem to need no refutation, did not alienation from God and the leaning toward materialism due to depravity eagerly seek a support in all this tissue of fables. . . . And, in fact, pride, after rejecting the Creator of all things and proclaiming man independent, wishing him to be his own king, his own priest, and his own God, — pride goes so far as to degrade man himself to the level of the unreasoning brutes, perhaps even of lifeless matter, thus unconsciously confirming the divine declaration, "When pride cometh, then cometh shame." But the corruption of this age, the machinations of the perverse, the danger of the simple, demand that such fancies, altogether absurd though they are, should — since they borrow the mask of science — be refuted by true science.*

"But the Church, as we all know, has by no means confined itself to opposing scientific investigation; it has, down to the present day, consistently cultivated superstition and obfuscation in the supposed interests of an ignorant people. Our treatise would have to give a chapter to this heading, which should deal with miracle working by saints and sorcery by devils. For while originally the miracles attested the doc-

* "A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom" by Andrew D. White, vol. i, p. 75.

trine, later the doctrines attested the miracles. If the worker of wonders was opposed to the popular belief, then were his miracles proof of the agency of Satan. There would be no lack of illustrative material in any century, though perhaps one of the most instructive instances is recorded by Cæsar of Heisterbach in his 'Dialogues.'

Two men, simply clad but not without guile, not sheep but ravening wolves, came to Besançon, feigning the greatest piety. Moreover, they were pale and thin, they went about barefooted and fasted daily, they did not miss a single morning the matins in the cathedral, nor did they accept anything from anyone except a little food. When by this hypocrisy they had attracted the attention of every one, they began to vomit forth their hidden poison and to preach to the ignorant new and unheard-of heresies. In order, moreover, that the people might believe their teachings, they ordered meal to be sifted on the sidewalk and walked on it without leaving a trace of a footprint. Likewise, walking upon the water, they did not sink; also they had little huts burned over their heads, and after the huts had been burned to ashes, they came out uninjured. After this they said to the people, "If you do not believe our words, believe our miracles."

The bishop and the clergy, hearing of this, were greatly disturbed. And when they wished to resist the men, affirming that they were heretics and deceivers and ministers of the devil, they escaped with difficulty from being stoned by the people. Now that bishop was a good and learned man, and a native of our province. Our aged

monk, Conrad, who told me these facts and who was in that city at the time, knew him well.

The bishop, seeing that his words were of no avail and that the people intrusted to his charge were being seduced from the faith by the devil's agents, summoned a certain clerk that he knew, who was very well versed in necromancy, and said: "Certain men in my city are doing so and so. I ask you to find out from the devil, by your art, who they are, whence they come, and by what means they work so many and such wonderful miracles. For it is impossible that they should do wonders through divine inspiration when their teaching is so contrary to that of God." The clerk said: "My lord, I have long ago renounced that art." The bishop replied: "You see clearly in what straits I am. I must either acquiesce in their teachings or be stoned by the people. Therefore I enjoin you, for the remission of your sins, that you obey me in this matter."

The clerk, obeying the bishop, summoned the devil, and when asked why he had called him, responded: "I am sorry that I have deserted you. And because I desire to be more obedient in the future than in the past, I ask you to tell me who these men are, what they teach, and by what means they work so great miracles." The devil replied, "They are mine and sent by me, and they preach what I have placed in their mouths." The clerk responded, "How is it that they cannot be injured, or sunk in the water, or burned by fire?" The demon replied again, "They have under their armpits, sewed between the skin and the flesh, my compacts, in which homage done by them to me is written; and it is by virtue of these that they work such miracles and cannot be in-

jured by anyone." Then the clerk said, "What if these should be taken away from them?" The devil replied, "Then they would be weak, just like other men." The clerk having heard this, thanked the demon, saying, "Now go, and when you are summoned by me, return."

He then went to the bishop and related these things to him in due order. The latter, filled with great joy, summoned all the people of the city to a suitable place and said: "I am your shepherd, ye are my sheep. If those men, as you say, confirm their teaching by signs, I will follow them with you. If not, it is fitting that they should be punished and that you should penitently return to the faith of your fathers with me." The people replied, "We have seen many signs from them." The bishop said, "But I have not seen them."

Why prolong my tale? The plan pleased the people. The heretics were summoned. The bishop was present. A fire was kindled in the midst of the city. However, before the heretics entered it, they were secretly summoned to the bishop. He said to them, "I want to see if you have anything evil about you." Hearing this, they stripped quickly and said with great confidence, "Search our bodies and our garments carefully." The soldiers, however, following the instructions of the bishop, raised the men's arms, and noticing under the armpits some scars that were healed up, cut them open with their knives and extracted from them little scrolls which had been sewed in.

Having received these, the bishop went forth with the heretics to the people and, having commanded silence, cried out in a loud voice, "Now shall your prophets enter the fire, and if they are not injured, I will believe in

them." The wretched men trembled and said, "We are not able to enter now." Then the bishop told the people of the evil which had been detected, and showed the compacts. Then all were furious and hurled the devil's ministers into the fire which had been prepared, to be tortured with the devil in eternal flames. And thus, through the grace of God and the zeal of the bishop, the growing heresy was extinguished, and the people who had been seduced and corrupted cleansed by penance.*

"In travelling through France last summer and visiting Lourdes and Toulouse I was struck with the reluctance of the Church to let a single false idea go by the board. At Toulouse, where the Church of St. Sernin claims to have as large and potent a collection of relics as exist in the world, including the bodies of four apostles, I believe, and numberless martyrs who suffered under Diocletian and through the violence of the Vandals, here new tablets have been prepared which give with scientific precision the length of the saint's bone in centimetres, suggest the malady for which prayers to the saint are peculiarly efficacious, and finally reassure doubters by means of a certificate of authenticity. The theological spirit is the same as it has always been.

"The inquisition I pass over. Though we hear much talk about it in Protestant circles, it was only

* Cæsar of Heisterbach, Dialogus Miraculorum, dist. v, c. 18, vol. i, 269 sqq; trans. by Munro in "Translations and Reprints," vol. ii, no. 4.

a fairly efficient piece of machinery for stamping out heresy and enforcing the policies we have already discussed. Its cruelty is too well known to require comment.

"The chapter on superstition would bring our outline down to the present day. We would have touched upon the personal teachings of Jesus, and the thought of the times in which he lived. We would have seen that he could not have contemplated what Christianity so soon became — a matter of organisation and of doctrine. We would have traced the building of this organisation and its gradual growth and amalgamation with the Roman Empire, till, in the downfall of the latter, the Church remained its successor as a super-national state. Parallel with this we would have examined the sources of the Christian doctrine, watched the intermingling of their streams of influence, their conflict, and final crystallisation despite their heterogeneousness. We would have seen how these two factors of organisation and doctrine, with which Jesus had nothing whatever to do, replaced the personal teaching of Christ, and became the chief if not the sole means of salvation; and we would have come to understand the reasons why the Church clings so to superstition, and is so stubbornly resistful of all progress, so ultra-conservative and reactionary.

"All these things and many more would have to

be considered in forming an estimate of the rôle which organised Christianity has played. Many, doubtless, feel that they must defend the Church on the ground that Jesus was responsible for it. This, as I have repeatedly said, seems to me a mistake. I think he can be completely exonerated from the many evils for which the Church has so consistently stood. The Christian Church did not owe its organisation to Jesus, and no one would have been more disappointed than He at the results of doctrines attributed to Him. The great advantages and disadvantages of monasticism, and the wonderful rôle of the Church as a political institution, are, of course, very difficult to estimate. Such culture and such order as existed from the break-up of the Roman Empire in the West until the thirteenth century is certainly largely attributable to the Church; but from that time on, with the development of the state and with the development of science, the Church grows to be more and more a grievous anomaly.

" The final chapter of our work would be the most difficult of all to write or to treat in any adequate fashion. 'What are we to do about it?' is the question that would there have to receive consideration. We would have to turn from looking back to looking forward. I believe myself that we would have to seek a solution along two broad lines. The first consists in the denationalising of the Church. That

which was first against the state, became next imperial, then international, and then national. The Protestants were, as I have pointed out, extremely conservative; they could not conceive of a church as separated from the state, but they could conceive of a national as over against an international church. The Protestant principle was *Cujus regio ejus religio.* Certainly, as the Church has become national, it has lost many of the disadvantageous features of the mediæval international church. But still more is necessary, and with the coming of the Separatists and Independents in England we have a new theory, — that of *voluntary religious association,* — which has been worked out with wonderful results in our own history; for churches with us are, of course, nothing more than religious clubs. What is taking place here is also taking place in France, and is, I believe, of vital moment to every nation, and above all to religion itself. When religion has ceased to have any association with politics, and has divorced itself from the social order, it will become a purely personal matter, as it seems to me that it should be.

"For the second line of advance I think we must foster science. It is upon science we must rely for the removal of crude superstition, for the breaking down of the barriers of ignorance and narrow prejudice, and for the lessening of man's superlative conceit. If we can do these two things, then I think

there is hope that religion may cease to be an impediment to social and scientific progress, and that its benefits, as its solaces, may be obtainable at less cost to the individual and the race.

"I fear I have talked too long, and in a rather desultory fashion. I know there is nothing particularly new or unfamiliar in the facts I have presented. Yet, in such discussions as we are conducting, these facts cannot be neglected. I have, therefore, wanted to put them before you in sequence, that some sort of connected notion of them might be reached. Fragmentary and one-sided as such a sketch must be, it is instructive; and it was scarcely possible to say what I wished in briefer compass."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I feel, Professor B—, that we have all to thank you very heartily. I suppose, as you say, most of us were at one time or another acquainted with the main facts of this history, but it must be an unusual achievement to have made such an extensive outline so graphic. Moreover, the object of these meetings is to re-examine familiar facts, if possible, from new standpoints, in the hope that thus their very familiarity may cease to blind us to their significance. Here, therefore, is the problem you have set us: What is the significance of this record? The facts themselves cannot be disputed, but how are they to be interpreted? What elements here pertain properly to religion? What

to raw human nature? You have shown us failure, superstition, narrow dogmatism, bigotry, and cruelty. You have dwelt upon the substitution of the letter for the spirit, and of temporal power for the kingdom of heaven. Is this sad record, then, properly a religious document? Or is it a psychological document, revealing the action of ignorance, intolerance, and self-seeking, as would the history of any organisation whatsoever? If we were to trace the history of government, or of the very principles of consolidation and organisation themselves, would we find a different record? These are some of the questions your account must raise, and which I trust we may consider. For my own part I would, at the beginning, attempt to defend the view that these 'crimes committed in the name of Christ' are properly ascribable neither to religion nor to organisation as a principle, but rather to those promptings and passions of human nature with which the religious spirit must contend, and which have from time to time dominated the church organisation as they have all other human institutions."

THE HISTORIAN: "That does not tell us very much, does it? And another trouble is that the Church is entirely unwilling to be regarded as a human institution."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It may be that the word 'church' is used in two senses. That of which you

have traced the history is plainly very human, indeed, and whether it is willing or not we shall have to recognise it as such."

THE HISTORIAN: "I was, of course, speaking of Christianity as an historic fact, as the Church of history."

THE PRAGMATIST: "That is the trouble with discussions on religion. We never know whether we are supposed to discuss religion as it is, or as it ought to be."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It does not seem to me that that is the trouble here. I think we have arrived at a fair notion of the religious attitude and spirit, but in the history of the Church we find this spirit seldom animating, or rather, seldom governing, the external organisation. Its place was usurped by superstition on the one side, self-seeking on the other. Now, in order for religion, or anything else, to be effective in the world some type of organisation is obviously necessary. The quest — "

THE PRAGMATIST: "Pardon me, Professor A—, but why should organisation be necessary to religion any more than to poetry?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Surely even poetry needs organisation. A poem becomes effective only as it is known. To make it known there is need of organisation, — of the publisher and bookseller, and of what is, in fact, a very complicated mechanism."

THE PRAGMATIST: "Your argument is more ingenious than sound. Publishers are somewhat more recent than poetry."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "But is it not really obvious that for the dissemination, and even for the preservation, of any idea, or force, or method, organisation is necessary? Long before the days of publishers poetry still had its external organisation in the bards and minstrels, save for which the early songs and sagas would never have come down to us. The more I think of it, the more poetry seems to me the epitome of organisation, the most highly and rigidly organised of all forms of expression, its value depending no less upon the perfection of its form than upon the truth of its meaning. I do not think we can seriously discuss the value of organisation; but that the question is rather how to retain its effectiveness while eliminating its evils. The record the Historian has traced for us brings this problem clearly into view, and should, I think, help us toward a solution; for it should enable us to analyse the forces operative.

"Chief among these, I believe, is the tendency to look for support to the visible rather than the invisible; the tendency toward materialisation, which causes us so readily to substitute adherence to the letter for obedience to the spirit. Jesus said: 'He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings.' But,

as the Historian points out, those who came later replaced this love by formal acceptance of a creed, and obedience by membership in an organisation. It seems we have here something more fundamental than the common failing of losing sight of our ends in dwelling on the means. This last is undoubtedly accountable for much — though we would not conclude therefrom that we should have no means whereby to attain ends. But here I think we have the action of something far more universal. I mean the action of fear. Is not this at the basis of the formalisation and the indoctrinisation of religion? We are afraid in the presence of existence; like children waking from nightmare, we long for something tangible, something visible, something we can lay hold of. For when fear comes, then faith is shaken and the inner sight obscured. Therefore it is that we seek external supports to which we may cling. We are afraid to trust ourselves naked to the law; to the words of the Master we remember, but no longer hear; to a love which seems to sleep blind to our peril. It seems to me that, if we had faith, creeds would be unnecessary; and that the first requisite in freeing organisation from its evils is to have the courage to recognise it as an instrument, a means, not an end, something we use to make religion effective, not something we cling to for our own miserable salvation.

"Is not the history of the Church, when viewed in this light, the history of a struggle between religion and these elements of our nature which are essentially cowardly and self-seeking? I would much like to hear what the Historian would say to this."

THE HISTORIAN: "I could only repeat what I have already said, that I am speaking solely of the historic Church, the historic institution. I would entirely agree with you that this has very little to do with what we would like to consider religion."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I fear I have been talking very vaguely and loosely if I have given the impression that I believe the Church has little to do with religion. I would hold, on the contrary, that the spirit of Christ has never wholly departed from the Church that professes his name; but that too often this spirit has been left to flower in obscurity, while the high places and government have been usurped by cowardice and self-seeking. It is the old story of the money-changers in the temple. It is always they who sit at the entrance and who make the noise. The real worshipper is quiet, and we pass him by unnoticed — until we are in sorrow or in trouble. Yet genuine piety rarely fails to leave its record, and I suspect this is to be traced in unbroken descent within the Church itself; a thread of gold running through the sombre pattern we have seen; or a fire, ever present though unnoticed, till

from time to time it blazes out in great conflagrations of reform.

"It is, of course, impossible to consider all sides of a question at once, yet I think we should bear in mind that there is this other side to the Church's record — not so obvious, perhaps, but nevertheless there. Was it not the Editor who spoke of this at our last meeting, wishing such a history would be written — the history of the Illuminati, of the Church within the Church? I probably have not his words correctly, but was not this his thought?"

THE EDITOR: "The 'Church Invisible' was the term I used; and it seems to me to stand for a very real and potent thing, perhaps, if we could see a little more deeply, the most potent thing in human history. Yet I confess I have not the habit of associating this very closely with what the Historian would call the Church. It has rarely been on good terms with the authorities or the organisation. Nor, indeed, do I often think of the Church when I consider the teachings of Jesus. It is more of an instinctive and temperamental disregard than a matter of reasoning, for I quite agree with the Mathematician that there is every evidence of the continuous presence of spiritual illumination within the historic body."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Why will you not trace for us this other history? I know you have been

reading along these lines for years, and you could give us another side of the Church's record."

THE EDITOR: "I have not the Historian's power of summary. I have, it is true, been much interested in tracing the flow of mystic thought through the centuries, and noting its recrudescence in the last quarter of each. Springing up apparently spontaneously, sometimes in one country, sometimes in another, it varies in minor details and in expression, but in essence it is always the same. This is what I referred to as the Church Invisible, the succession of Illuminati. But it cannot be called peculiarly Christian, for it has existed among all peoples and in all ages. Jesus revived this teaching; he did not originate it. Indeed, St. Augustine himself so says, for he tells us that what he knew as Christianity had existed from all time, and was but given that name when revived by Jesus.

"In the end of the eleventh century the chief mystical movement was among the Spanish Jews, where also was the greatest culture and learning of the age. It was largely through them that Arabic and Greek and Oriental thought were disseminated through the West, and I do not think any one can read 'The Duties of the Heart,' by Rabbi Bachye, without being impressed by its breadth, its wisdom, and its penetration, as well as by its genuine religion.

"But in the twelfth century we find it in Chris-

tian guise — in the teachings of Peter Waldo and the Cathari. In the thirteenth there were the Brethren of the Free Spirit, or the Beghards; while in the fourteenth we find Tauler, and Nicholas of Basle, and the Friends of God; as well as Thomas à Kempis and Suso and the German mystics. The end of the fifteenth century saw, of course, the unrest preceding the Reformation, and the movement is somewhat harder to recognise; but there was a Chancellor of the University of Paris, Gerson by name, who seems to have led a genuine mystical revival which, I suspect, affected the Reformation more than is generally believed. In the sixteenth we again return to Spain, but now among the Christians, not the Jews. Here were Alcantara, St. Teresa, and John of the Cross. The end of the seventeenth century gives us Molinos, and Madame Guyon and the Quietists, as well as Fénelon. The eighteenth is the prelude to the French Revolution; but there in France we find St. Martin and St. German and the recrudescence of mystic Masonry; and in the north, Swedenborg — though he has always seemed to me more psychic than mystic. And finally, there was the revival of Eastern Mysticism, which we ourselves have witnessed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, largely resulting from the work of the Theosophical Society, and the translation of so many of the Oriental Scriptures.

"Plainly much of this was outside the Christian

Church, and almost always opposed by it, being sooner or later persecuted as heretical. The succeeding organisations, each of which for a while exemplified and carried on the movement, seem soon to have degenerated, where they did not immediately disintegrate on the death of their founder. But the spirit of these movements and their teachings have endured unchanged — the same to-day as when Jesus taught, nineteen hundred years ago. That is to me the true Church, this moving spirit and those who embody it; but, as I said, I do not often associate it with the external organisations. One gets tired using the word 'Church' in a different sense from those who would appear to have the best right to determine its meaning. Remember also that by birth and education I am a member of the Society of Friends."

THE PRAGMATIST: "You lean then toward my view that religion has nothing to do with organisation?"

THE EDITOR: "Not at all, though I do not myself care for forms and ceremony, organisation seems to me essential, though it must be kept fluidic. I know how useful the Friends have made theirs."

THE YOUTH: "There is a difference between finding a thing useful and finding it necessary. Opiates are useful, but if depended upon they do more harm than good. Buddhism does not require organisation. Why should Christianity?"

