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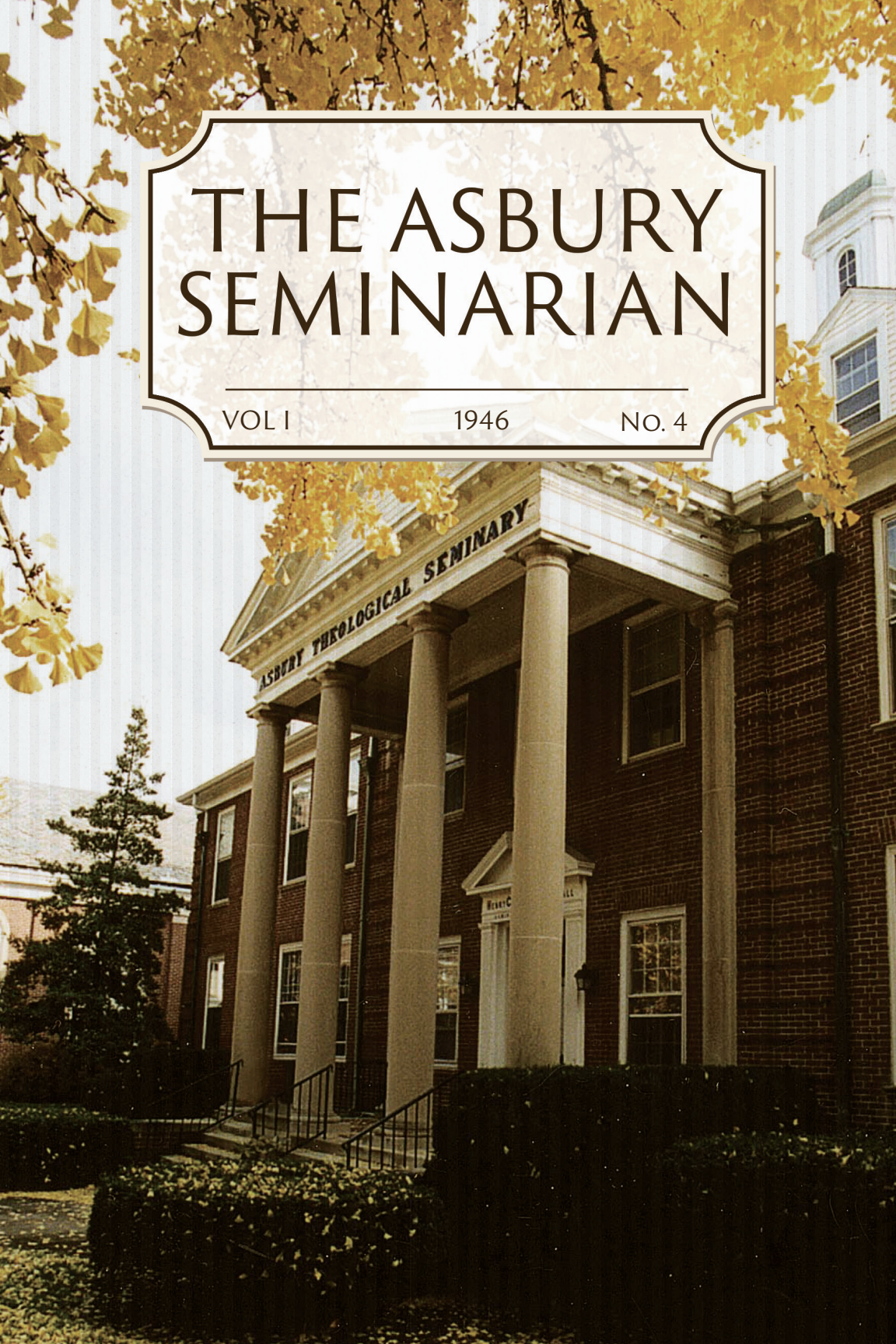

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The President's Letter

JULIAN C. MCPHEETERS

The fall quarter at Asbury Theological Seminary opened with an enrollment of one hundred eighty-seven students. This represents an increase of twenty-seven percent over the enrollment of the fall quarter of 1945. Four years ago, the enrollment was seventy for the same quarter.

The emergency measures taken by the building committee for additional housing during the summer months, bore gratifying results at the opening of the fall quarter. The committee provided for seventeen additional apartments for married students, twenty G. I. houses for G. I. men, and fourteen additional rooms for women students. The committee made provision for fifty-one additional students, who otherwise could not be in the seminary this year. This additional housing was provided at a cost of approximately seventy-five thousand dollars.

One of the features which commands attention in our enrollment this year, is the increase in the number of our women students. Thirty-two women students are enrolled. Most of them are working for the degree, Master of Religious Education. This is a new degree offered by the seminary and is proving to be quite popular.