THE AUTHOR: "It is a mistake to consider Bud-

dhism unorganised. Its organisation is plastic, but very real. It seems to me that we can liken the Church to a casket, much kicked about and ill-used because often in the custody of those who did not know its secret; itself broken and defaced, but still preserving intact the scroll of the law. It is the Church that has preserved the teaching of the Kingdom, even where it did not understand that teaching, and it is thus to the Church that we owe our knowledge of it to-day, just as to the Brahmins we owe the record of the mystery teaching of the Rajputs."

The Pragmatist: "Does this mean more than the preservation of the written texts?"

The Author: "Yes, I think so. All our Scriptures come to us through a priestly cast, to whom, as you say, we owe the continued existence of texts. But with these texts there is handed down a body of tradition and interpretation — often at fault, often mistaken and misleading, but again precious beyond all words, the garnered fruit of ages of spiritual experience and aspiration. The value of such a body of testimony, confirming and elucidating the original teaching, is priceless, if we use it rightly. I mean as a guide to our daily living, not as something to which we turn our eyes in distant intermittent reverence, sterile and fruitless. I remember a very short and pithy description from the Katha Upanishad: 'The son of Brig took and did.' That is what we

need to do with our religion. We need to take and do. That also seems to me the lesson taught by the lives of the mystics to whom the Editor referred. In each case the emphasis was upon the will — upon living rather than professing."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Is not that the explanation of the whole history of the Church? The confusion between life and a theory of life — the belief that Belief brings salvation? If we grant this, does not all the rest follow as a matter of course?"

THE BANKER: "That is my view. We need to preach salvation by works."

THE HISTORIAN: "Whatever be its explanation, it is a most disappointing record, — a terrible record to call religious."

THE AUTHOR: "I quite agree with you. And the more closely we study it the more terrible it is."

THE HISTORIAN: "Do you not think so also, Mr. F—? Do you not think that Christianity has been very disappointing?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "From what point of view?"

THE HISTORIAN: "From any point of view; as an effort to better man. Do you not think that it is all very disappointing? When you consider what it cost?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "Disappointing, perhaps, to Jesus; but surely *we* cannot call it so. Look at what it has done. Your outline is so extensive it is

misleading. You have had to leave out of account entirely what must be the most essential element in judging of any religious movement. This is the effect it has had upon the religious-minded man. Here is the actual history of religion, written from generation to generation in the lives of its worshippers. The mediæval Pope, thundering anathemas, is not making the history of religion, but the history of war. The great current of religious evolution flows by, as careless of his denunciations as he is ignorant of its mighty stream.

"Consider the life of the religious man before the coming of Christianity. Go back to the Greek civilisation, to its wonderful philosophy, its art and its poetry — but also its unutterable vices. Consider Sophocles, the poet, next to Shakespeare, who gives me the greatest inspiration and pleasure, and consider his life. Think of those nameless vices of Athens, not as practised by the depraved and outcast, but put forward as the proper delights of the philosopher, and of the poet, of those who stood for the highest religious life of a people. Such a picture fills one with amazement, so far have we grown away from it. The thought of these practices now excites only loathing and disgust, and our whole civilisation unites in outlawing the rare degenerates who have been guilty of them. It took Christianity a thousand years to stamp this out, but it has done it.

Whatever else we have gained, religion and debauchery have been forever dissociated.

"Consider the facts. Look at human nature as it is and as it was. So far from being disappointing, I believe that, could we reconstruct the conditions in which Jesus taught, measure and analyse the forces of that time and people, see them all as they were, not as now we fancy them, why, then I believe we could calculate with mathematical precision the whole course of Christianity. So many years of persecution, so many centuries of temporal power, so long a period of superstition and authority, so much metaphysical theology, so much subtle logic on misconceived premises, — all these could have been foretold. All the horrors of the inquisition, all the retaliation of the reformers, all the abuse of power and degradation of high office, all these, too, could, I believe, have been foreseen; the working out and purging of the race from its poison.

"The effect of Christianity upon the world might be considered almost as the mechanical problem of the resultant of forces — presenting inevitable conflicts and the appearance and temporary domination of all sorts of anti-Christian factors.

"Why will not you scientists who preach the conservation of energy apply it? Why will you not see that the forces acting in men's minds and hearts must work outward to their inevitable conclusion. I can

conceive of Jesus waiting through the centuries till this should have been accomplished, waiting and working for its accomplishment. And I can even believe that, whatever the human brain may have thought, the great Soul within foresaw all this from the beginning — foresaw the ages of misunderstanding before His mission would be fulfilled, before His spirit of love and of service would dwell universally in the hearts of those who profess Him, before He could 'come again,' no longer, perhaps, as a man among men, but as the Spirit of Man itself, animating and uplifting the race to knowledge of its Divine Sonship."

The Historian: "Do you really think our improvement due to Christianity? I most willingly grant the world to be better than it was, but I can see no evidence that this has been brought about by our religion, which appears in history always as reactionary. I have talked to-night to no purpose if that is not clear. The new thing, morally, in our age is the feeling of brotherhood, of unity, of responsibility for the welfare of others — other classes and even other nations. This, I think, we have developed to a degree never before known in the world. To the Greek and the Roman, as to the Mediæval European, the masses beneath him were scarcely human — their happiness, their lives even, of no consequence whatever. But the change from this does not seem

to me due to religion, but to democracy and science; to both of which the Church has always been directly opposed, and which require for their true development a tolerance of individual view that the Church has never to this day adopted. Indeed, from the record, could we not say that humanity had bettered religion, rather than religion humanity?

"Does it not, for example, seem strange to you, as well as disappointing, that Christianity, adopted by Rome, should so immediately have transformed a tolerant community into an intolerant one?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "I doubt if Rome was ever tolerant in our sense of the word — or as toleration implies spiritual brotherhood. Religious toleration under the Roman Empire was, to a large extent, an instrument of diplomacy, by which the gods of conquered peoples, and their worshippers, might be rendered favourable to imperial dominion. The pantheon was little more a symbol of religious tolerance than were Rome's foreign legions symbolic of brotherhood or political equality. When was Rome really tolerant? Under Nero?"

THE HISTORIAN: "Nero's persecution was not from intolerance, or not from any other intolerance than that of the Christians themselves. It was political. Indeed, it was anti-semitic. I think they got the Christians mixed up with the Jews. But I must not speak positively, for really we are entirely unin-

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formed as to the actual conditions of the alleged persecutions."

The Mathematician: "The Historian has started two trains of thought at once, and I would like to see each followed further. The first is the growth among men of what must be recognised as a moral and religious spirit — the spirit of brotherhood — though, the Historian holds, religion did little or nothing to foster it. Now to this seeming paradox I hope we may later return, so in passing I would only suggest that its resolution may lie in distinguishing between the two uses of the word 'religion.' On the one hand we identify it with a spiritual force moving in the race. On the other we confuse it with an external organisation ruled by, and, indeed, composed of, very imperfect human minds and hearts. All forms, all organisations, all habits tend to conservatism; tend to remain unchanged while the causes which prompted them alter. Life is continually outgrowing its clothes, and, in religious matters, particularly, we confuse the clothes with the wearer. It seems to me that the Historian's picture tends rather to support than to deny the Clergyman's concept of the Spirit of Christ, waiting and working ceaselessly through the hearts of men, broadening them year by year, lifting them from their narrow misconceptions, compelling brotherhood. Or, as the Oxonian put it, if I remember correctly, 'the doc-

trine of the Holy Ghost approves itself as essentially true in experience.' Something has bettered us. Something has made us more religious, brought us nearer to the spirit of Jesus and an understanding of His message. Whatever this force may be, it is surely a religious force, 'whose end is righteousness'; working, truly, through science and through politics; through, I believe, every department of life; but for this fact the more, rather than the less, genuinely religious; genuinely of the essence of that for whose service the Church exists.

"The second line of thought concerns this question of intolerance, so foreign to Christ, so often and so cruelly exemplified in the history of Christianity. Indeed, intolerance and fanaticism seem more marked in Christianity than in any other religion, save, possibly, Mohammedanism. The linking of these two religions in such a connection suggests that a further explanation, beyond that mentioned by the Historian, might be found in the peculiar type of monotheism they represent, — or, perhaps more truly, in a misunderstanding of monotheism. That is an idea I should like to put forward for consideration."

The Editor: "What do you mean?"

The Mathematician: "This. So long as a religion is frankly polytheistic a broad tolerance is easy. In a galaxy of gods it is easy to find place for one

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more. Perhaps you had not heard of him. He is not one of your gods. But he may, nevertheless, be a very worthy and powerful deity. The religions of primitive civilisations, where communities were isolated and life very little unified, were essentially of this polytheistic type. From polytheism to monotheism and monism there are two paths. The first consists in the recognition that behind diversity of form there is a oneness of essence, that all these gods are, as it were, but aspects of a supreme hidden Deity; that in worshipping them one is really worshipping Him or It. This path consists, in short, of the recognition of the One *behind* the many, and to those who follow this path tolerance is also easy. It is, indeed, the very essence of their creed. They would not wish to change any man's religious system. They would only seek to make him go more deeply into it. For the unity lies within.

"The other way is the way of conquest, and is well illustrated by Hebrew theology. The Jehovah of the Jews was never, in popular conception, the One behind the many, but was one *among* many. 'I am the Lord *thy* God, which hath brought *thee* out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. *Thou* shalt have no *other gods* before me. *Thou* shalt not bow down thyself to *them* nor serve *them*; for I the Lord thy God am *a* jealous God.' This frankly recognises the existence of many other gods.

The scheme of things is polytheistic, but the people of Israel are to cleave to one only; and he is intensely jealous and egotistic. Monotheism consists here in maintaining allegiance to him, in magnifying him above others, in fighting for him against others. Such monotheism is anything but monism (I think a moment ago I linked the two together), and its dualism is, as an ultimate condition, only tolerable as the dualism between the victor and the vanquished, in which *we* are the victors rejoicing in heaven while our enemies are consumed in hell. Such a conception of the Deity is totally repugnant to our modern view, yet there can be no doubt that it was the belief of the Hebrews and long coloured Christian thought.

"I remember when this theory of religious intolerance (though I do not suppose it is particularly original) first occurred to me, I was studying that most remarkable period in Egyptian history when Ikhnaton, or Amenhotep IV, as he is more commonly called, attempted to replace the popular polytheism by the esoteric monism and pantheism which were the religious tradition of the Royal House and Priests. I have never been sure whether Ikhnaton himself misconceived this monism, or whether the misunderstanding existed only among his followers, but certain it is that the people were not ready for it, and saw in the teaching of unity and the symbol

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of the sun only a new deity unwilling to share his honours with the ancient hierarchy.

"Despite Ikhnaton's iteration and reiteration the esoteric doctrine remained esoteric — hidden from all but the few who had the ability to understand. It is a pathetic picture this young king makes. Idealistic, eager, full of the sense of the greatness of his message and his gift to his people, he finds this gift first misunderstood and then rejected. The Priests turn against him; and for the first time in history there is religious war and persecution for religion's sake. For a time he wins, but later is driven from his ancient capital and his throne. In the new city he created he is little better than a prisoner — the forms of royalty are left him, but his power is gone. The dream of monism passes and polytheism, so easily pictured, lending itself so readily to the intelligences of the learned and the ignorant alike, resumes its sway.

"I fear I have wandered from my point, as this theme always holds my imagination. But it seems both interesting and instructive to notice that the absolute monism of Buddhism and the frank polytheism of Ancient Egypt were alike tolerant. It is only misunderstanding that makes intolerance; and misunderstanding of unity at that. I believe, by the way, that Ikhnaton's date was not more than a century before Moses, and there have been many efforts

to trace the latter's teaching to this source. Certainly there is the same type of misunderstood monism, resulting in the same intolerance."

THE BANKER: "Another factor, and fully as important a one, in my judgment, was pointed out by the Social Philosopher a bit ago, but was not then taken up, as the talk swung into other channels. Did any religion other than Christianity have the belief of Salvation by Faith? By what you believed and professed? If not, then one would expect Christianity to be the most intolerant. Such a creed is an entirely adequate reason for bigotry. More, it demands bigotry of every right-minded person. If your neighbour is only to be *saved* by believing, then it becomes both right and your duty to make him believe. If you literally believed in the alternative of an eternity of torment, do you think you would hesitate at torture? No more than a doctor amputating a poisoned toe, in order that a life might be spared. No, tolerance is a good thing, a kindly, pleasant thing, but there are plenty of situations where it is out of place, and one of them is if you happen to believe as the vast majority of Christians did believe in the Middle Ages."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I suspect toleration has a far deeper significance than your words would suggest. To me it involves the whole question of the inviolability and sacredness of individuality — of the

integrity of the individual Soul. And this, as the Historian indicated, though I do not know whether he meant it to be taken in just this way, is a prerequisite for brotherhood, for unity with either man or God. True tolerance seems to me not a negative attitude of indifference, but a positive recognition of the individuality of others, an attitude which opens many sides of the religious nature."

THE HISTORIAN: "I wonder whether a man's belief does have much effect upon his character, whether, as you say, a belief in tolerance would open the religious nature and make one brotherly, or whether the reverse process is not the case? It seems mostly a matter of temperament. As I said, some men seem to have religion and some have not. Those that have believe in religious things. But I suspect it is the temperament that makes the belief, not the belief the temperament."

THE CLERGYMAN: "You are questioning the possibility of a religious belief educating and moulding human nature? That is something which the Church has studied pretty thoroughly in connection with our missions. It reminds me of a little testimony I collected on my own account some years since, on a trip around the world. As a boy at Sunday-school my pennies were given for the support of two foreign missions, — the one among the Karens in Burmah, the other with the Tellagoos in India, — and these

two names have ever since typified 'the heathen' to me, much as Sir Galahad does knighthood. When I was in Burmah I remembered my old friends the Karens, and asked the Bishop of Rangoon, with whom I was stopping, where they were and how they were. I am ashamed to say I was half afraid I would find they had vanished with the fairies and dragons of the same childish epoch. However, they turned out to be real enough and anything but mythical. Indeed, they had become shining examples. For, from being among the lowest of the Burmese races, apparently from their nature, they had become among the highest, from the influence of Christianity. The same experience awaited me in India with the Tellagoos. I came away cheered and delighted with these friends of my youth, and with the work for which my pennies had gone. So here the practically universal report of foreign missions is substantiated. Religious belief does uplift and educate.

"Calvinism, which I hate, seems to be an admirable example of the same effect. It does not seem to matter what was the original character or nature which embraced it. The resulting type is the same; in Geneva and Holland and Scotland, or wherever it is found."

THE EDITOR: "The same likeness, flowing from similarity of belief, is evident in the Society of

Friends. It is a closer likeness, a more strongly marked type, than that of nationality."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Though I would quite agree with your main contention, it seems to me that in these last illustrations the causal principle is selective as well as formative. The Protestant reformations and doctrines were preached broadly throughout the whole of Europe. The natures which responded to a given doctrine or ideal became the followers of that doctrine. This is a distinctly selective process, based upon an inner quality of nature — an inner likeness. Each sect is to-day composed either of worshippers selected in this fashion, or of the descendants of those thus selected. I do not think we can disregard this selective action and attribute the similarity of type solely to the formative and character-building influence of belief."

THE CLERGYMAN: "Everything is selective in the same sense. Take the champion weight lifter at your University. He was not always strong. On the contrary, as a boy he had no particular strength. Something in the ideal of athletics must have appealed to him, because he took up some dumb-bells one day and liked the effect. He practised and grew strong. I suppose you could call this selective, but it would leave the argument quite unchanged. He was not strong when he was 'selected.'"

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THE HISTORIAN: "No. But neither did any 'belief' make him so. He grew strong because he exercised; because of the conditions of his daily life. To the same causes are due the betterment of the race and its growth in brotherhood. It does not result from religion, but from trade; from railways, from steamships, democracy, and science. They may seem strange instruments for inculcating morality, but they are effective. And I confess Christianity does not seem to me to have been particularly effective. Most disappointing, in fact."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Did not you yourself point out that Christianity has never had a chance? Faith without works is not faith."

THE HISTORIAN: "That is the trouble. It has not worked."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Do you know those books of Fielding Hall's on Burmese Buddhism: 'The Soul of a People' and 'The Heart of Man'? They are charming. I think it is in the first that he refers to the difference between the religion of the Burmese and the religion of Europeans. The Burmese believe theirs. We *believe* a rattlesnake bite is poisonous, and we avoid it. We *say* we believe in Jesus, but how many obey Him? I quite agree with you that it is our acts which mould our characters, but I am unwilling to call any profession of religion a real belief unless it is lived. It is by living our ideals

that they uplift us. Let us try living Christianity before we condemn it."

THE CLERGYMAN: "There you have the keynote of what must be the religion of the future. It must be practical, intensely practical. For myself I find I lay less stress upon beliefs and more upon works. In fact, the effect of any belief upon character is largely the result of the higher forms of conduct, and the new and nobler deeds that belief has inspired. What does he do? That is the question I always want answered of those I meet, and it is the question I think life asks us: What are we doing? And in the end it will be, What have we done? Religion must be practical. So practical that, I think sometimes, it will be a sort of spiritual socialism.

"That is one of the most interesting phases of the conflict between Church and state now going on in France. Do you recall the incident of a few days ago when an Archbishop was turned out of his palace to make room for a Minister of Labour? It seemed to me far more in consonance with the acts of Jesus than have been the recent Papal Bulls. One cannot help hoping much from such signs as these — and there are many — that the Roman Church may abandon its political and temporal pretensions, and that religions of all denominations may turn more thought and attention to bettering life as it must be lived here and now. After all, religion is concerned

with the living, not with the dead; and if the churches are to remain a power in the world, they must better the condition of the living. They must be practical."

The Mathematician: "I quite agree with you that the religion of the future will be intensely practical. But I think it will be so by looking inward to a spiritual ideal, which we seek to express in our lives, rather than by looking outward to any socialistic state or condition. The superficial effects may seem to be the same, but I think there is a profound difference in the two attitudes. The first seems to me the religious attitude, centring the attention upon spiritual ideals and spiritual law, and tending to identify our life with these. The other, however beneficial it may appear, is ultimately materialistic, placing the emphasis upon material conditions and magnifying their importance."

The Social Philosopher: "I thought we had agreed to hope that this making of religion — as you are doing now — a mere matter of ideals, was but an eddy in the main stream of religious evolution; and that we might find for religion the 'stone-wall' type of reality, as we looked deeper into its meaning and as its development progressed."

The Pragmatist: "You beg the whole question in the way you phrase the statement. The 'mere' is derogatory. Religion will never be 'merely' any-

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thing to the religious man, neither 'merely' ideals nor 'merely' anything else. Yet the more strongly we feel an ideal, the more careless we may be of other evidences. To need other reality than this is practically a reflection upon our own feeling."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "That is Santayana's idea which we agreed unsatisfactory to at least a side of our nature."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I think we will get the stone-wall type of reality in the way I suggested: by living out and expressing our ideals in our own lives and work. Then they will have at least the same objective reality that we have. We are ourselves part of the machinery of existence, we should remember, and not the least important of our functions is the transformation of ideals into acts and objective conditions."

THE HISTORIAN: "Are we not getting pretty far away from the ordinary meanings of religion? I suppose everybody's life is living out some ideal — so far as it is not just drifting — though I do not suppose we are particularly conscious of it always. But this is not necessarily religious, is it? And it does not seem to require any particular organisation such as the Christian Church."

THE CLERGYMAN: "I, of course, believe that religion needs organisation and always gravitates toward it. Otherwise I should not be in the Church. In-

deed, so essential is the Church to me that I cannot conceive what life would be without it. If any power higher than my own should ever deprive me of my present position in, or relation to the Church, it would be a matter of the deepest regret to me. I would have anew to associate myself with it, if not as minister, then as layman, as a mere 'hanger on,' a 'strap hanger,' if no other connection were possible. The satisfaction I find in the Church, particularly in prayer, and prayer within the Church, is far too precious for me ever willingly to forego it. I cannot believe that in this I am in any way unique. I am confident, rather, that what I feel is a need of our human nature, not always present in the consciousness, but always present in us. And once its satisfaction has been experienced it can never be forgotten.

"This is a time in the world when of all times there should be least challenge of religious organisation, for this is, par excellence, the age of organisation — of social co-operation and mutual endeavour. It is these which underlie all modern effectiveness, and they are as necessary in our religion as in our civilisation. But in religion they are something more than instruments of effective service — more than the mere machinery whereby Christian ideals become operative in the world. Community of worship can lift the consciousness to a spiritual region it is difficult to enter alone. By its means our personal limita-

tions are transcended. Our prayer and aspiration, so incomplete and broken in ourselves, are rounded out and supplemented by the aspiration of our fellows. Our personal consciousness is uplifted and merged into a wider consciousness which supports it — the consciousness of the Church. We recognise the presence and effect of such group consciousness clearly enough in other directions. In listening to music, for example, we know how our pleasure may be enhanced by a sympathetic and appreciative audience, or damped by a cold or empty house. We have all experienced the contagion of fear or of courage, of some emotion or feeling. And this contagion is but a psychological indication of the profound truth of spiritual brotherhood upon which all community of worship rests.

"The Church is here — a fact in our civilisation. It ministers to a need which is also a fact, a fact of our nature. The question which confronts us is: How can we make the Church most useful? How can we take advantage of past mistakes, learn from the past, leave the weakness behind us, and push forward with the good?"

THE YOUTH: "I would like to ask Mr. F— a question. Was not Jesus the highest exponent of Christianity?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "You must know my answer to that."

The Youth: "And, after Jesus, perhaps St. Francis, and, let us say, George Fox?"

The Clergyman: "They certainly had much of Christ's spirit."

The Youth: "Then it does not seem to me that Christianity gravitates toward organisation (for these, its chief exponents, were either ignorant of the possibility of organisation or feared its coming), but, rather, that religion gives birth to organisation, and tends to die in the process."

The Pragmatist: "I do not think I can grant the Clergyman's contention that organisation is a need of the religious spirit, or an assistance in the religious life. Surely, if one's religion could live only on 'the contagion of emotion,' it would have but shallow roots. I do not wish to distort the Clergyman's words — and I am sure that was not his meaning — but I do not see what other good organisation can do in religion. As for the betterment of social and civic conditions, the betterment of man himself, I think the crux of the matter is in B—'s proposed last chapter. I believe it is to be sought through the emancipation of science. Our tenements are better than they were, not because of religion, but because of sanitary science; and the same is and will be true in the betterment of other social evils.

"Religion is not a collective thing, but an indi-

vidual thing. Religion must always be individual, always based upon personal experience and personal temperament and character. Nor can my religious experience be communicated to another, much less duplicated by anyone else. For such to be possible it would be necessary to duplicate me; for all that is most essentially myself enters into and colours my religious life. Therefore, I think organisation can never touch the essentials of religion, but must always draw attention away from the unique individual essence to the common surface things, and thus rob religion of its real significance.

"Religion is to me an adventure of faith; an act of the will. One chooses to believe in a power for good. One is not compelled by external things to such a belief; but by one's own will one chooses that attitude toward life. Religion is thus always concerned with the present and the future, with those things which cannot be organised, both in ourselves and in conditions. It is never concerned with the brute past. The past is simply historical — and usually more bad than good. Religion is not a matter of evidence, but of the will. It is an adventure of faith."

The Clergyman: "It is a matter of science and common sense, — of spiritual law underlying our natures and compelling our assent. Over against the 'adventure of faith' I place the constancy and

eternity of spiritual law, which it is the duty of every man to discover and obey."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Are you not each describing a different part of the same Path? It seems so to me. The Clergyman's illustration of the athlete may make my meaning clearer. Until he has exercised regularly he can have no certainty — no logical proof, at all events — that it will do him good. To make the initial effort is thus, as the Pragmatist put it, 'an adventure of faith.' It is after this has been made that we have what the Clergyman spoke of, the practical experience of its benefits and the recognition of the principles and laws which underlie them. Finally, there results an establishment of the bodily system upon this new basis of hygiene and the exercise of new powers, rather than upon the previous softer mode of life.

"This, I think, is not a bad parallel to what happens to the man who endeavours to express his religious ideals in his own life. Is it not Inge who defined faith as 'a venture, or series of ventures, which verifies itself as it advances'? The definition is not unlike the Pragmatist's, and has the advantage of rejecting all sterile opinions, all beliefs we say we hold, but do not put into practice. For anything to be a part of our real faith we must live by it. It must 'march,' as Carlyle would say, and verify itself in the advancing. So our religious life begins with

the trust in our religious ideals. Gradually this trust grows until it becomes a matter of faith with us. We 'will' to believe in them, as the Pragmatist told us, in the sense that we will to act upon them and enter upon the 'adventure of faith.' Then comes the verification — perhaps personal and incommunicable, as may have been the faith it verifies, but none the less unmistakable and convincing. And last there comes the complete re-establishment of our lives upon the basis of our faith, upon the basis of our ideals, which have been proved to us as we have followed them. They become for us the law of our lives, as real to us as we are to ourselves; infinitely more real than the world of 'stone-walls.'

"It is obvious that much of this Path is purely personal and not touched by organisation. Yet in another part we can be greatly helped. This 'adventure of faith' is no light matter, and the testimony of those who have gone before can give us something to hold to when our own vision is clouded."

The Pragmatist: "I don't think I can even now agree with you as to the usefulness of organisation, or even as to the possibility of organising religion. If it were not so shockingly late I would like to discuss it further."

The Mathematician: "We can take it up another evening."

The Clergyman: "I wish you would think over

the practical side of the problem. What steps can the Church take to make it more in harmony with, and helpful to, modern life? In what way should science and democracy modify its ideas and its organisation?"

VII

ORGANISATION AND RELIGION

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "To put this evening's subject in its proper connection with what has preceded, it will be necessary to go back two meetings. You will remember that the Oxonian, being then requested to open the discussion, gave us the choice of four topics, of which we promptly selected all. He complied so far as to present three of them, which formed a fairly connected sequence of different aspects of individual religious feeling. The fourth topic he begged to postpone till it could receive more adequate consideration. That was the Place of the Church in the Present Age. At the following meeting, when we were unfortunately deprived of the Oxonian's company, the Historian traced for us the history of the Church as an external organisation. Beginning with the statement that Christianity derived its name, but neither its teaching nor its organisation, from Christ, the first part of his thesis was directed to showing what he believed to be the origin and growth of these latter. He pointed out that once organisation and doctrine had been established, membership in the

one and adherence to the other became necessary to salvation; so that their effect was to substitute conformance to the letter, for obedience to the spirit of the law and the teaching. The crimes of the Church, its superstition, bigotry, and cruelty, its self-seeking and opposition to all progress, its political, rather than its religious character through the Middle Ages, — all these were dwelt upon and illustrated by writings and records of mediæval Churchmen. Then, turning to the present and the future, the Historian raised the problem of how to better this, and sought its solution along two lines, first in the denationalisation of the Church, putting it on a legal parity with a literary or scientific society; and, second, in the removal of superstition by the fostering of science.

"In thanking the Historian I pointed out how admirably his paper instanced the very problem to which these meetings owe their origin, and the need of analysing religious history and phenomena that we may distinguish between the action therein of religion itself and of those tendencies in us with which the religious spirit must contend. In particular, I dwelt upon the tendency to replace the spirit by the letter, to remove our attention from the end and fasten it upon the means, seeing in this tendency that which led to the gradual materialisation and externalising of all religion and the danger in all

organisation. I held, however, that organisation of some sort was essential to effectiveness, that it was, in fact, essential to the continued existence of anything at all. So that our problem was how to preserve its effectiveness while eliminating its evil.

"The Pragmatist disputed this view, seeing no reason to believe that organisation was more necessary to religion than to poetry; to which I replied that it was necessary to poetry. There was some further talk upon this point, and upon the cause for the intolerance the Church so greatly fostered. But, I believe, we all felt that the one evening had not permitted a satisfactory discussion of such important problems. The Clergyman, indeed, made the direct appeal that we should consider in what way those who work through organisation should direct their efforts; how we could profit by the mistakes of the past, and how make best use of past achievements. These, then, are the topics before us this evening: What is the value of organisation in religion? What is the place and function of the Church in the world to-day? And from these I hope we will be able to pass to a third: In what directions should we turn our efforts that organised religion may be raised to a freer, purer life, its effectiveness increased, its evils eliminated? To this end I have asked the Pragmatist to open the discussion, after which I shall call upon the Oxonian, for, if I am right in my

guess, his fourth topic should be complementary to the Pragmatist's view."

THE PRAGMATIST: "It may be complementary, but I am confident it will not be complimentary. The Oxonian and I have talked of these things before. Indeed, I suspect many of you will find me too radical.

"Let me preface by a remark which may seem to stand apart from my proper subject, but which bears upon it. It is this: Religion is too often discussed as though it were a separate and isolated thing, with an independent existence of its own; while, in reality, it is not a thing in itself, but a relation in which things are; an attitude which must be taken by some one, or something, before it has meaning. To attempt to discuss this relation independently of that which it relates is to invite confusion. For the peculiarity of the religious relation is that it *is* the essence of what it relates. A coupling link may be viewed and studied quite independently of the car and engine it connects. But the religious relation is no such mechanical contrivance. The aspiration of each man's heart toward God contains within itself all that is most truly that man, and what is most truly God. It is meaningless without these. So religion can only be understood as we understand man and as we understand God.

"Now, I cannot pretend to speak of the develop-

ment of religion from an anthropological or an historical point of view. I can speak only as a dialectician and consider the various ways in which the word has been used. Here I think we find three well-marked epochs or stages in the conception of Deity, or of that to which religion relates man. The first stage presents the primitive, tribal gods. In this, religion is not individual but communal. The correlate to which is that religion is without particular significance to the individual, concerning, in fact, only those portions of his life where his welfare is bound up with the welfare of his tribe. The god is the god of the tribe, treating the tribe as a unit and worshipped by the tribe as a unit. The sacrifices are propitiatory for the entire community, not at all individual, or expressive of an individual relation. Whatever relation exists between you and any particular deity exists because you are a member of a particular tribe which has either pleased or offended the deity in question.

"In the record leading us from primitive Judaism to early Christianity we see the transition from this first stage to the second. One God has been chosen from many, and that one has become supreme. But there remains the old tribal idea, that your relation to the Deity depends upon your membership in this or that body. With the Jews it was a racial matter; the whole Hebrew people were the chosen of God.

With the early Christians, and perpetuated in Catholicism, it was a matter of membership in the organised Church. This was the hold and basis of authority. As the Historian pointed out at our last meeting, it was this special relation existing between the Deity and the Church which insured the salvation of all within the Church. So here, as in the first or tribal stage, religion still lacked the individual significance it was later to attain; and the concept of the Deity was still limited and provincial, still a God of one sect or institution more than of another.

"The most significant and essential thing in the Protestant movement, again speaking not as an historian, but as a dialectician, was the raising of its concept of God to universality. God was no longer the God of the Church alone, or even of Christendom, or of man, or of the whole world; but was actually cosmic and universal and absolute. So that man's religion became the relation of man to the Absolute; the relation of that which is most completely individual to that which is most completely universal. Now, if this relation is universal, it can exclude nothing. It must exist between everything in the universe and that universe. It must exist between such a God and every man whatever his condition. It must be present in every act, every moment, every relation. No one organisation can possibly confine it or make it exclusively its own.

"It is curious to note how often when men seek forcibly to alter a given condition they succeed only in re-establishing the content thereof in some new form or way. Again and again has this been proved in political history, where the tyranny of a king has been overthrown only to establish the tyranny of a mob; and it is equally marked in the history of ideas. Thus Descartes, who avowedly began by doubting all things, was led, through this doubt, to reaffirm all the essential elements of the system he sought to replace. Nor was Luther any exception. He but re-established in different guise and upon different foundations the principles of exclusion and authority, logically so inconsistent with the broadening view of God for which he stood. It has happened, therefore, that Philosophy and Science have been left to champion what is actually the Protestant conception of Deity, and the universality and the immediacy of the religious relation. This conception makes quite untenable the claims of organised religion, which I have tried to show as survivals of the old communal or tribal worship. Therefore, I believe that there is no more place for organised, and so exclusive, religion in logic than there is in our own hearts. Religion must be immediate, personal, wholly individual, containing and expressing all that the man himself is.

"I go further, however, than thinking organisa-

tion is simply unnecessary or superfluous. I believe it has been positive for harm, — that the claim of the Church to be exclusively religious has greatly impoverished life and our other relations. In what is at once the wider and more personal concept of religion, which seems to me the true one, every act or moment of our lives must have its religious significance, which is the essence of that act or moment, its deepest and most sacred meaning, and in which we can see God. We have lost much by looking upon religion — our relation to the Divine — as something which is expressed through formulas and in the church. We have robbed the natural order of life of so much which it was meant to have — which it has, if we could but persuade ourselves to look for and find it in the daily round. The Historian alluded to the degradation of the sex-relations through the monasticism of the Middle Ages, but is not the effect of the Church to-day still to impoverish and belittle them? It truly has not killed marriage as an institution, but it has prevented it from reaching the development and the sacredness it should have reached. We are not taught to look upon sex-relations as sacred or holy. We smile at the worship of the lover. Often enough it is foolish and absurd. Nevertheless, no man who has felt real love but knows that in it the heavens have opened for him and he has come nearer to God. And love is but one of the

innumerable aspects of life of which the same is true, — which have been impoverished by this theory that religion is concerned with organisation; for this leads us to look abroad for the sacredness which lies most close at home.

"I would like to make my attitude clear on this matter, and I do not know whether I have done so or not. If any one benefits by praying with others, or by any type of collective ceremony, I, of course, have no objection to offer to associations for such purpose. I suppose that seems very much like what organised religion now is. The word 'organisation,' however, implies to me something exclusive, or as though a religious organisation was in some way particularly or specially or exclusively religious, and this notion of confining religion I think very unfortunate and harmful. The word 'association' does not have for me the same connotations. But, as you know, I personally feel that religion is far too individual to benefit by such means. That, I hope, makes my general position intelligible."

The Mathematician: "It does not seem to me, Professor K—, that your views are as radical as you made us anticipate. If I understand you, you hold that nothing should stand between man and God. Religion being the relation of man to the Absolute, you argue that it must be direct and immediate as well as universal. The Church steps in and says

intercourse is to be carried on through it and only through it. It wishes to be an assistance and intermediary, but succeeds only in being an added veil between us and the light, separating what should actually blend, and restricting what is universal. To such an organisation of religion — which makes it a matter solely of an hour or so on Sunday, leaving the rest of the week free to be spent as we like — you distinctly object. For you show us that God can be found in every moment and act of our lives, and that if we do not so find Him in our lives they are wretchedly impoverished. To this we all must give assent, as we must to your final admission that you have no objection to 'associations' for worship or service if any find benefit therein. This seems to me a truer view than the other of the actual function of the Church. I think it was the Zoologist who suggested that religion was fully as much a matter of the consciousness of our relation with the Absolute as it was of that relation itself. We must surely all know the inspiration and fresh incentive that comes from companionship and tradition; and these, together with the reawakening of our religious consciousness, are services which religious organisations or 'associations' should perform for us. They should help us to be more truly religious at all times."

The Pragmatist: "I would not agree that I needed any organisation to help me 'be religious.'

It is little short of an impertinence, both to God and to me, for the Church to assume that I do."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I am again confronted with my old difficulty: that I agree with others so much better than I can persuade them to agree with me. Evidently I ought to listen and not talk. Will not the Oxonian give us his views now?"

THE OXONIAN: "I ran over so in my three topics at our last meeting that I have reduced to writing what I wanted to say to-night, so that I might know just how long it would take me."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "You know I told you the longer you spoke the better we would be pleased."

THE OXONIAN: "It was very good of you. I asked for ten minutes, and I do not think it will take me longer to read what I have here. Let me put it to the test.

"We have all of us at one time or another fallen on quiet days or hours and read for a while in the literature of counsel and ideal; it may have been in Marcus Aurelius, or, better, in Emerson, or, best of all, in Poetry. Has it ever happened to you to notice when the time had well passed and you were immersed again in work and society that there had been a change of mental weather; that you were now in a different and a heavier air, in which the animating ideas looked faded, and your spiritual energy had flagged? The question has but one an-

swer, and on that answer rests the defence of the Church.

"For it is possible to keep oneself, comparatively speaking, in a certain atmosphere, and only too easy by negligence to wander out of it. We need to be brought back into the presence of thoughts and things that renew moral ardour or recall spiritual reverence. We need to be reminded. Now the Church is the great reminder. It says to us, I have called His ways to remembrance.

"If you deliberately practise a new exercise, it may be riding or canoeing or some gymnastic feat, what is at first awkward and trying, the last thing you can naturally do, becomes, of course, if you acquire it at all, easy and spontaneous. We say this is because the machinery of muscle, nerve, and cell has been adapted to its task and the muscle has been strengthened. In point of fact, a new muscle has been made. There is not one department of power, art, science, humour, kindness, or social grace in which the like does not hold true. As the familiar French saying runs, the function makes the organ. There is a single word for this idea, the making of organs. It is 'organisation.' Only we must not forget that in every case, as notably in muscle, nerve, and cell, it is not the making of a single organ, but a system of organs that are harmoniously to work together. And to create the organisation within there must be brought

to bear fit and *unfailing* agencies without — organs to build organs.