Wilder R. Reynolds, Ph.D., the new professor of Church History, delivered his inaugural address at a convocation held on October the 17th. Commendatory evaluations of his address on the subject, "The Church and the Crisis in Religion," have come from numerous sources since its publication in the fall issue of the Asbury Seminarian.

Clarence V. Hunter, A.B., B.D., is the new spiritual life counsellor for the seminary. This new department has been added to the seminary this year with the view of keeping the spiritual tone of the seminary at a high level. A spiritual life survey was made of each student at the opening of the fall quarter. In this survey, ten percent of former students and fourteen percent of new students indicated a definite need in specific spiritual life problems. These problems are receiving the personal attention of the spiritual life counsellor through the personal invitation of the students. It was under the supervision of this department that a twenty-four hour period of prayer was arranged, preceding the fall meeting of the Board of Trustees on October 18th. The chain of prayer started at six a. m. and continued unbroken until six a. m. on the following morning. Students and members of the faculty were coming and going throughout the entire period. Some great victories were obtained during this day of prayer.

Efforts are now being centered on the completion of the Morrison Memorial Administration building, which is one of the four new buildings now in the

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Editorial-

Under the Spell of An Idea

It is scarcely possible to overestimate the rôle of ideas in the achievement called History. Against the view, so popular twenty years ago, that human events are chiefly the outcome of the operation of economic and sociological forces, has been placed in more recent years an emphasis upon the power of ideas to shape events and to lend homogeneity to an epoch of time. In this newer study mistakes have been made. Some have, under the spell of modern dynamism, personified the movement of history and have sought to understand it in the light of a deterministic operation of the dialectic of ideas. Others have thought of ideas as genes which impart to history a particular kind of shape in advance.

A more moderate view is that, while ideas *do* serve to condition history, ideas are themselves products of human endeavor, at least in the sense that they are received, elaborated or modified and transmitted to succeeding generations. Thus, while ideas promote the development of a culture, they are also influenced by culture. While there are no 'pure ideas'—ideas apart from minds which hold them—neither is there 'pure history.' As Whitehead says,

> This notion of historians, of history devoid of aesthetic prejudice, of history devoid of any reliance upon metaphysical principles and cosmological generalizations, is a figment of imagination.[1]

A careful analysis will reveal that the number of assumptions basic to a culture is fairly small, and that these are frequently derived from one master-generalization, which itself serves to lend coherence to intellectual life. In seeking to understand the ideas which have been most powerfully dominant in the shaping of our modern age, one must bear in mind that the higher generalizations of a period are likely to be implicit rather than explicit. They are most frequently expressed in terms of their derivatives, these latter serving as a 'front' for the basic generalizations.

It should be remembered that the vitality of an idea is not dependent upon its truth or falsity. No one will deny that the geocentric astronomy was a powerful intellectual determinant in the Middle Ages, though it later proved to be untenable. Perhaps the most difficult task for any age is that of realizing that its basic principles are in reality assumptions. The difficulty here rises from the apparent tendency of minds to be dazzled by ideas; or to put it another way, the mentality of any period is subject to self-hypnosis, with the result that enthusiasm for fundamental principles obscures the power of criticism so that these principles are accepted as absolute truths. Only here and there can be found minds sufficiently frank and objective to admit that they are assumptions and subject to either transformation or abandonment.

The thought world of the eighteenth century, with its emphasis upon the order of nature as comprehended by reason and as laying a foundation for natural religion, was radically transformed in the nineteenth century. The early romanticists, while accepting the majestic concept of order in nature, gave to that concept a new interpretation. During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and the first half of the nineteenth, there came into the thinking of the western world a growing interest in the idea of

[1] Whitehead, Alfred North, *Adventures of Ideas.* New York: Macmillan, 1933, p. 4.

development, not now as a universal process bearing all forward as on a great wave, but as a temporal, and in a sense local, forward movement in which every existing thing has come to its present state by pursuing its own laws of development.

We should not imagine that Darwin's *Origin of the Species* was the chief factor in the transition from the typical eighteenth century mentality to that of our 'modern' period. In point of fact, the works of Lessing, Herder and Hegel in Germany, and of the Encyclopedists and (later) Cousin in France, had popularized the conception of development until the learned world was so conditioned as to quickly accept the views of Darwin. The effect of his work was, it seems, to convince the scientific world that whatever difficulties may be found in proving the *how* of evolution, the *that* of evolution is undeniable. For eighty years, the generality of scientific men have held as a dogma, that all forms of life have developed from a few simple forms.

The application of the hypothesis of evolution has been widespread and fearless: the principle has been conscripted to do service in the fields not only of biology, but of stellar origins, of psychology, of society and social configurations, of morals, and of religion. Underlying this manifold use is a principle really more basic, or at least more elemental, namely that of *continuity*. It is this generalization which has conditioned the major part of modern thought.