"The religious body that calls its teachings Christian Science protests that life and health do not depend on organs. When Christ healed, they say, he used no means; let us abjure means or machinery in general. These are not aids, but rather, if we put any faith in them, they are clogs upon the spirit, which only requires to wake up to its own free independence. Yet there is perhaps but one other Christian body that makes so persistent and masterly a use of the ecclesiastical machinery as they. (Hence, they are one of the few powers which that other body fears.) Their followers shall attend the services. The cured shall bear testimony before the congregation. The chosen passages from the books shall be conned and studied. The lamp shall be tended and kept burning. Is your health uncertain again? Do you seem to be overworking? It is because you do not give enough time to Science, that is, to the calm attendance or reading or contemplation that is enjoined. If anything goes amiss there is but a single remedy. You must come nearer to the Divine. And the ways are marked for you.

"This is only correct psychology or comprehension of human nature. John Stuart Mill is justly regarded as in great measure a disciple of Bentham, but Mill remarks that the religious teachers of the

Church had a far deeper knowledge of the profundities and windings of the human heart than Bentham. The truth is that you do not gain men for a commanding idea, and mould them to it by making small demands upon them, but by making great demands. Unitarianism makes small demands, does not deem the Church very necessary, intimates that the chief thing is a wholesome civic and family life, correct habits, and good-natured feelings; accordingly, Unitarianism is the outer surface of the Christian religion, where evaporation takes place. We find something more to the purpose of life in Mrs. Gladstone's simple remark that her husband conquered his irritability by years of daily prayer.

"In no case is this more clearly true than in the poetic interest. It is said, let religion be as free as the poetic sense. It is often quite as free and quite as evanescent. For the poetic interest easily atrophies. It completely atrophied in the hackneyed case of Darwin. But, also, it easily fails to develop at all. It is, of course, a frequent law of interests and instincts that, if not taken at their period of readiness, they wither and lose their responsiveness. Needless to say, all whom we call poets have heard or read poetry. Wordsworth tells, in the Excursion, of a man who would have written verse if he had had it about him in his youth. Nothing vibrates, nothing lasts, nothing carries its atmosphere and aroma from

mind to mind and from book to mind more than verse; nothing can sleep more soundly in the brain when we let the stores alone. This is embodied in the homely saw, 'Poetry is catching.' Amongst gracious fostering traditions, rich with the spoils of time, encouraging originality while offering aid and added impulse, the tradition of poetry has a sure place. It does in some sort for a race what a parent of refined interests does for his children, when he carefully chooses his time to put Macaulay's Lays and Scott and Byron and Tennyson and Keats and Shakespeare in their hands, and finds some means of inciting them to 'keep up their poetry.' A nation that read poetry more than ours and rewarded it with more appreciation, and on all sides criticised it by the standard of the best, would have a richer harvest than we. Perhaps one day American Universities will attack this fact. What poetry and literature, together with the whole element of tone and taste, flagrantly want in America, is criticism, — our great lack, — the preaching of standards, the organised bringing to bear of the best we know, — a natural office of universities, journals, and voluntary associations, which should fill the atmosphere with it, that it might circulate insensibly.

"The word 'voluntary' recalls the idea of freedom so perplexingly invoked in this discussion. Is unorganised religion hampered because the organised ex-

ists? Need we care for Whitman less because we know the power of Milton's measure? Are the woods and the mountain-top robbed of their awe because men build a house to God? Are we less prone to be moved by a chance sight of the sublime because we call His ways to remembrance every day? The truth is that the spontaneous warmth of sentiment that all prize, which can neither be confined nor loosed at will, is not a mere fragrance in the air, wafted hither and thither by an idle breeze. It rather is to be likened to the blooming of a plant with roots. It draws its vitality from the habit and spirit of the mind, and is easily sapped at a point below its level.

"Perhaps you will ask me what all this has to do with the actual Church of history, bound and barnacled with inheritances that obstruct the life of the spirit. On the abuses and infidelities of the Church it is tempting to dilate. No one of modern education will question that its dogmatic system, its form of organisation, its legal and penal attitude toward faith, and much of its moral principle are from sources quite other than the precept of Christ, — not wholly harmful for that reason. Christ framed no organisation; he only brought a spirit and idea so potent that in the economy of human things they demanded an organisation to perpetuate them. In a grossly imperfect manner they have been perpetuated. They are an everlasting gospel. He left his legacy

amongst *men.* It had to survive (if survive it could at all) by taking the rougher, hardier, impurer forms that suit the mass of human society and by uniting for centuries with much that was alien to its essence. In so doing it also united with much that was sound and solid, though superadded to itself.

"But now the Church stands before us an immense fact, a broad foundation, halls where the people may be addressed, in a measure, habits of attendance and worship. It is daily widening its view, opening doors and windows. What a means for the stimulus and instruction of communities! Do you wish to see this enormous 'plant,' as the commercial phrase is, left derelict? Do you think that ardour for the ideal is already superabundant? Or do you wish to see men of critical and fastidious mind pass into it in greater force and leaven the whole? Perhaps you are not edified by its history. Well, fools build houses — yes, and knaves, too — that wise men may dwell in them. Perhaps you think that contemporary forms of worship and contemporary preaching are for the most part ill calculated to nourish cultivated minds. Enter and modify them. The light and mellowness of the few must be imperfect, said Arnold, until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with them too; those are the flowering times for spiritual things when there is a *national* glow of life and thought,

when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by it. In the Church, now gradually growing free and flexible, the most discerning criticism of life and the deepest kindling of the spirit might be at home.

"The rest must be brief.

"Christianity is social. The Mahometan may pray alone in his mosque, and one Greek, or one Hindoo, might sacrifice alone in his temple, but we gather in churches as a society. A man of cultivation says, perhaps, that he avoids church-going because he gains nothing by it. The truth is he gains nothing by it because he is capable of avoiding it as a poor bargain. He has gone that *he* may be instructed and uplifted (to use the cant phrase) for the purposes of his life outside the walls. That is, indeed, a purpose of church service, but it is not the only purpose, and it is fulfilled only by passing chance, one might almost say, if the chief purpose be neglected. The service is not all an exercise *about* something else, about life, behaviour, heaven, and the rest. It exists for its own sake. Where religion is real, I do not mean in every case or in every breast, there is a contagion and a common warmth, what we in other cases call the spirit of the thing, kept alive by observance, by singing, by prayer and rite and invocation. It is an experience, an enhancement of life, an infinitesimal portion of that communion in which religion culmi-

nates, social in its nature, and so not unfitted for the other end of binding men together as citizens of their common world.

"The life of the Church, rightly conceived, is a procession of symbolism. Now all life hangs on symbols. We perceive by symbols only, we think by their means only, our feelings cling to nothing else. Science is a system of human symbols and is anthropomorphic through and through. The same is true of art and religion. Now the continuity of any religion, the lasting gist and burden of its faith, is best committed to beautiful and venerable symbols, which stand while thoughts waver, and round which thoughts may safely work in unrestraint. Of such symbols, in spite of its sins, the Christian Church has been the one custodian."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "The Oxonian has said what I was trying to say — only far better than I could have hoped to do. He has emphasised also the value of organisation as an instrument — as a means of making our religious experience or aspiration effective in the world and of service to others. It is the effectiveness of organisation which is its most salient feature. But before we enter upon a detailed discussion of the Oxonian's paper I would like to ask the Author also to speak upon the same theme, for I know him to have studied the Church organisation from a very interesting point of view. Will you

not repeat for us all, E—, what you talked to me of the other day? Or put it as you will."

THE AUTHOR: "What I would rather say would be in the nature of a commentary at once upon the Pragmatist's definition of religion (as the relation of the individual, or man, to the universal, or God), and also on the statement of the Historian, at our last meeting, that Jesus did not intend to form an organisation. It seems to me we can get a good deal of light on the subject by seeing how the organisation of the Church actually arose; by treating it historically, in a little greater detail than the Historian was able to do, having so much longer a period to cover. There is abundance of evidence on the subject and we have easy access to it.

"First, I take issue with the Historian in that I think it unquestionable that Jesus himself did establish an organisation, and did so deliberately. Let us consider the early period of his ministry, especially as recorded by Matthew, an eye-witness of the early doings in Galilee.

"We have, first, the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, from whom Jesus seems to have taken the rallying cry: 'The kingdom of heaven has drawn near.' (Matt. iii, 2.) Immediately after we have the Temptation, and then the first missionary epoch, in which Jesus visited the synagogues of Galilee, 'preaching the gospel of the kingdom' (Matt. iv, 23),

declaring, in the words adopted from John the Baptist, that the kingdom of heaven had drawn near.

"The Sermon on the Mount, which immediately follows, sets forth this Gospel of the Kingdom: 'Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.' This whole sermon is to be taken in connection with certain passages in the fourth Gospel, such as the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, where Jesus declares: 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' (John iii, 3, 5.)

"We see, therefore, that the Gospel of the Kingdom was the doctrine that we must be born again, or born from above (*anothen* means both); that this spiritual re-birth follows on the death of egotism ('He that would save his life shall lose it'); and that by this re-birth from above the soul is ushered into a new spiritual consciousness, the consciousness of 'the realm of the heavens.'

"Both the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon of the Last Supper make it clear that Jesus conceived this new consciousness as bringing the soul into direct and immediate relation with the Divine. In the former he speaks of the soul standing in the presence of 'the Father who seeth in secret,' and in the

latter he says, 'If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.' (John xiv, 23.)

"Therefore, we find Jesus teaching a new birth from above which ushered the soul into the realm of the heavens, where it held direct communion with the Divine, and also (and this is most significant) with the spirit of Jesus himself. It is quite clear that, if we contemplate a group of those who were thus 're-born from above,' a group of disciples, their souls would stand in a direct interior relation to the spirit of the Master, and this would undoubtedly imply a new relation between these souls among themselves. This would be a sort of divine and necessary organisation, flowing out of their common spiritual relation to the Master, and due to the driving power of the Master's spiritual force, affecting them all alike. This is a vital side of the matter, to which I should like to return in a moment.

"Now, to take up the thread immediately after the Sermon on the Mount, we find Jesus, impressed with the thought that the harvest was plenteous, but the labourers few (Matt. ix, 37), organising a vigorous propaganda, and sending forth his twelve disciples throughout Galilee and Judea, to preach that 'the kingdom of heaven was at hand.' (Matt. x, 7; *cf.* Mark, vi, 7 *et seq.*) He laid down a series of

rules for their work, and thus undoubtedly established a preaching organisation.

"This preaching order visited many towns and villages, especially in Galilee; and, at the same time, Jesus Himself continued His own propaganda, speaking in the synagogues, not only throughout the country, but also in the metropolis.

"To this vigorous propaganda, thus systematically carried out, was due the foundation of the central religious organisation at Jerusalem, which continued after the Crucifixion; and a picture of which, with some embellishments, perhaps, we get in the early chapters of the Acts. Luke was not an eye-witness of these events, therefore his testimony here is not so striking in its vivid accuracy as it is in the later chapters, where he was personally present, with Paul. But we may rely on his account of the central organisation in all its main outlines.

"Just such a preaching mission as we have already seen carried out by Jesus and his twelve disciples was later organised by Paul, and groups of students were formed in various towns of Asia Minor, and a little later in Greece and Italy, to study the teachings. We should note here that these groups were formed of students of certain teachings, and not exclusively of those who had been 're-born from above,' in the full sense. They met to study the sayings of Jesus, of which Luke speaks as being already written

down; and also the letters of Paul, and later of Peter and the other apostles. We have an interesting survival of this in 'the Gospel for the day,' and 'the Epistle for the day,' which still form an essential part of the services of the Church.

"By a process entirely natural the older students had a certain weight and authority in these groups, and we find many references to them in the thirty years after the Crucifixion. They are called in the Greek *presbuteroi*, and women students of the same class are spoken of as *presbuterai*. These words are generally rendered 'elders'; and we can see that they came to be looked on as a natural governing or directing body.

"In Acts xx there is a very interesting episode in which these elder students play a part. From Greece Paul had crossed over to the Asian shore, and was in port not far from Ephesus. He sent for the elder students of the group at Ephesus, and addressed them, bidding them take heed for themselves and for the flock, over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers (*episkopoi*), and described to them the duties of their position, and the spirit in which they should carry it out. Then he bade them farewell, saying that they would see his face no more, and they saw him off on his voyage to Tyre.

"This was probably about the year 60. A few years later we find Paul laying down, for the guid-

ance of Timothy, the qualifications of the overseer (*episkopos*): The *episkopos* 'must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity (for, if a man know not how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)' and so forth. Writing to Titus, probably about the same time, Paul gives exactly the same qualifications for the *episkopos* (Titus, i, 7), who is to be 'the husband of one wife, having faithful children,' and so on. These letters were probably written from Rome, a few months before Paul's execution.

"Here is a perfectly natural organisation: the groups of students in various towns, as the result of the vigorous propaganda already described; the elder students having a certain weight and authority, as was entirely natural; and the overseer or director (a married man with a family), to guide and direct each group.

"We find Peter laying down certain most useful moral rules for the *presbuteros* and the *episkopos* (1 Pet. v), 'The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ. . . .' Peter lays special stress on the principle of religious liberty, warning the

elders and overseers (*episkopountes*) against 'lording it over the flock.' I have long thought that Peter is here quoting the words of his Master himself: 'Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them . . . but it shall not be so among you . . .' (Matt. xx, 25; Mark, x, 42), the Greek word being the same as that used by Peter. Therefore, both the disciples of Jesus, and the students of the disciples themselves were specifically warned against that domineering spirit, that lording it over the flock, which worked such deep harm in later centuries.

"We saw that Paul indicated the father of a family who ruled his children well as a fit person to be an *episkopos*. It is easy to see how the paternal authority, the *patria potestas*, which was the foundation of early civil law, might colour the mind of the *episkopos*, and gradually develop him into such a bishop as we see in the post-apostolic age. We can also see how the priestly idea might be added to the character of the elder student (*presbuteros*), and, indeed, we can see the process at work in Hebrews vii, where Paul writes of Jesus as 'a *priest* after the order of Melchisedek.' It would be possible to trace the whole growth, step by step, till we came to the full-grown hierarchy. The preponderating influence of the world's metropolis naturally gave a like influence to the *episkopos* at Rome, and thus we have

the germ of the Papacy. The point is, however, that this organisation grew up quite naturally among the students in various towns; and that we can see the intrusive elements gradually changing what was at first a free order into a despotism. The fault is not with the order, but with the intrusive elements, which must be extruded once more, as indeed they are being extruded in these latter days.

"To come back now to the point touched on before. We found Jesus speaking of the new birth from above, in virtue of which the soul of the disciple was brought into immediate spiritual touch with the spirit of the Master: 'we will come unto him and make our abode with him.' This was said on the eve of his death, and at a time when he was fully convinced that his death was at hand. But we do not find Jesus thinking of this relation, thus inwardly established between his spirit and the souls of the disciples, as about to be ended by his death; on the contrary, he clearly contemplates it as something to endure indefinitely, quite independent of his death. 'I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' . . . 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' It is here clearly contemplated that the inner relation between the soul of the disciple and the spirit of the Master shall continue, quite independently of the approaching death of Jesus.

"I believe that we have an instance of the establishment of this interior relation in the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus. The soul of Paul came into interior touch with the spirit of the Master on that occasion, and this interior relation continued throughout Paul's life. Again, the relation already established between the soul of John and the spirit of the Master continued throughout John's long life, and I believe the Apocalypse is a record, in part, of that conscious relation. The very strangeness of this thought is, no doubt, one of the reasons why the authenticity of the Apocalypse has been called in question.

"I am convinced that John and Paul are only the first members of an unbroken series; that, side by side with the 'apostolic succession,' there has been a succession of saints, who have in their interior lives realised the ideal of Jesus, when he said: 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.' (Rev. iii. 20.) This is exactly the ideal expressed in the Sermon of the Last Supper, and the same image is used for the spiritual communion.

"We have an unbroken series of witnesses to the truth of this promise. I need mention only a few, such as St. Columba, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Catherine of Siena, all of whom bore testimony to just

such communion as that described by Paul and John. And I believe that to the spiritual power of these great souls, and many more like them, is due the spiritual power of the Church through the centuries. They were the salt of the Church; their spiritual power is the silver lining to the dark cloud of ecclesiastical domination.

"Thus, it seems to me, we have first the spiritual organisation of the disciples, as taught and exemplified by Jesus; an order which is really continuous throughout the centuries. And we have, on the other hand, the organisation of the disciples of these disciples, the students in various towns, with their 'elder students' and 'overseers' gradually developing into priests and bishops. This secondary organisation was, at first, entirely natural and healthy, but, in virtue of certain intrusive elements, notably the desire to dominate, it was choked by such over-growths as were indicated at our last session. If rid of these over-growths, as we see it being rid, especially in these latter days, it will once more become something as healthy, as wholesome, as humane as it was on the day when Paul took leave of the elder students of Ephesus, and launched his boat on the waves on his way to Tyre, and thence to Rome."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It could only be with much hesitation and many misgivings that anyone

would attempt to summarise the three views of organisation we have listened to. Each contains so much of value, each differs so completely from the others in the view-point adopted. But, different as they are, they do not seem to me unrelated; and I believe that, however faulty must be the result, the attempt to exhibit their unity will be of value.

"The Pragmatist begins by re-emphasising the universality of religion: that the essence of all things is sacred, that God is to be found, and worshipped and served, in each moment and act of our lives; and that to the extent to which organised religion is exclusive, it is an obscurant and a barrier — impoverishing life, dwarfing religion, and obscuring God.

"The Oxonian dwelt on the value and the need of times of attuning ourselves to the inner rhythm, in order that our relation to the universal may be one of harmony rather than discord; and that through this harmony we may become conscious of the spirit of life, whose universality I understand he would admit, but the consciousness of which is both too limited and too evanescent. He next passes to the efficiency of organisations, using the Christian Science regulations as an illustration thereof. It seems to me that Christian Science illustrates equally the Pragmatist's point, of the exclusiveness of formal religious bodies. For, though I object to much in

Christian Science, much else is of value and appeals to a genuine need of the heart. But the churches have excluded it all from organised religion. Standing isolated and alone, as a separate 'ism,' the unfortunate elements have been emphasised, and where in proper relation it might have been wholly good it now seems fruitful also of harm. But that is not my theme. Finally the Oxonian pleads that we view the Church not only for what it can give to us, but for what we can give to it, and through it to the world, recognising that Christianity is social and that its forms are only symbols, — symbols such as are necessary to science as to religion, or to thought itself.

"The Author presents the Church organisation as but the historic outgrowth, expression, or symbol of an actual brotherhood; of ties which are not matters of external forms but of inner fact. Those animated by a common purpose or ideal find that this fact acts as a bond between them whether they will or no. We see this among men of science quite as plainly as anywhere else. Those who are seeking the solution of the same problem find themselves drawn together in a tie which is often closer than that of blood. Much more is this true among disciples of the same Master. This, I take it, would be what the Editor spoke of as the 'Church Invisible,' which the visible Church should symbolise. That it must

include to-day many outside the ranks of organisation is evident; so here, too, we would return to the Pragmatist's objection of exclusion in religious matters. Membership in such a Church as the Author has sketched must be a matter totally of our own interior attitude, the relation in which we put ourselves to the Christ spirit and 'the will of the Father in Heaven.' This is something it would seem necessary for the visible Church to realise if it is to be indeed Catholic, or symbolise truly the inner brotherhood of which the Author speaks.

"Incomplete as this summary is, it will, I trust, serve to put all these views before us for discussion. The field is certainly both rich and wide."

THE YOUTH: "I have to go in a few minutes, but there are one or two things I would like to say first, if I may do so now. I have been thinking about what the Clergyman said at our last meeting. You remember, Mr. F—, you were speaking of how much the Church meant to you, and particularly prayer within the Church, so that you were sure your religious feelings could only be satisfied in organisation. Now, I think that is unhealthy. I don't think it is the normal, healthy thing to want to enter an organisation or a church whenever you feel religious. Last Sunday I entered a church, and as I sat there the sun came in the window and a breath of air and some notes of a song-sparrow that must have wan-

dered from the park. I felt religious, and I got up and walked out.

"Another thing: The Oxonian asked us whether the sun and the mountains and the beauty of nature meant less to us because we built churches; and whether regular religious practices made us less likely to be moved spontaneously by what was beautiful. I say yes, I think they do. If we associate acts of religion and religious feeling with certain times and environment, we tend to forget them at others. That is simply common sense. I don't think of winding my watch until I take my waistcoat off, nor of the newspaper save at breakfast, nor of my slippers save in my own room. You attend to the news at breakfast and then comfortably forget about it until the next breakfast. And it is exactly the same with religion. If you associate your religious feeling with eleven o'clock on Sunday, you forget all about it from one week's end to the next.

"Again, take what the Oxonian said about making organs. As soon as you make an organ for a certain purpose you turn that function over to the organ and you yourself disregard it. You don't think about digestion. You let your stomach do it for you. You only do what you have n't an organ to do for you, and only think about it when the organ fails — when you have indigestion. I don't remember much about the little biology I was supposed to learn, but I

think there was some kind of a sea urchin or animal that, so long as it did n't have any mouth or stomach, wrapped itself around its food and digested with all of itself. As soon as it developed a mouth and stomach, it let these feed for it. That is what I think happens when we organise our religious sense and feeling. We turn it over to something or other and cease to think about it.

"This is what I particularly wanted to say, and I am much obliged to you for letting me say it and run away. I wish I did n't have to go. But I must. Good-night to you all."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "As I have been holding down the safety-valve for two months I find it difficult to refrain longer from entering again into the discussion. There is so much in what has been said upon which we may all agree that it may seem ungracious to bring up points of difference; but there are some matters that have been presented regarding which there may be, I think, at least two points of view. I think that zoologists are agreed now that function does not precede structure, as has been stated by the Oxonian, in discussing the religious consciousness. If there is anything that modern experiment and observation have taught, it is that structure itself precedes the function, or, at least, the two are so combined that it is not correct to speak of one as coming first and controlling the other. And then,

too, I find it difficult to believe that so purely individual a thing as the religious consciousness or function 'necessitates' organisation at all, any more than a function of a lower order, such as digesting or seeing, necessitates a gathering together of men in order that each man may thereby facilitate digestion or sight. Take our luncheon room at the University. Pleasant as the conversation is, it certainly is not necessary for the purpose of eating. Indeed, it draws the blood from the individual stomach, where it is needed for digestion, and thus is actually deleterious to the primary object of our being there. I cannot see that the coming together of people, possessed of religious feelings, into organisations is essential, or even useful, any more than the assembling of twenty typewriting machines in one room facilitates the working of each individual machine.

"While it is true that men will naturally associate themselves for the discussion of great topics that intimately concern them, it seems to me that religious communion, involving the sense of the relation of the individual to the universe at large, scarcely gains from publicity. And did not Christ himself enjoin his followers to 'enter into the closet' for solitary communion with the great things of the universe?

"And then, too, the cloud that may have its silver lining — although it seems a pity that in order to have a silver lining we have to have the cloud — is

that when an organisation is once formed it tends to solidify in a very unfortunate way; it tends to inhibit real growth in so far as it leads to the establishment of fixed boundaries of dogma that are considered final. No one better than Clifford has insisted upon the absence of finality in one's system of thought, if growth in mental and intellectual respects is to continue, for the plastic condition only allows growth. And the organisation of religion, like any other conventional organisation, tends to the establishment of the static condition. I think that a good biological analogy is that of the crustacean — "

The Banker: "I beg pardon?"

The Biologist: "He means a crab — a lobster."

The Zoologist: "The crustacean, which forms a rigid shell about itself only to find itself cramped and incapable of further development until it casts off the whole incumbrance — truly a painful process, the more so in proportion to the rigidity and insufficiency of the encasement. Is it not better to keep our mental integument, so to speak, soft like that of the humbler worm, so that we may grow consistently and uniformly? For any organisation that we may deem final at any time will certainly be found inadequate if our knowledge increases as it should. So I think that the organisation of religious views or emotions, besides leading to fictitious results, as the Pragmatist has so well said, really in-

hibits the free and full development of religious thought, which is, after all, a purely individual thing, an individual function of the human organism."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I wonder whether it would be possible to defend the statement that the more individual a thing is the more it profits from association with other individuals. If so, it would seem to have bearing on what you have just said. It seems to me you rightly insist that religious thought and aspiration are individual, but I suspect digestion is only individual in the sense that each must do it for himself. It does not appear to me individual in any true sense, but, on the contrary, mechanical and formal, — practically the same chemical and physical process in each of us, as incapable of anything really individual as are the typewriting machines of your other illustration.

"Forgive me for taking these illustrations in another sense from that in which you used them. I quite agree with the point you made, that each man's religion must be developed and practised within himself; that he must enter into his closet for prayer and meditation, and express the light he gains in his daily life. But granted this, is there not still use for religious associations or organisations? Our lunch-room conversations may draw the blood from our digestive processes, but they greatly help our thought, and, I believe, considerably improve our

literary and scientific productivity, despite the fact that the actual work thereof must be done at other times. I suspect too that the more strongly marked our individuality, the more we can profit by such interchange, so that the more we work alone the more we can profit by association. Just as genius can contribute the most in a conversation, it will also receive the most. Are not both, therefore, needed? Both solitude and companionship? It seemed to me, as I listened to the Author's account of the Church fellowship, that it was much like that existing among us at the University, — each working on his own line, yet each inspiring others."

THE CLERGYMAN: "What I miss in these discussions is the historical view! My mind cannot get away from the historical facts, or from things as they are. It would need a psychologist, an historian, and a first-class writer of fiction to express what is seething and boiling in me. You professors and scientists take an academic attitude which I cannot follow. You question and analyse the heart out of things, and theorise about facts that are right before your eyes. You walk through them as though they were not there. We must look at facts as they are, — as they *are*, — for I must say again that I believe our future idealism is to be found in the heart of the facts of life. Here *is* organisation. Religion always has had organisation and it always will have. Here

is the Church; it always will be here. The fact that it *is* is the proof that it is necessary. The fact that I need it and that John Smith needs it and that Sam Jones needs it, and finds comfort or strength in its ministrations, is more convincing than any argument, — for it is a *fact,* and my mind cannot get over facts. Without this fact do you think any organisation could have endured for nineteen hundred years? It is not a question whether the Church is necessary. The existence of the Church answers that before it is asked. The question is, how can the human need to which the Church owes its existence be best met and fulfilled?

"Why, the very first impulse of anyone to whom something large and inspiring has come is to go and find someone else to whom he can tell it, with whom he can share it. Moreover, it is never wholly his until he has shared it. Until imparted to another, spiritual experience remains, for a side of our mind, intangible and vague. It is only made perfectly our own as we give it to others and use it in the service of others. The Oxonian put it very beautifully. Christianity is social, and the Church exists for service, — for the service of man in the spirit of Christ.

"Walk out of the Church? As our young friend did and would have us do? For what end? What was the result? There ought to have been something very great and beneficial to have justified such a

startling and unusual procedure. Was he benefited? Or perhaps it was the Church that was benefited? I wish he had told us. The truth is that those who walk out of the Church simply cut themselves away from a wide relationship and a magnificent opportunity of service. Cut off from organisation, they are effective neither to help it nor to help the world. That is, not nearly so effective as when they had command of all the machinery."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "And yet, Mr. F—, the churches too often make it impossible for an independent thinker to remain in their organisation. Dr. Crapsey will serve as an example. Do you not think it very unfortunate to turn such men as he is out of the Church? And if the churches do this, if they permit their obsolete system of dogma, which belongs to an earlier stage of thought, to expel their ministers for simple straight thinking, can they expect to appeal to straight-thinking laymen? Is it not a pity, but is it not also true, that organised religion is exclusive of the free movement of thought; and if we 'scientists and professors' neglect the Church, does not the Church neglect us?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "I was opposed to the trial of Dr. Crapsey. I do not think the action taken in his case typical of the spirit of the Church as a whole. It was the action of but one court in a single diocese."

THE OXONIAN: "Yes. And even that has worked for good. The significance of the Crapsey trial is that it is the last the Episcopal Church will have. It has already refused to try a clergyman who wrote his bishop he agreed entirely with Dr. Crapsey. Thus, though Dr. Crapsey has been unfrocked, his trial has strengthened the liberal movement."

THE AUTHOR: "I believe the Oxonian is right. And not only does it seem to me that the Episcopal Church is broadening, but that the same liberalising movement is evident in all Christendom, irrespective of denomination. Nowhere, indeed, is it more marked than in Catholicism, particularly among the French Catholics. I have been reading recently some of Abbé Loisy's writings. Do you know them, Mr. F—?"

THE PRAGMATIST: "But has not Loisy recently been placed upon the Index?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Yes, but that is the reaction of the external organisation, not the true spirit of the Church. I think we must always expect the Vatican to be reactionary. The interesting thing is to see how Catholicism is being broadened despite the Vatican."

THE EDITOR: "The crab casting its shell."

THE CLERGYMAN: "Exactly, and having cast this, it will grow another which must in its turn be cast, and so on indefinitely. But surely the shell must

fulfil some function. The trouble is only when an old one is retained too long."

THE ZOOLOGIST: "Yes, but there is a better way than growing shells. The crustacea are not particularly advanced organisms. The churches will be compelled, as they have been at other times in the past, to admit the inadequacy of their present rigid encasement. But it is rather a pity, I think, that when they undergo an ecdysis they immediately replace the old shell with a new one equally rigid, that must itself be discarded at some future time. At least one great lesson of science, the mutability of human thought, is too seldom learned."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "You have brought the central problem again before us. How can we broaden organised religion, how can we free it from its narrowness and its exclusiveness? How increase its effectiveness? Or, as those of us who are without the Church can do little or nothing, how should those within direct their labours?"

THE PRAGMATIST: "It is a question of replacing religions by Religion, of freeing what is universal from the obscuring limitations placed around it."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Precisely. How can we come closer to the unity of life? How can our various religious organisations lay aside their shells and their differences, broaden and purify themselves, that

they may fittingly express the great universal current of religious life?"

The Social Philosopher: "Why seek to unify? Why want to break down differences? Why not let Methodists be Methodists, and Catholics, Catholics, and Brahmins, Brahmins? Is not this wide variety of form and symbol valuable in itself? Has not each creed and ceremony a beauty of its own? Should we not rather keep all types, and welcome more, as evidences of the infinite richness of religious aspiration? Why seek to merge in one gray common tone all this rich variety of colour, all this wealth of association and tradition, all this living heart-history of the race? Is it not all infinitely beautiful, infinitely pathetic, and infinitely dear?"

The Mathematician: "Surely yes. The unity we seek must be the One behind the many; not one instead of many. It must contain within itself all the richness, all the infinite variety of expression, all the impossibility of confinement to a single form. Yet I would have each organisation realise this: that, thereby, each may be enriched by the richness of what it seeks to reflect."

The Author: "Is it not a question of emphasis? It seems to me we can get at it in this way. If we study the teachings of the great religious leaders we find two things: First, a distinctly local element, which is, for example, Chinese in Lao-Tze, Indian

in Buddha, Persian in Zoroaster, and so on; and, second, we find a universal element which is the same in all teachings. Is not the latter 'Religion,' with a capital R, and is it not to be learned by a sympathetic, comparative study of religions, seeking the part common to all? It seems to me this comparative study gives us exactly what the Pragmatist is asking for; the pure spirit of Religion, apart from all local and personal elements.

"What is true of the great religions is equally true of the sects of each, and I think we could approach unity without impoverishment, if each denomination would dwell upon that which is universal in its belief and service, and recognise the rest as personal, not to be forced or required. If we dwell upon that which is universal, we approach unity; if we dwell upon what is personal, we create only difference and discord."

The Zoologist: "If the churches would do that, they would find themselves as united to Science as they would be to each other. But *they* must do it. We cannot."

VIII

SIGNS OF THE TIMES — THE RENAISSANCE OF RELIGION

THE late spring had finally passed into summer, and with the coming of warmer weather the annual exodus from the city had begun. The Zoologist had sailed for the South Pacific, seeking further data for his researches into the origin and mutation of species. The Banker was in Amsterdam, arranging, it was said, for the importation not of species but of specie. The Biologist was presiding at a medical conference in a distant city. The Pragmatist had gone to his country home, and, on the evening set for the meeting at the Mathematician's rooms, a message was received from the Oxonian saying that he also would be unable to attend. It developed later that he and the Youth had gone canoeing together, and had been prevented by head winds and tide from making their home port in time. There was some doubt as to the whereabouts of the Historian — as, having moved his family to the mountains, while his own work kept him near the libraries, he was sometimes to be reached at his club and some-

times not. For this evening he had said he had three separate engagements, in as many different places, but had scouted the suggestion that, as he could not possibly keep all three, he might as well keep none and join the discussion, where he was much wanted. Later, however, he had said he would come if he could.

The Author had been asked to open the discussion, but, perhaps because of the uncertainty as to the Historian's coming, or perhaps because of the feeling of intimate understanding that the smaller circle emphasised, the conversation remained long informal and without premeditated direction. When the Author entered he found the Philosopher in his accustomed seat in the corner of the cushioned window bench, talking with the Editor and Mathematician about Pragmatism.

The Mathematician: "No. I confess I think the Preacher of Pragmatism is greater than his doctrine. You remember, C—, that very pleasant evening given us by the Oxonian — at the close of James's lectures here, when he had us all dine together, and our 'round table talk' afterwards? The breadth and human sympathy of the man seemed so much greater than the system he was defending."

The Philosopher: "I remember very well. I remember, too, your parable."

The Author: "Was A— guilty of a parable? Do let us hear it."

The Philosopher: "He was indeed. But he will have to tell it to you himself."

The Mathematician: "It was not a parable; it was a fact."

The Editor: "All true parables are facts; as all facts are parables, if we would only so think of them. The Author ought to make that into an aphorism. When he has, I shall propose it as a motto for science. But tell us your story, A—."

The Mathematician: "It is not much to tell, and it requires a long-winded introduction. As you know, the dinner was given at the close of Professor James's series of lectures on Pragmatism, and he was holding the lists, as its champion, against all comers. It so happened that I was sitting next to him, so my turn came last. It is too long ago to remember just what I said, but I recollect the general trend of my thought. In one of the early lectures Professor James had spoken of Pragmatism as 'limbering up' our philosophic systems, and, above all, as mediating in philosophic antinomies and contradictions. This had aroused most agreeable anticipations. A philosophic system or method that would do this must, indeed, be what I was seeking; for my trouble has always been that my own life insists upon uniting what logic insists are opposed. The description of

existence necessitates a paradox which living resolves. A man is really more than a logical copula. But, however that may be, my anticipations were doomed to disappointment, and I was again and again told I must choose this *or* that, when I knew perfectly well I took both. This was very marked in the lecture on Pragmatism and Religion, when Professor James insisted we must look either forward or back, and believe either in predestination or in free will. For his own part, he said, if he were offered existence in a world where salvation was not assured from the beginning, but was conditional upon his doing himself his level best, and upon every one else doing the same, he would accept such existence gladly and enthusiastically. He believed, moreover, that a willingness to accept safety and happiness only as the prize of successful endeavour showed a healthier, more vigorous religion than that which made of salvation a universal and necessitated process, performed upon us from without. Now with all of this I could have completely agreed if I had not been told the two views were inconsistent, and that I must choose between them.

"Those 'ors' of Professor James irritated me, and when I had the chance I said so. I said that instead of having limbered our philosophic muscles such a doctrine showed all the signs of a bad stiff-neck. In actual fact we looked both to the past and

the future in guiding our conduct. If our philosophy could look only in one direction, then our philosophy was stiff-necked.

"Professor James had said we must choose between the doctrines of universal salvation and that of a salvation depending upon individual effort. I was compelled, both by heredity and personal training, to believe the two were not opposed: by heredity, because a great grandfather of mine was the first preacher of universal salvation in this country; by personal training, because of the little incident of my childhood to which C— refers.

"It was a still winter day, I remember, and I, a small boy of ten or so, had the afternoon to myself,— save that I had been told to clear the snow from the path to the gate. I had thought I would play first and work afterwards, and had had a most happy time building a snow fort. After a while a new idea seized me, and I went to the house for my sled. My mother met me and asked if I had shovelled the path. I said no, I had been playing. She reminded me gently that whatever duty I had to do I should have done at once, and bade me do it then. I knew she was right, but tried to justify myself by saying I had only been told to do it before I came in. Her reply was a quiet 'Very well, but see you remember,' and I went coasting. When I came back it was late, — too late, I thought, to shovel snow. My mother

thought otherwise. I could take my own time, but that path was to be made before I came in. I went back into the winter dusk, away from the warmth and the light, full of rebellion, sure that no boy was ever so badly treated or had such heartless parents. But I would show them! So I made a great pretence of enjoying myself — snow-balling the trees and whistling as cheerily as I could — hoping I was being watched from the windows. They would see I did n't care. By and by they would be anxious at my being out so late, and would call me in. But they did not. Not a curtain moved. The darkness and the loneliness grew deeper. Visions of being out all night, of freezing supperless in the snow, came before me. I began to think how sorry my mother would be when she found my poor frozen body in the morning and knew she had killed me. I was filled with self-pity at the melancholy scene. I had to struggle with a lump in my throat, and a warm tear or two trickled down my cheek. But, after a while, even the comforting picture of my mother weeping at my funeral failed to sustain me. I knew there was only one way; and, fight against it as I might, I knew it was the right way. I got to work with the shovel.

"Now here is the point. If there was anything certain, to one who knew that small boy, it was that he would sleep that night in his own bed after a good supper. It was equally certain, to one who knew his

mother, that he could not do it until he had performed his task. In theory the two doctrines may be opposed, but in practice they are one. Life is so constituted that we cannot escape our tasks, and we are so constituted that salvation is necessary for us. We can play as long as we see fit, but sooner or later we must 'see the truth and do our whole duty on our journey to the Sacred Seat.'"