Implied in the principle of continuity is the rejection of all dualisms, and particularly the rejection of the dualism of natural and supernatural. In place of this has been substituted in modern thought the monistic view of the world as externalizing one cosmic principle. God, man, and nature thus meet on common ground: all are parts of a growing whole. Within this scheme, the process of development appeared to some as the supreme expression of the divine life.

When the explanations offered by Lamarck, Darwin, and De Vries were successively weighed and found wanting, at least two alternatives were open to twentieth-century thinkers: they might begin to question the validity of the principle of continuity itself; or they might continue to hold the principle as truth, and seek some other mode of explanation. That the latter alternative has been generally chosen few will deny. The charm of the idea of continuity for the modern mind has been great. Under its sway one of the men considered to possess a mind as keen as any in our generation writes:

> For example, at a remote period urged by the growth of forests some mammals ascended trees and became apes; and then later, after the lapse of some vast period, urged by the decay of forests, the same race descended from trees and became men.[2]

This does not mean that the thinkers who dogmatically accept the evolutionary hypothesis are content to remain without a rationale for their belief. The latest attempt at explanation is that known as 'creative' or 'emergent' evolution, a metaphysical theory whose assumptions are quite other than the empiricism of which science boasts. Carl F. H. Henry comments as follows:

> Modern science first revolted against theistic creationism because of its supposed "non-scientific" character. But now science has reacted to the inability of Darwinian evolution to produce missing links, by the proclamation of a speculative theory of reality whose pivot points are rooted not in science but in philosophy.[3]

Perhaps sufficient has been said concerning the power of the conception of continuity in general to indicate that it exercises a two-fold tyranny in

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[2] Whitehead: *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[3] *Remaking the Modern Mind.* Grand Rapids: Eerdman's, 1946. p. 118.

our modern day. It has so captured the fancy of the scholarly world that no paucity of evidence in its support can bring the modern mind to treat it skeptically. And, it has succeeded in forcing its canons upon all branches of scholarly investigation until it may fairly be said to be the predominant motif in the typically modern way of thinking.

In few fields of scholarship has the application of the generalization of continuity been more fearlessly applied than in the field of religion. It is not the purpose of this editorial to trace the implications of this principle for the historic Christian doctrines of creation, revelation, human nature, and redemption, and for the Christian eschatology. A little reflection will reveal that the searching application of the evolutionary hypothesis will necessitate not only a radical transformation of the character of the historic Christian system, but a denial of its qualitative superiority over the other religious systems of men.

It is significant that in this very field in which the principle of continuity has for nearly a century been embraced with such enthusiasm, there are indications of some searching of heart. By the kind consent of Dr. Robert H. Pfeiffer, editor of the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, we are reprinting a book review, written by Dr. Walther Eichrodt, Professor of Old Testament in the University of Basel. The editor of *The Asbury Seminarian* is very grateful to his former teacher for this permission, which allows us to bring to our readers a stimulating and scholarly expression of the newer temper.

—H. B. K.

An Analysis of Harry Emerson Fosdick's 'A Guide to Understanding the Bible'*

WALTHER EICHRODT
Basel, Switzerland

Fosdick's book, *A Guide to Understanding the Bible,* is clearly and beautifully written. The author shows good knowledge of modern biblical research, as well as ability to control the wide material, from which he selects what suits his purpose, presenting it plastically and eloquently. He bases his approach to the ethical and spiritual values of the Bible almost wholly on an evolutionary historicism; his position in the mid-current of modern biblical scholarship without himself being an original investigator, renders his conclusions strikingly typical of the school to which he belongs, reflecting the prevailing intellectual atmosphere of the past generation in biblical scholarship.

At the same time one cannot but be aware that Fosdick's book reflects a period of biblical scholarship which is now drawing to an end, while a new period is dawning. In his book the author has, to speak candidly, written the obituary of a whole scholarly approach and method of investigation, making both their inherent merits and their limitations clear to the thoughtful student. While no trained scholar of today would deny the great importance of the evolutionary principle in history, much less its value in clearing up many seemingly enigmatic phenomena of biblical literature, we are today acutely conscious of the danger of assuming unilinear evolution of institutions or ideas. Two dangers stand out clearly; first that of reconstructing history to suit hypotheses *a priori* of the direction of development: second that of identifying *description* of evolutionary historical stages with *insight* into the true meaning of these successive stages.