THE EDITOR: "What did James say?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "He thanked me for a 'beautiful illustration' of his own view, and later called me a pluralist when I was defending monism!"

THE EDITOR: "I wonder, Professor C—, if you have seen that new book of Dr. Inge's? He makes a very able argument against the adoption of the pragmatic attitude in religious questions."

THE PHILOSOPHER: "You mean the Paddock Lectures which he delivered at the General Theological Seminary this winter?"

THE EDITOR: "Yes. They have just appeared in book form under the title 'Personal Idealism and Mysticism.'"

THE PHILOSOPHER: "I have noticed a number of favourable reviews, but have not yet read it. It ought to be an interesting book."

THE EDITOR: "It is, — very. As the title indicates, it is a defence of mysticism against the 'Will to Believe' and 'Personal Idealism' of the Prag-

matists. But the treatment is so broad and constructive that it never degenerates into barren controversy. In fact, it is one of the most lucid and sympathetic expositions of Christian mysticism and the philosophy of the Neoplatonists that I have seen. Inge has the unusual ability to make subtle things clear without hardening or materialising them."

The Author: "That is indeed a rare gift, and one most necessary for this theme."

The Philosopher: "How does he develop his argument?"

The Editor: "You must read the book. The first chapter is on 'Our Knowledge of God,' which he begins, I remember, by a quotation: 'Such as men themselves are, such will God appear to them to be,' and finds the basis of man's religion in his experience. But man, he holds, is a microcosm with affinities to every grade of existence, so that in a sense man shares in the experience of the whole. One sentence here reminded me of the Zoologist's talk. For Dr. Inge suggests that, as in prenatal life the human embryo runs through all the lower forms, so in the spiritual aspiration of mankind there is a foreshadowing or dim anticipation of another long period of growth and upward progress for the race, which can culminate only in a divinity already potentially ours. We can know only what is akin to ourselves,

but there is that in us which is akin to God. The religious problem is to identify ourselves with this indwelling divinity and, by conforming our nature to its laws, to share in its consciousness and immortality.

"It is in the emphasis upon the reality of spiritual law, and the need of obedience thereto, that mysticism is in opposition to the ultra-individualism and utilitarianism of pragmatic thought. The central concept of Inge's argument, as of all Christian mysticism, is, of course, the Logos doctrine, — that the true self of man is the spark of the Logos, which is one in us and in all that is. It is a cosmocentric philosophy as opposed to the anthropocentric attitude of the early Churchmen and of modern Pragmatism. Against the notion of an impervious and isolated personality Dr. Inge contends with both force and acumen. He holds, indeed, that it is totally contrary to the whole content and spirit of Jesus's teachings, and that its importation into Christianity, its ingrafting upon a tradition which knew nothing of it, is responsible for the distortion and absurdities of Christian theology. If we abandon this view of ourselves as isolated units, and, in particular, if we take the Christ as typifying and exemplifying the life of the Logos in man, then even the imagery of Jesus's teaching becomes logical and consistent.

"But, really, it is absurd for me to try to sum-

marise his argument. It is the time-old thesis of mysticism — only presented with singular clearness, and, it seemed to me, very ably defended. It is remarkable how wide-spread the present revival of mysticism is, and it is as much as a sign of the times as for its own merit that Dr. Inge's work so holds my interest. — Who is this, I wonder?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "The Social Philosopher, and, — yes, the Clergyman. Excuse me."

THE EDITOR: "I wish you had been at his church last Sunday evening, E—. It was one of the most interesting services I ever attended. F— had a Jewish Rabbi there who gave the sermon or address. I want to ask him about it when the Mathematician is done playing the host.

"Good evening, Mr. F—. We were just talking of that very interesting service last Sunday. What a remarkable speaker that Jewish Rabbi is! Who is he?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "Rabbi —. He was educated here and first preached here. Then he went west to S—, where he had a large synagogue and was very successful. They wanted him to stay, but he decided to come back to this city and found a free synagogue; which means, I think, a pretty liberal one."

THE EDITOR: "He is certainly an able speaker. I have rarely listened to more finished eloquence, though he was evidently talking extemporaneously, or

at least without notes. And, his oratory quite apart, one could not help being impressed by the movement of his thought. The 'Fellowship of Religions' is a theme which presents difficulties, — after all these centuries of warring creeds, — yet he did not dodge or evade them; he faced them squarely, but with a penetration and a tact which compelled my admiration.

"Is it not unusual for a Jewish Rabbi to take part in a Christian service and preach from an Episcopal pulpit?"

The Clergyman: "I do not remember ever having heard of its being done before, but there is no essential reason why it should not have been. The service, you know, was one of the joint services of the State Conference of Religion."

The Mathematician: "I am afraid I do not know. I was even unaware of the existence of such an organisation. What is it?"

The Clergyman: "It is a body organised about eight years ago by ministers and laymen of a number of different denominations. At the start I think there were twelve different religious bodies represented. The motto they adopted expresses the general attitude of the Conference, 'Religions are many, Religion is one.' They hold that individual beliefs should be loyally maintained, but that Religion unites many whom Theology divides, and that in religious

work much may be gained from co-operation and mutual understanding. This the conference aims to promote. They have a number of meetings for addresses and discussion, and frequently common services — such as that in our Church last week. They do not seek to change anyone's theology or belief, but only to work together for the common end of personal and social righteousness."

THE EDITOR: "What an admirable idea it is!"

THE CLERGYMAN: "I am afraid it has not accomplished very much as yet. But they tell me it is growing all the time. At any rate, its influence is good."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "It is surprising that you have been able to include the Jews. I do not mean that it is so remarkable from the Christian standpoint as from that of Jewish orthodoxy. From what I have heard, the hatred of the Cross is still deeply felt there."

THE EDITOR: "The Rabbi told a very pretty story of the way in which the unity of religions was first brought home to him. He was coming out of his synagogue one day when he noticed an elderly man upon the steps who bowed to him as he was about to pass. The Rabbi stopped and greeted him, asking if he belonged to his church. The man replied, 'I hope so, sir.'

"This answer being somewhat cryptic, the Rabbi

repeated his question: 'Your face is strange to me. You are a member of this synagogue?'

"'No, sir,' said the man; 'this is the first time I have been here.'

"'From what synagogue do you come?'

"'From none.'

"'From none? Of what church, then, are you a member?'

"'Of that, sir, of which I trust you also are a member — The Church of God.'

"The Rabbi told us he went home with many new thoughts in his mind. He did not tell us whether his interlocutor was Christian or Mahometan, Brahmin or Buddhist. And the beauty of the story is that it does not matter. However the religions of men may be separated by creeds and formulas, which, after all, are more matters of racial psychology than anything else, they are united in the essential object of their worship."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It would be a long step forward for organised religious worship could it recognise this, and, laying emphasis upon the unities of religion, let the differences rest."

THE EDITOR: "Do you know, Mr. F—, anything of the Conference I believe was held last winter between the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists as to a possible closer union?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "No. Where was it?"

THE EDITOR: "In Toronto. I heard of it from a correspondent there, but have missed seeing the report, if any appeared in the papers."

THE CLERGYMAN: "I had not heard of it. The most startling proposition of the kind is that which Dr. Briggs has advanced in the 'North American Review.' Did you read his article? He proposes that all the Christian denominations unite under the leadership of the Pope, whose powers should be restricted by a sort of constitution. In other words, that Christendom should treat the Pope as the Russian Duma is now treating the Tzar."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Does he suggest that the Pope retain his present absolute power in the Roman Church? It would be a very interesting situation should the rigid organisation remain unimpaired in the midst of a freer larger one."

THE CLERGYMAN: "Perhaps that might be a first step."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "I think it would be an essential point to the Pope. He might be willing to take a general supervision, or nominal headship, over all Christendom; but he certainly would be unwilling to abandon or curtail his power where it now exists."

THE CLERGYMAN: "I am not particularly anxious to have him take supervision over me. The scheme is so far beyond what anyone dreams is possible

that I cannot believe it will ever receive serious consideration."

The Mathematician: "To one who knows either the Vatican, or the thorough-going non-conforming Protestant it would seem very unlikely of realisation. But do you know, Mr. F—, I think there is a certain type of churchman to whom it would appeal. I should not be at all surprised to see some one or other of your earnest, well-intentioned Bishops advocate it."

The Author: "I fancy he would receive little encouragement from Rome — beyond being invited to return to 'The True Mother Church.'"

The Mathematician: "E—, do you realise that you were to have given us a lead this evening, and that, so far, you have hardly said a word? It is too late for us to expect anyone else, I am afraid, so there is no use of waiting."

The Author: "It is rather a pity to interrupt the pleasant conversation we are already having. No 'lead' was necessary. I had purposed, it is true, to speak to-night of the Eastern view of evolution, which supplements, in what seems to me important particulars, the present Western doctrine and throws new light upon its application to religion. But all our evolutionists are absent, and, as I particularly wanted the criticism of the Zoologist and Biologist, I think we had best let this subject wait. Let me

speak, instead, of two books I have been reading recently, and which present interesting parallels both with each other and with what the Editor has told us of Dr. Inge's volume of lectures. The one is 'The New Theology,' by the Rev. R. J. Campbell, a Congregationalist Minister, whose Church is the City Temple in London. The other is the 'Substance of Faith,' by Sir Oliver Lodge, scientist and Principal of the Birmingham University. Each is original; each is the mature work of a man who has risen to high place in his own calling; and, though approached from such totally different directions, the conclusions of both are in essential points the same. That upon which they agree may, therefore, be fairly taken as typical of the best thought of these times upon religious questions.

"If we begin with Campbell's work, we find him telling us that the New Theology is neither new nor of his invention, but is essentially Christian in the fullest sense. It is, indeed, an untrammelled return to Christian sources in the light of modern thought, its starting-point being a re-emphasis of the Christian belief in the Divine immanence in the universe and in mankind. It holds that we know nothing, and can know nothing, of the Infinite Cause whence all things proceed except as we read Him in His universe and in our own souls. The appeal to experience, the return to nature, only bring us closer

truly be called sons and co-workers with God, and, as such, are heirs to that inner joy with which achievement is ever irradiated, and which the Divine Life ever renews.

"The intelligence which guides things, Lodge continues, is not something external to the scheme, clumsily interfering with it by muscular action, as we are constrained to do when we interfere at all, but is something within and inseparable from it, as human thought is within and inseparable from the action of our brains. In some partially similar way he conceives that the multifarious processes in nature, with neither the origin nor maintenance of which we have had anything to do, must be guided and controlled by some Thought and Purpose, immanent in everything, but revealed only to those with sufficiently awakened perceptions. To the higher members of our race the intelligence and purpose, underlying the whole mystery of existence, elaborating the details of evolution, are clearly visible.

"We see, therefore, that the processes of evolution are regarded by both Campbell and Lodge as the gradual unfolding of the Divine Thought, or *Logos*, throughout the universe; that both agree in the general sense in which they use the word God; and agree also in emphasising the Divine immanence in us and in all things.

"I have quoted Mr. Campbell as saying that we

can only know God as we read Him in our own hearts or in the universe. We can only interpret the universe in terms of our own consciousness. In other words, man is a microcosm of the universe. The so-called material world is our consciousness of reality exercising itself along a strictly limited plane. It is all a question of consciousness. We can know just so much of the universe as our consciousness is open to. The larger and fuller a consciousness becomes the more it can grasp and hold of the consciousness of God, the fundamental reality of our being as of everything else.

"We have an opening into larger fields of consciousness, Mr. Campbell reminds us, in our knowledge of what is called the subconscious mind, or the supraliminal consciousness. Our discovery of its existence has taught us that our ordinary consciousness is but a small corner of our larger consciousness. It has been well compared to an island in the Pacific, which is really the summit of a mountain whose base is miles below the surface. Summit and base are one, and yet no one realises when standing on the little island that he is perched at the very top of a mountain peak. So it is with our everyday consciousness of ourselves; we find it difficult to realise that this consciousness is not all there is of us. But when we come to examine the facts the conclusion is irresistible, that of our truer, deeper being

we are ordinarily quite unconscious. Beyond the ordinary self whom we are familiar with, there is a larger self, vastly greater than we know. This larger self is in all probability a perfect and eternal spiritual being integral to the being of God. The surface self is the incarnation of some portion of that true eternal self which is one with God.

"Sir Oliver Lodge also has much to say of the infinite possibilities of wider consciousness in man, finding the true self something far larger and higher than our present thought of ourselves, limited and shut in as it is by incarnation in animal bodies. This incarnation, he thinks, accounts for the double nature of man, — the inherited animal tendencies, and the inspired spiritual aspirations. He explains it in some such way as this: Our body is an individual collocation of cells, which began to form and grow together at a certain date, and will presently be dispersed; but the constructing and dominating reality, called our 'soul,' did not then begin to exist; nor will it cease with bodily decay. Interaction with the material world then began, and will then cease, but we ourselves in essence are persistent, if our character be sufficiently developed to possess a reality of its own. In our present state, truly, the memory of our past is imperfect or non-existent; but when we waken and shake off the tenement of matter, rejoining the larger self, of which only a part is now

manifested in mortal flesh, our memory and consciousness may enlarge, too, and the continuity become clear. It is here that he quotes Wordsworth:

> Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
> The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar:
> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home.

"The idea of gradual incarnation — growing as the brain and body grow, but never attaining any approach to completeness even in the greatest of men — seems to Lodge an opening in the direction of truth. In this view, the portion of the larger self incarnated in an infant or a feeble-minded person is but small: in normal cases, more appears as the body is fitted to receive it. In some cases much appears, thus constituting a great man; while in others, again, a link of occasional communication is left open between the part and the whole — producing what we call 'genius.' Second-childishness is the gradual abandonment of the material vehicle, as it gets worn out or damaged. But during the episode of this life man is never a complete self, his roots are in another order of being, he is moving about in worlds not realised, he is as if walking in a vain shadow and disquieting himself in vain.

"Thus the second point of agreement between the minister and the scientist is this dual doctrine of the fragmentary character of our personal every-day consciousness, and the larger self, which is never wholly incarnated, but from which we draw our life and genius.

"Mr. Campbell uses our knowledge of the sub-conscious mind to illustrate two other important religious principles: first, the fundamental unity of the whole human race — Universal Brotherhood as it has been termed elsewhere — and, secondly, the immortality of the true self through a conscious union with God. Ultimately, he says, your being and mine are one, and we shall come to know it. Individuality only has meaning in relation to the whole, and individual consciousness can only be fulfilled by expanding until it embraces the whole. Nothing that exists in our consciousness now and constitutes our self-knowledge will ever be obliterated or ever can be, but in a higher state of existence we shall realise it to be a part of the universal stock. 'I shall not cease to be I, nor you to be you; but there must be a region of experience where we shall find that you and I are one.'

"If this doctrine implies that we are one with each other, it implies also that the highest of all selves, the ultimate Self of each of us and of the universe, is God. The New Testament speaks of

man as body, soul, and spirit. The body is the thought-form through which the individuality finds expression on our present limited plane; the soul is a man's consciousness of himself as apart from all the rest of existence and even from God — it is 'the bay seeing itself as the bay and not as the ocean'; the spirit is the true being thus limited and expressed — it is the deathless Divine within us. The soul, therefore, is what we make it; the spirit we can neither make nor mar, for it is at once our being and God's. The being of God is a complex unity, containing within itself and harmonising every form of self-consciousness that can possibly exist — yours and mine and all that is. No one need be afraid, Mr. Campbell holds, that in believing this he is assenting to the final obliteration of his own personality. No form of self-consciousness can ever perish. It completes itself in becoming infinite, but it cannot be destroyed.

"With this I would like to compare what Sir Oliver Lodge has to say in addressing himself to the question as to whether we ever again live on earth. It appears unlikely, in the view he has sketched, that a given developed individual will appear again in unmodified form. If my present self is a fraction of a larger self, some other fraction of that larger self may readily be thought of as arriving, — to gain practical experience in the world of matter, and to

return with developed character to the whole whence it sprang. And this operation may be repeated frequently; but these hypothetical fractional appearances can hardly, he thinks, be spoken of as reincarnations.

"The discussion of the higher self in man leads to a consideration of the personality of Jesus. In the view of the New Theology the character of Jesus represents the highest standard for human attainment; it is an ideal already manifested in history. If the life of Jesus was lived consistently, from first to last, with perfect love, directed toward impersonal ends, in such a way as to be and do the utmost for the whole, what can we call it except divine? Mr. Campbell would restrict the word 'divine' to the kind of consciousness which knows itself to be, and rejoices to be, the expression of a love which is a consistent self-giving to the universal life. Jesus was divine because His life was governed wholly by this principle. In Jesus humanity was divinity, and divinity humanity. Christendom recognises the life of Jesus as the standard of human excellence. But this is not to say that we shall never reach that standard too; quite the contrary. We must reach it in order to fulfil our destiny and to crown and complete the work of Jesus. Traditional orthodoxy would restrict the description 'God manifest in the flesh' to Jesus alone. The New Theology would ex-

tend it in a lesser degree to all humanity, and would maintain that in the end it will be as true of every individual soul as ever it was of Jesus: 'as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us . . . I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.'

"Mr. Campbell argues that the reason why the name of Jesus has such power in the world to-day is because a perfectly noble and unselfish life was crowned by a perfectly sacrificial death. The life and death together were a perfect self-offering, the offering of the unit to the whole, the individual to the race, the Son to the Father, 'and therefore the greatest manifestation of the innermost of God that has ever been made to the world.' In this self-offering was the perfect manifestation of the eternal Christ, the humanity which reveals the innermost of God, the humanity which is love. To partake of the benefits of that Atonement we have to unite ourselves to it; 'to die to self with Christ and rise with Him into the experience of larger, fuller life, the life eternal.'

"While the resurrection is a symbol, the New Theology holds that it is also a fact, taking for granted the broad fact that without a belief in a resurrection Christianity could not have made a start at all. The disciples must have become convinced that they had seen Jesus face to face after

the world believed Him to be dead and buried. How are we to account for this confidence of theirs that they had once more looked upon the face of Jesus?

"In the view of the New Theology insistence upon the impossibility of a physical resurrection presumes an essential distinction between spirit and matter, which it cannot admit. The philosophy underlying the New Theology may be called a monistic idealism, and monistic idealism recognises no fundamental distinction between matter and spirit. The fundamental reality is consciousness. The so-called material world is the product of consciousness exercising itself along a certain limited plane; the next stage of consciousness above this is not an absolute break with it, although it is an expansion of experience or readjustment of focus. 'Admitting that individual consciousness persists beyond the change called death, it only means that such consciousness is being exercised along another plane; from a three-dimensional it has entered a four-dimensional world. This new world is no less and no more material than the present; it is all a question of the range of consciousness.' . . . 'Does this throw any light,' Mr. Campbell asks, 'upon the mysterious appearances and disappearances of the body of Jesus? Here we have a being whose consciousness belongs to the fourth-dimensional plane, adjusting Himself to the capacity

of those on a three-dimensional plane for the sake of proving beyond dispute that —

> Life is ever lord of death,
> And love can never lose its own.'

This seems to Mr. Campbell the most reasonable explanation of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, and the impression produced by them on the minds of His disciples. It is a matter of no small interest that such views are to-day advanced from orthodox pulpits.

"It must, of course, be remembered that Mr. Campbell addresses himself with persuasive reasonableness to the many doubts and objections which his views cannot fail to arouse. To do justice to his thought and method you must go to his book. I have tried only to present certain aspects of his teaching, using his own words whenever I could recall them.

"With Mr. Campbell's theory of the Atonement and resurrection may be compared Sir Oliver Lodge's statement that the idea of Redemption or Regeneration, in its highest and most Christian form, is applicable to both soul and body. The life of Christ shows us that the whole man can be regenerated as he stands; that we have not to wait for a future state, that the Kingdom of Heaven is in our midst and may be assimilated by us here and now. The term 'salvation' should not be limited to the soul,

one should apply to the whole man. What kind of transfiguration may be possible, *or may have been possible*, in the case of a perfectly emancipated and purified body, we do not yet know.

"The most essential element in Christianity is its conception of a human God; of a God, in the first place, not apart from the universe, not outside it and distinct from it, but immanent in it; yet not immanent only, but actually incarnate, incarnate in it and revealed in the Incarnation. The nature of God is displayed in part by everything, to those who have eyes to see, but it is displayed most clearly and fully by the highest type of existence, the highest experience to which the process of evolution has so far opened our senses. The Humanity of God, the Divinity of man, is to Lodge the essence of the Christian revelation.

"This is the central thought of Sir Oliver Lodge, speaking as a representative of the foremost science of our time. One cannot fail to see that point by point he is teaching the same doctrine as Mr. Campbell: the immanent God; the personal self, as only a fragment of the higher self; the higher self as a link, a stepping-stone to the divine consciousness; the incarnation of Jesus, His life and death, as revelation of divine consciousness, and therefore a prophecy of that future when 'we shall be like Him in glory.' The thoughts, the very words, are the same.

Not that either borrows at all from the other, but the same Spirit is blowing on the hearts of both, telling of a new awakening of the religious life of mankind."

When the Author ceased speaking there was a moment's pause, which the Mathematician seemed content to let pass in silence, while the Author waited for comment or question. It came first from his neighbour, the Social Philosopher.

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "What reason is given for the belief in a God above the universe? What reason, that is, other than that one would like to believe in it? Does either Campbell or Lodge give his reasons for this? I would very much like to know what they are."

THE AUTHOR: "To both Campbell and Lodge such a belief is a matter of obvious necessity, evident upon the face of existence; and they so explain their use of the term 'God' as to make the denial of His reality impossible."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "If I remember rightly, you said that Campbell used it to stand for an 'uncaused Cause of existence' and again as 'the unity *implied* by diversity.' I fail to see that such an implication is at all compelled, or that there is in this the least *reason* for the belief in a ruling power or God above the universe."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I do not think that Campbell does believe in a God *above* the universe, in the sense of being set over against the universe. His whole emphasis is upon the immanence of God. He finds his God within the universe; behind the visible universe would perhaps express his thought, though not behind or beyond existence. As thought lies behind or within speech, or love behind an act of service, in no way to be separated from it, so, I understand, Campbell pictures God within the universe."

THE AUTHOR: "He repeatedly states that we can know God only as revealed within the universe."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "But why within? Why above? Why behind? Why is there anything to be immanent? Why is there anything other than the universe as we know it? Why is not existence just what it appears to be; a haphazard congeries and conflict of forces — good, bad, and indifferent — striking from moment to moment a mechanical resultant? Is what we have listened to more than a naïve assumption that things are as we would like to have them?

"I thought these discussions were meant to be critical."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Existence does not appear to me as you suggest. Indeed, I think such an hypothesis is as opposed to the scientific view as to

the religious. Is not the whole message of science that the more deeply we learn of nature the less of haphazard or of accident appears, and the more clearly the universality of law is revealed?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Of course. We all know that. But law itself may be nothing but the mechanical resultant of the lawless action of a multiplicity of independent units and movements — the mathematical average, as it were, which seems fixed and absolute only because the deviations from the norm fall within the error of our observation. No proof, or even attempt at proof, has been here advanced that the universe is not a mere aggregate, let us say, of minutest atoms whose free individual action escapes our perceptions; or that our so-called laws of science are anything but crude statements of the present average resultant of their interactions."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Even such a theory as that does not remove the universe from the dominion of law. The laws of integration take the place of those of differentiation. The doctrine of averages, the *laws* of chance, make chance inoperative. The norm alone persists, and though, perhaps, never perfectly conformed to in any single state or moment, is still the true reality expressing the nature of the aggregate. Chance, as chance, forever nullifies itself, as, it seems to me, human wilfulness and sin must do. If for ten thousand times I drop this scrap

of paper on the floor and mark its fall, and if I then find its average position six inches to my right, I know it was not chance that caused this, but either the way in which I dropped it or a current of air. And if in another ten thousand falls I find its mean resting place to my left, I know the draft has changed. Change and growth and evolution can come only from directed force, either from within or without, but never from chance. The law of averages reveals the norm, and the norm is the reality, which grows and evolves and persists. If we are to view ourselves as dice, we must realise also that we are loaded, and that the centre of our mass may little by little be shifted."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "I do not think you can put forward the doctrine of averages as the equivalent of the God of religion. What I queried was the reasons for the belief in God."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I am proposing no such substitution. I am trying to say that it is mathematically impossible that the haphazard or chance action of independent units could ever have produced the universe or account for anything at all save the most transient aspects. The doctrine of averages reveals the impotency of chance, that its results must be nil, and, in its neutrality, the nature of being works unimpeded and undisturbed. This Nature of Being Campbell and Lodge call God. Something is.

Something has produced and sustains the phenomena of the universe; produced you and me, our ideals and aspirations, and all around us. If it be not chance it must be the noumena of existence, and this we can call God. You spoke of the universe as we know it. But we can know it in various ways and under many aspects. In even the humblest and meanest of things — the most crudely wrong — there is still a divine aspect, to be known if we care to look for it. Mind is; purpose is; nobility, truth, beauty, and love are; above all, the infinite is. If we know this aspect of the universe, are we not knowing what Campbell and Lodge mean by the immanence of God?"

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "The trouble is that this aspect is relatively so insignificant. Your argument identifies God with a single aspect or tendency of life, entirely neglecting the far wider realms which appear to show no moral qualities at all. Yet you persist in speaking of this narrow aspect as though it were all inclusive or the ultimate reality, and of the universe as ultimately unified in an infinite God."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "That is the way I feel. I feel that that aspect is closer to the nature of things, more deeply and fundamentally real than all else. I think it would be very easy to show that it cannot be called 'insignificant,' but I do not see what argu-

ment could *prove* its all-inclusiveness. That seems to me a matter of feeling which experience can justify but which logic cannot demonstrate. In my own nature, for example, there can be little doubt that my faults and failures are more often in evidence than my virtues. Yet I cannot feel that the former are in any such vital way myself as are the latter. And even in my faults I can sometimes see the principle of good, — distorted, unbalanced, run riot into evil, but still capable of transmutation into good, rather than needing total eradication. So also it seems to me of the whole, of which I am a part."

The Social Philosopher: "If it were a matter of feeling, we might all agree. But our feeling needs the justification of reason. And that appears as yet sadly lacking."

The Clergyman: "Is not your own argument, — that this aspect of existence corresponds with our own ideals, and so should for that reason, if for that alone, be cleaved to and followed, — sufficient to make us base our lives upon this feeling of the deeper reality of the good? To the extent that we do this we gain the justification of experience, if not of logic."

The Philosopher: "I also want to speak to I—'s point. We assume, I think much too readily, that a choice must lie between Christian cosmogony and a mechanical solution of the universe which will leave

no room for religion. This choice is not in fact forced. First, because science is not in essence irreligious; and secondly, because there are many other religious accounts of the origin of things besides the Christian. We give far too little thought to the great pagan systems.

"As most of you know, I have been devoting a good deal of time in the last ten years to a fairly close and critical study of Aristotle. At first I was attracted by his logic, but of late I am finding that the moral and religious aspect of his philosophy is growing more and more important to me; and I confess to being puzzled, and not a little amazed, at the completeness of the neglect which has befallen it. The Greek ideals of art and of beauty have endured. Their sculpture, their temples, their poetry remain as inspirations to our later age. Their logic and their science are the foundations of our own. But their religious attitude has been forgotten, and their metaphysics buried in an obscurity their temples have escaped.

"We look back upon the Greek Gods with the half-pitying, half-patronising feelings of maturity for youth — as though these were unformed, childish imaginings we had outgrown. In truth, few of us have ever taken the trouble to understand them, to comprehend the interpretation of the universe for which they stood, or to master the developed and

co-ordinated scheme of life given us by such a thinker as Aristotle. It is just this scheme of things which I should like to suggest as a possible solution for the Social Philosopher's difficulties.

"The pagan Gods did not create the universe, they are its children; responsible not for its existence, but for its law and order. Through the Gods order came from chaos. Upon them depend all the ordered sequences of nature; the courses of the stars, the growing of a flower, the music of a stream, or the fortunes of man. They stand within the universe, neither behind nor above it; transcended by reality, not transcending it. I used to be shocked at this limitation of worship — this humanising of the Gods. It seemed to me a dreadful thing to think of some of them as living here upon Olympus, close to man and like him, sometimes to be met and talked with, their friendship or enmity obtained. I used to be shocked at the thought that the Gods laughed. But recently I have missed these things in Christianity; missed the sense of humour in paganism; missed its closeness and likeness to its Gods.

"The Ultimate Reality, the Absolute of Philosophy, the Monistic God as a 'causeless Cause,' must ever remain unknown and unknowable. However deeply we penetrate into the workings of nature, however exact and wide our knowledge, however high our meditations rise, beyond us is Mystery — the

mystery of Being itself, that anything should *be*. So long as there is good, there must be evil; so long as there is a better, there is a worse. And each *is*. That in us which craves satisfaction, which reaches out for its own and knows its own to be good, must ever live in mystery and paradox. It cannot contend against existence. It must accept. And its acceptance places it under Law, and Law is of the Gods and leads to the Gods.

"I believe that the pagan concept of these individual, humanised Gods, dwelling in a universe for which they are not responsible, but whose laws they sustain, presents a religious system which has many merits, and which, as moulded by Aristotle's genius, may well be considered along with the Buddhistic theory of emanation and ultimate absorption, or with the orthodox Christian doctrine of an external Creator and Judge."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "Is not this frank polytheism?"

THE CLERGYMAN: "It seems more a poetic form of nature worship, springing naturally from the Greek love of beauty and of order."

THE PHILOSOPHER: "No, it is not that — not, at least, as that term is ordinarily used. To the Greeks nature was a thing irregular, often ugly and evil, never to be trusted as apart from law. Law, on the other hand, is regular, just, and beneficent; always

of the Gods. It is rather a worship of law than of nature."

The Social Philosopher: "To the extent, however, that it is religious, is it not a mere poetic personification of natural forces — of the natural law and order? And if this be so, is it not again an identification of religion with poetry; the sense of power being impelled by nature, but the sense of worth lent by the poetic temperament?"

The Author: "You forget, I think, that the Gods came first. The Greek mind was very concrete, in that to it spirit was always embodied in form, and, whatever may have been the case in the age of later scepticism, in the religious life of Greece the Gods were very real and human."

The Social Philosopher: "Then, as I said, you return to frank polytheism. Moreover, is not the most marked characteristic of the religious craving the insistence that the object of its worship must be an ultimate reality? If you abandon this, do you not compromise the whole religious position? Is it tolerable to the religious sense that its object should be, like man, circumscribed and limited by an unordered chaos, — making a garden patch in a limitless and pathless jungle? I, myself, believe that more can be said for pluralism than is here the fashion, but it seems to jibe no better with our religious longings than it does with Christianity."

The Mathematician: "It is the old question of the relation of the One to the many. We cannot speak of the 'many' without regarding them as in some sense 'one.' Plurality exists; but it can exist only in unity — in a unity that at once synthesises and supports it. So I would quite agree with you that our worship, our religious aspiration, must transcend diversity and separateness, must rise above all differences of form and expression toward the fundamental unity behind them."

The Social Philosopher: "But, again, why? Why is unity behind or more fundamental than plurality?"

The Mathematician: "Because Existence is more fundamental than existences. The fact of *being* must be behind all that is."

The Social Philosopher: "The fact of being may be but an aspect, an attribute, of what is. *Things* are. Your mind synthesises them for the purposes of convenience, grouping them according to their attributes; but there is no need to assume that the synthesis you choose to make, these common attributes you discover, are more fundamental than the things themselves. Pluralism is consistent enough."

The Mathematician: "When it is made ultimate it seems to me rather the *reductio ad absurdum* of philosophy. Beings pass away or alter, Being endures. If, as you say, though I do not see it so,

it is logically consistent to view the ultimate basis of things as many, I could only reply that it is equally logical to view it as one, — though the nature of that One be ever hid from us. Logic cannot pass on both premises and conclusions, and perhaps it can no more settle this question than it can force a choice between the Euclidian and the non-Euclidian geometries. But logical consistency is not our sole criterion of truth, and a moment ago you pointed out that the one system satisfied our religious cravings, while the other, as an ultimate, was intolerable to it. Both our minds and hearts require that the many shall somehow be synthesised into the One, and the fulfilment of this demand seems to me as necessary an attribute and criterion of truth as is consistency of internal structure.

"I think if we approach the Greek religion in this spirit, we will come nearer to an understanding of its actual significance than if we look no deeper than its polytheistic form and nature imagery. Behind the divine must lie Divinity; the Gods can only be such as they express the Godhead. As the Philosopher said, the God of Monism must ever lie beyond our farthest reach. We may enter the light, but we will never touch the Flame — never while we are still men. We need the interpretation of manifested nature and of pluralism; the individual experience of characteristic and attribute which these give, in

order that we may, in a re-synthesis, draw near to the meaning and life of the whole. Though the re-synthesis, made by the mind, remains incomplete, it yet seems the closest mental expression of the singleness and unity which the heart knows in religious aspiration. We call 'the good' that which we can synthesise with what we feel to be most vitally real; that which remains unassimilable is for us evil. But always there is synthesis. So it seems to me with the individual Gods of paganism. Our worship must transcend their separate personal aspect and be held by the common Divinity which each expresses and exemplifies, and which merges them all into a single principle of good — of law and order and justice, and, in Christianity, of love. This seems to me no other than the Logos of Christianity, the spiritual breath of existence, which is the life of the soul, and whose movement in man was typified, as Christianity has always asserted, in the life of Jesus. I do not think that it belittles spiritual and cosmic forces to find them so completely animating the highest members of the human race that they may be said to be their life and true being. It is not the human form we worship — the man we can perhaps meet on the mountain-side and call our friend — but it is the spirit of life itself, the life of the Logos, which that man has made his own. We need such interpretations of the Divine, such living symbols of the

Cosmic Spirit which we seek. But we cannot worship the symbol in itself. I think Christianity forgets too often, or perhaps misreads, those last words of the Angel to John in Revelations, where John has fallen on his face to worship, and the Angel replies, 'See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.'"

THE EDITOR: "I have been interested in comparing what you have said with Inge's statement that Plotinus and the Neoplatonists, who so emphasised the Logos doctrine, were in the line of Greek rather than Oriental thought; so that the last word of Greek philosophy was not the proud and melancholy isolation of stoicism, but the warmth and unity of mysticism — the recognition that no man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself, but that each lives with the life of the whole. Is not the Christian doctrine of the communion of saints similar in principle to the interpretation you are putting upon the Greek pantheon?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I suppose it is."

THE PHILOSOPHER: "There is another question I would like to see discussed. The difference between science and religion is no longer one of opinion, nor need it be one of content. It is rather one of method. Each seeks to enrich and better. Which

is the more effective? The one deals with the mechanism, the other with the sense of values. The one works from without, the other seeks to appeal to something within. On the one hand we have the betterment of conditions and environment, better sanitation, increased comfort, a wider perspective. On the other, we have the adjustment and betterment of the inner attitude. Which is the better mode of approach, which the more effective method?"

THE EDITOR: "There is another question to be answered first. What is the end to be accomplished? We must know this before we can pass upon the efficiency of means: What is the object of life?"

THE PHILOSOPHER: "Any you choose. Let the object of life be what it will. What is the most effective means of attaining it? Take any one of us, — it does not matter what our line, — are we being more effective if we stay at home at our desks on Sunday or if we leave them and go to church? That is a crude illustration of what I am asking."

THE CLERGYMAN: "I do not see how it could be possible to give a definite answer to such a question as that. There must be times when it is as much your duty to stay away from church as it is at other times to stay away from your classes. Yet regular periods of prayer and of worship, of attuning ourselves to the great life about us, and rendering the conscience sensitive to highest ideals, must be neces-

sary for effectiveness of any kind. Anything which burrows down into the depths of consciousness and summons thence the latent powers of our natures — as do all religious exercises — must be instrumental in producing efficiency.

"For instance, this town knows perfectly well how to have clean streets, better and safer transportation, hygienic conditions in tenements and factories. All these things science has taught us. But there science leaves it. It is content to present only the method, the possibility. Religion, dealing as you say with the sense of values, awakens us to the need and value of these reforms. It makes them operative where science had only made them possible. Religion is the power, the dynamic driving force, which makes science itself effective for human betterment. It is religion, not science, that awakens the conscience of a community. Therefore science should help religion, and religion, science. They should not be separated, much less opposed."

THE AUTHOR: "Can we not put it in this way? Science is concerned with the evolution of life from the mineral to man; Religion is the evolution from man to God."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "Then is the Philosopher's question left without meaning. Religion is all. This evolution must be unbroken and continuous; must be life itself; must be the ever deepening, expand-

ing consciousness and will, which now make us men, and which can make us something more than man. Science can preserve for us what we have gained, care for and better our bodies, teach us the laws of physical and mental health. It can show us the direction in which we have travelled, and so forecast something of the way ahead. It can help us to an understanding of ourselves and of the universal forces playing through us, which we must learn to use. But the end for which we use them, the direction in which we travel, the purpose and value and object of life, must be a matter of Religion. As the Clergyman said, we are to build for ourselves a spiritual body in which we may know God. Not separate from other men, but one with them, we make our journey. Each step forward that a comrade makes helps us. Each time we rise we help by so much the progress of the race. It is a matter of what we are, and what we become. And the way is lit for us by our own ideals, by the movement of the Logos in our own hearts, by the achievement, the counsel, and the inner companionship to be had from those who have preceded us, yet who have left something of their spirit upon the path they trod. Religion ceases to be a matter of creeds or forms or ceremonies, — though these may help us. It becomes, as I said, a matter of what we are, a matter of our own obedience to the 'light which lighteth every man who cometh into

the world.' It is an obedience which may find its expression as well in cleaning the streets of this city as in a Sunday service. It is a matter of an inner attitude, which permits life to take us by the hand and lead us, through our aspiration and our duties, to a deeper knowledge of itself; till we become one with it and express in our own person its laws, as we share its consciousness. It seems to me that religion is evolution become conscious, — a ray of what we are to be, already lighting what we are. Surely nothing in the world can be more important to us than that. All else is but a means to that end."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "I wish that the churches could be brought to take such an attitude. It is pretty saddening to see men who have spent years of hard study and sacrifice in preparation for their calling turned away for no other reason than that they cannot prostitute their intelligence. A student of mine came up for ordination last month, and they asked him what historical evidences he could give for the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus. He replied that he was afraid he could give no convincing ones; and was thereupon told to go back and study further. He was all cut up over it when he came back to see me. What could I tell him? It may be necessary to retain the ancient creeds, but one would think one might at least be permitted to take each as a whole: to say that 'on the whole' this

expresses my religious views and attitude, even though this or that clause can only be interpreted symbolically. Do you not think, Mr. F—, that it is a great pity to so force the literal acceptance of each separate article? It seems to me it is shutting out from the clergy all the best thought of the age, and I know for a fact that it is a great temptation to hypocrisy. If only a free interpretation were permitted, it would help greatly."

THE CLERGYMAN: "Individual interpretation must come sooner or later. But the position of a liberal clergyman in the Church to-day is by no means a simple one. His motives are frequently questioned. And, as was the case with Dr. Crapsey, people ask why, if he is not content, does he not leave. Many do not see that for him to leave would be for him to lose the little power that he may have to bring the Church in contact with the vital, but too often unrecognised, religious life and thought of such men as you, for instance. There is general ignorance of the foundations of historical churches, such as the English Church and the Episcopal, which, by reason of their comprehensiveness were compromises, and are obliged to be more tolerant and inclusive than other churches. The historic creeds, I think, will be more and more treated as symbols, not as literal statements, both by laymen and clergymen, until the time is ripe for a more universal symbol of faith in the

spiritual life. There are many who feel in this way, and in the end I think this policy must prevail. Now ecclesiastical liberty is largely in the hands of the individual bishop. I do not know where your friend came up for examination, but perhaps in another diocese he might fare better."

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER: "He is not very hopeful of that — and his experience has made him question the honesty of his going further. He does not wish to enter by some back door. Yet he was brought up in the Church, and has for years looked forward to ministering in it. I do not know at all what he will, or can do; though he is able enough, I think, to succeed in any line."

It was long past midnight, and as the Editor rose to go, the others did the same, bringing to a close the last meeting of the season. The Clergyman stopped for a moment, speaking of the interest and pleasure he had found in the discussions, adding: "I had hoped, A—, you would have given us one of your illuminating summaries, synthesising, as you love to do, the many views we have had advanced, and tying the whole series together for us. I should have liked to hear you."

The Mathematician smiled, and the Author answered for him: "I think he had rather thought of doing so, as I had myself intended to speak upon an-

other theme. But I believe we were both wiser to refrain. The synthesis exists, and each one of us is taking it away with him to-night. It is better left unformulated, for it has found a truer expression in our mutual understanding and sense of fellowship than it could find in words. Such talks as these should not end in summaries — but in inspiration."

IX

HAS THE CHURCH FAILED ?—THE OUTER AND THE INNER LIFE

SOME weeks later the city was scorching in a sudden breathless heat. The Mathematician's personal affairs had kept him in town longer than was his wont, till he had grown used to solitary dining in deserted clubs and restaurants. This afternoon, however, as he passed from the quivering glare of the streets to the dim quiet of the club, he had met the Historian. The two had dined together, and later had walked to the Mathematician's rooms, where they were now seated before the low, wide window. The night breeze had finally come, and with it a hint of freshness from the distant sea. They had been talking of the Historian's work, of the endless patience and labour involved in the search for the original sources — the vast mass of possibly doubtful material which must be examined only to be rejected, the care with which evidence must be weighed and sifted — and yet the richness of the reward.

"I wish," the Historian had said, "that we could wipe out all the second-hand opinions of history, all the overgrowth of tradition and prejudice, and force

the world back in each case to the original records, or, let us say, a clear translation of them, for its information. Perhaps, then, we could see things as they were. But now it is all overlaid with centuries of imaginings. Do you know what has done us the most harm? It is the dramatic and literary instinct. It requires constant watchfulness not to write drama rather than history; to keep oneself down to the bare facts which are known to us, and not weave around them a fabric of our own. And it is simply astounding how error perpetuates itself; how something once printed is quoted and assumed, and appears and reappears again and again, in the most diverse places, till you can scarcely believe so much could have sprung from so little. Until we popularise the sources we shall never be able to separate the facts from the fictions which cling to them.

"After all, there is no study so fascinating; for it is our own nature that history reveals to us. History is the great enlightener. If we would only live by its light! Do you know, A—, I believe that nine-tenths of the trouble with the Church to-day is due to simple ignorance of history. The ordinary clerical attitude toward the Church, particularly towards its creeds and dogmas, would be simply inconceivable if their actual historic origin and development were understood. I do not know what the reason of it is. Partly, I suppose, the tendency to repeat error, like

parrots, from which we all suffer. And more, I suspect, is accounted for by our habit of leaving what we learn unassimilated; isolated in its own pigeon-hole, — as though it had the measles and must be kept from the other occupants of our minds; whereas the spread of the contagion which it carries is the best service a fact or idea can do for us.

"I doubt if we make enough of anything that we know, — that the earth moves round the sun, or that ants keep cows. I am sure we do not make enough of the doctrine of evolution. We talk about it at wearisome length, but we do not even yet assume it in our habitual thought of ourselves. It would make a wonderful difference if we really would look at our own lives from that standpoint. We adopt it readily enough toward the lower orders, but not with ourselves — not as applying to that part of us which itself assumes standpoints. We shrink from realising that our intelligence is not a ready-made hand-me-down, not some perfect, immutable principle fresh from God. But, in truth, it is different to-day from what it was in the past, or what it will be in the future. Our minds carry over with them into the present much that belongs to past conditions. Much of us really pertains to the cat and dog stage of development. There are atrophying 'meows' and rudimentary tails in our minds as in our bodies. We are continually trying to make our conditions square with

our wants. We should make our wants square with our conditions. And we could do this if we would but realise how our wants have arisen; how many of them are anachronisms, survivals of a finished past.

"It is pathetic to me to see how the clergy live in fear of present facts. They are in constant dread of some discovery which will upset all their edifice of dogma, and they cannot tell from what quarter the blow may fall. It may be a papyrus newly uncovered in Egypt, or some ancient manuscript left mouldering through the centuries in a forgotten monastery, or it may be from the laboratories of our chemists and biologists. They cannot tell. All they know is this feeling of vague alarm; the pressure of the young present upon the lingering past; the pressure of facts upon theories that are out of tune with facts. Why, they have a regular system of defence; scouts and pickets which waylay any new 'scab' idea, and, if they cannot stop it, try to assassinate it. Reading some of the clerical papers, you would think religion was on strike against progress, and, refusing to work there itself, was still desperately afraid its place would be taken by a better artisan."

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "I recognise the picture. But it is not the portrait of religion, however true to some members of the Church."

THE HISTORIAN: "I know your view of religion as the image of our next step in evolution. That

The Historian: "But it is so largely discredited. One rarely treats a pulpit utterance seriously in these days. You take it as part of the ceremony, part of what is expected, and so without significance, like the formal inanities of social intercourse. You may really 'have had a delightful time,' but no one would think of taking you seriously when you say so. It would seem to me that the pulpit would be the last place in the world from which to start a genuine reform, and that the Church must be more of a hindrance than a help."

The Mathematician: "Nevertheless, there is there to-day the genuine religious spirit which is moving such men as F—, and which gives the hope that the Church, as a whole, may yet follow it. That is why I championed the Church against your exposition of its failure as an historic institution. There is to-day a better chance for it than ever before. Can the new spirit win? If so, the Church is far too valuable, potentially at least, far too effective, to be dismissed as a failure. Look at the work F— is himself doing, not only in broadening and deepening the religious beliefs of his congregation, but also in civic betterment. His church is a real factor in the neighbourhood. Where I see work like that I want to pitch in and help."

The Historian: "The trouble is that organisation, particularly church organisation, inevitably

[illegible] must [illegible] about the [illegible] Therefore [illegible] of the [illegible] think [illegible] valuable. But [illegible] is analyt[illegible] [illegible] long [illegible]

[illegible] there was none [illegible] ceremony and symbols. [illegible] are more reasonable [illegible] of a sub[illegible] but we need [illegible] and bend all our [illegible] There is value in an[illegible] means not an end."

[illegible] should we try to force [illegible] Jesus himself [illegible] old bottles? [illegible] same as it was two hundred years ago [illegible] deform the grow-ing [illegible] outworn moulds? The [illegible] Genesis with the geology [illegible] suitable."

[illegible] No one cares about the geology of Genesis."

The Historian: "You mean that you and I do not. But there are many who do; and fifty years ago it was a burning question for all. I referred to it, though, only as an example, typical of much else — of the desperate running fight the Church has made, always obstinate, but always forced to yield, always defeated."

The Mathematician: "And only seeing afterwards that defeat was not loss but gain."

The Historian: "That is it exactly. But the Church has never learned the lesson, — nor, do I think, have most of us. We need to recognise that the intelligence of man is itself capable of evolution and that it must leave behind it the things it has outgrown. We are such cowards here, we cling to the familiar simply because it is familiar. We dread the new. At least many do — not all. The Pragmatist is right. It is an individual matter. We must make our minds conform to conditions; not be continually seeking to build systems to suit our desires. We should eliminate desires that do not fit the facts, not strive to gratify them. There are those two ways of gaining satisfaction. But the one establishes us firmly upon nature itself; the other puts us at odds with facts. And in the end facts have a way of triumphing, when all our work must be done anew. But worse than this, our systems always cramp us. We have to carry our fools' paradise

around with us, fearful lest if we once overstep its borders we may never return.

"The Church is constantly fettering the spirit. The whole tendency of Christianity is to put as many veils between our intelligence and the universe as possible. No one seems to realise how it superimposed again upon humanity what the best pagan minds had succeeded in eliminating. The freedom which Plato and Cicero and the educated men of Greece and Rome had acquired, their direct view and acceptance of life, were all wiped out with Christianity, and this great mass of infantile cosmology again imposed. If we do attribute, as the Clergyman did, the moral betterment of man to Christianity, we must also count the cost at which it was obtained. But those vices were never prevalent in Germany, for instance. Probably they existed only in certain Mediterranean centres. Nor do I believe vice was so much more universal in Greece and Rome than it is to-day in our large cities. Certainly American Paris cannot claim to be moral. Of course, the scholars and literary men are less frank now than they were. Probably they are better, too. Though where you will find Plato's peer is hard to see. Surely in his 'Laws' he is as outspoken as the Clergyman against unnatural vice. But, on the whole, it seems to me that all these two thousand years have only seen a detour so far as religious thought has been

concerned. I do not see that Christianity has brought us as much as it has taken away. I do not particularly turn to the Bible for stimulus and help. I read it for its style, — and with deep wonder at many of the sayings of Jesus, at his character and teaching. But I do not get as much stimulus from them as I do from the life of Leslie Stephen, for example. Jesus's problems were not mine, while Stephen's were. I do not particularly want to do what Jesus did; while Stephen's is just the type of big, strong, sane, all-round mind that I admire. How is it with you? Where do you look for strength? Do you turn to the Bible in your own troubles?"

THE MATHEMATICIAN: "It depends, I think, upon the kind of trouble. I go often to the teaching of Jesus; rarely, if ever, to any other part of the Bible. There are a number of books I use in this way. I suppose everyone has his favourites. I am very fond of Thomas à Kempis and of parts of St. Augustine. But 'Light on the Path' and the 'Bhagavad Gita,' and many others, Marcus Aurelius, and Epictetus, and Emerson, Fénelon and Father Guilloré, are quite as dear to me. I am particularly fond of all the mystics, and find helpful the records of all those who were trying to broaden and uplift their consciousness. That is an awkward description, but it will show the kind of book I mean.

"You like Maitland's 'Life of Leslie Stephen'

because it helps you do what you are trying to do. It helps you live your own human life cleanly and forcibly and effectively. As you said, Stephen's problems were much your own, and the way he bore his burdens helps you to do the like. But beyond this there is something more. There is the reality of the spiritual life. And here I think such difference as there is between us has its origin. To me this reality is the one supreme fact of life; while to you it still seems a matter of impersonal speculation. The kingdom of heaven is to be entered here and now. As Jesus said, it is 'at hand.' There is a new type of spiritual consciousness which can be attained — the consciousness of the heavens. It is our next step away from the cat and the dog and our rudimentary mental tales. And it is also the great adventure, the call to which is eternally vibrant in our hearts, and upon which the mystics of all the ages have entered. Some description of this consciousness they have left behind them, with some record of the road thereto, to help those who follow after. This is what I am trying to do — believing in its reality, its human possibility, and its infinite value. Therefore it is that Jesus's sayings have for my efforts the same intimate personal application that you find in the thoughts of Leslie Stephen. For I do not look upon them as remote morality, but as descriptions of a road I would travel; or as the science of the

soul's growth and life, as exact and definite as the science of chemistry, and, like it, to be verified only by experiment.

"The second difference between your view and mine flows, I think, naturally from this, and seems to me really to lie in the question as to whether or no we are in the front rank of evolution. If we are, then each step we take is indeed new, and so, of necessity, an abandonment of the past. But if, on the other hand, others have gone before us, then may the life of personal religious experience have been the same from time immemorial. As we advance we may grow nearer to all the great of all the past, and enter into a subtile sense of comradeship and communion with them. This latter seems to me the truth; and therefore I am the more hopeful for the ancient systems; hopeful that they will throw aside the overgrowths of ages and turn once more to their true mission, leading men to the heritage of the spirit and emphasising again its reality and its worth. This is my hope. Whether it will be justified or not I do not know. But it is at least a hope worth fighting for — and more than that we do not need."

THE HISTORIAN: "I think you have come very close to the heart of the matter in what you have been saying now, though I agree with your first point more than with your second. I do not know how to describe personal religion. As I said, it seems

mistic. This side of it I must leave to you or others. But on the personal side I agree with you; that, strange as it may seem to you, satisfies me. More goes on within each one of us than others ever guess. And this seems very true to me, very well worth while. I am glad you said it.

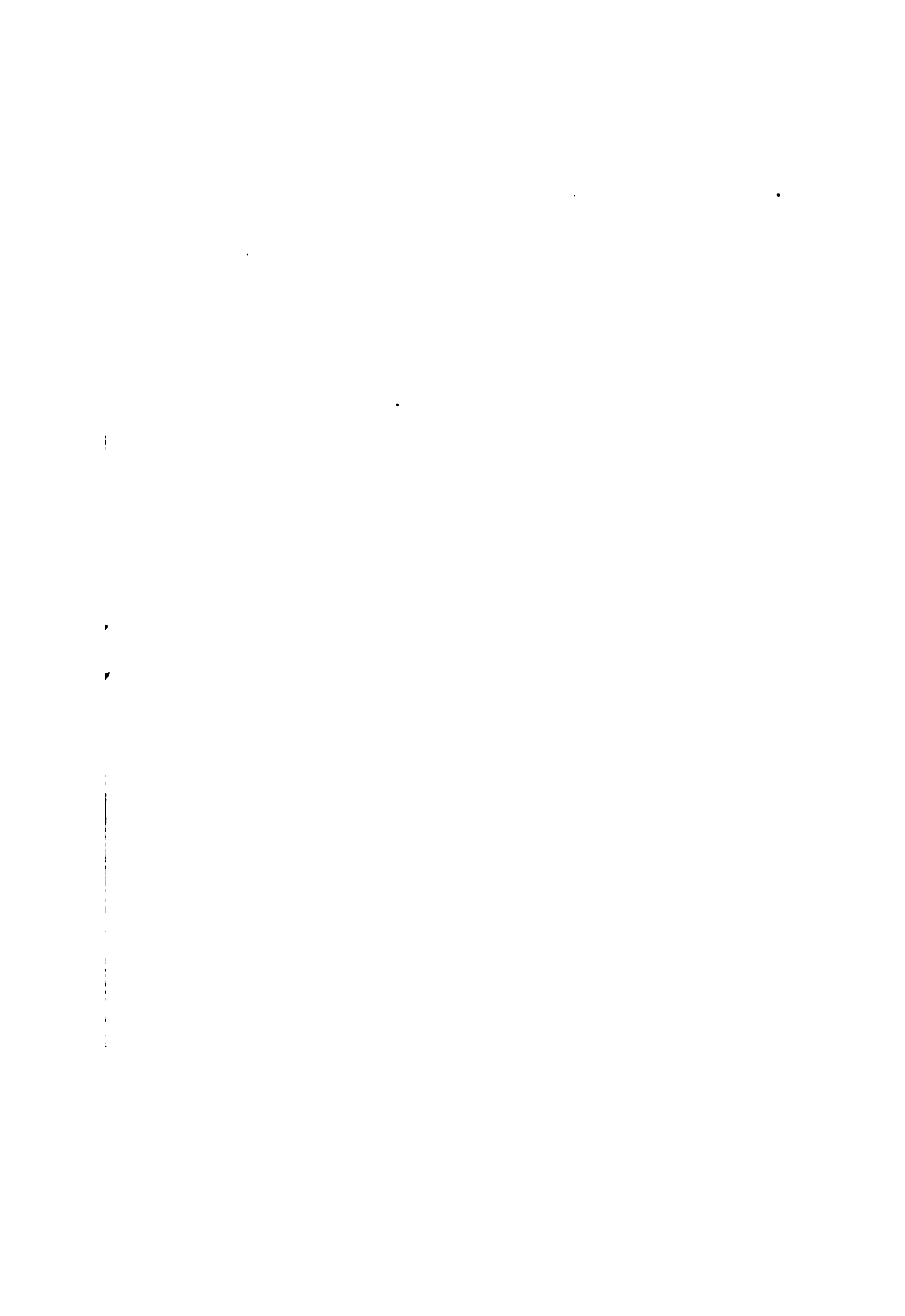
"Now I think I shall walk home. Good night."

The Mathematician moved back to the window, looking up, out from the cavernous street in which he dwelt, far into the still spaces of the night. The stars in their wide courses held his gaze, and before he turned away they were paling in the summer dawn. Before him came the vision the Clergyman had drawn of the spirit of Christ waiting and working through the centuries till He could come again into the hearts of men, His meaning and His mission understood. And in the Mathematician's ears there rang the words from Revelation,

"I, Jesus, am the bright, the morning star.

"Surely I come quickly."

The University Press, Cambridge, U. S. A.



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