Thus Fosdick adopts a fundamental error of modern scholarly research in making the evolution of the religion of Israel begin with the most primitive ideas and practices in order to point a contrast between the alleged low level of early Israel and the high level evident in later books of the Old Testament. Of course, one cannot deny that there were early survivals from still earlier stages of religious culture; the great mistake is to construct a system out of such survivals, arbitrarily disregarding or rejecting all contrary evidence for a higher level of ethical and spiritual life and thought, which is explained away or treated as later interpolation in earlier sources. Thus we have the familiar figure of Yahweh as a purely anthromorphic nature deity, limited to a single shrine or tribe, brutal and sanguinary in character, represented by a fetish or image, pacified by human sacrifice.... This extraordinary picture is constructed only by eclectic selection of passages which are interpreted in such a way as to suggest the picture in question, disregarding the fact that the oldest narrative sources, in particular the Yahwist, as well as the earliest

*Reprinted from the JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE, Vol. LXV, Part II, June 1946, with the permission of the editor, Robert H. Pfeiffer. This article is an abstract in English, prepared by William F. Albright from the German text, which is printed in full in the periodical mentioned above, pp. 208ff: Receipt of this review was hindered by the war; the abstract has been revised by the original reviewer.

legal corpora, presuppose a much higher level of ethics and a much more advanced faith in God. In this connection the author disregards entirely the already published works of Gressman and Volz, where similar objections to current criticism are stated.

Moreover, our knowledge of Israelite religious history is not really made any easier by this schematizing reconstruction; actually historical interpretation becomes harder than it was originally. Modern scholars have failed completely to show how this alleged transformation of early Israelite religion to a pure monotheism could have taken place and what basic forces there were which could have altered the picture of God so radically. It is quite impossible to attribute all this to the activity of the prophets, since their activity itself presupposes an established belief in God as judge, redeemer and foreseeing planner of Israel's future. The familiar pattern of a nomadic stage followed by a peasant phase is totally inadequate, because a specifically religious innovation cannot emerge from a change of material status. Moreover, Canaanite religious syncretism exerted more disintegrative than constructive force, so it cannot be held responsible for such a radical change in the religion of Israel. With insight far surpassing his lesser contemporaries Wellhausen recognized that no satisfactory explanation of this change can be given, while Eduard Meyer pointed out the futility of the cliché which radical scholars often employed in order to explain the source of Israelite monotheism: "Yahweh God of Israel and Israel people of Yahweh."

The author also exaggerates the social mission of the prophets, who came primarily to proclaim the imminence of divine judgment on a sinful people, not to propagandize for a social ideal. It is a strange misunderstanding of the prophetic point of view to say with the author that God was identified by the prophets with an unattained social ideal. On the other hand the author fails entirely to mention such fundamental matters as the wrath and the stern severity of God, which formed so large a part of the prophetic message, presumably because they do not seem to fit well into the rising evolutionary curve from primitive polytheism toward the concept of the God of love. The author fails completely to reckon with the fact that the prophets were closely associated with the cultic life of Israel, a relation clearly expressed in their expectation of a new temple at the same time that they continued to combat the old temple. Similarly, the author does not even recognize, much less explain, the same paradox in Judaism, where preachers of a faith with cosmic scope at the same time attribute a special place to the holy people and its temple. The underlying reason for this lack of insight on the part of the author is his neglect of the covenant idea which is so characteristic of the conception of Israel's relationship to God in Old Testament literature. Instead the author adopts certain general religious ideas derived from the individualistic spirit of Hellenism as his guide through the essentially different conceptual world of the Bible. With such guidance it is scarcely surprising that he stakes out a short cut through the Bible which consistently excludes not only Old Testament cult but also New Testament teachings about the Church, its sacraments, its liturgy, and its expectation to the return of Christ. Here it becomes obvious that the choice of the authors' factual data for his purpose is determined by his subjective premises rather than by any scientific method.

The second outstanding danger indicated above is that mere description of evolutionary stages is treated as

equivalent to real understanding of what is essential in any phenomenon belonging to the history of the human spirit. However, phenomena of this order can be understood only when their basic principles and intrinsic forces through which they receive their structure are known. For biblical religion this means that one cannot pass over the central concept, that God bears a special relationship to His people, a relationship appropriately designated by the words "covenant" and "election." Only when we fully recognize the centrality of this conviction in the faith of Israel do we grasp the true inwardness of biblical teachings, which not only convey the *teaching* of God but also bear witness to the acts of God, through which reality makes itself felt in history. In this way we learn to see the world of early Israel, the age of the Prophets, and the period of post-exilic Judaism in a new light, standing not only in logical, but also in living, relationship to the divine act of revelation in Christ.

It is, of course, true that the Old Testament becomes much less easy for the modern mind to understand as soon as we abandon certain widely assumed premises of modern thought. Nor can it be any longer subordinated to the New Testament by the simple method of drawing a line of evolution over it to culminate in certain selected high points of the New Testament. On the contrary, it demands careful study of its own dialectic representation of the process by which God reveals himself to man. Only in this way can the Old Testament receive due recognition for what it claims to be—normative to all believers in God. This claim of the Old Testament — embodied in the Church's recognition of its place in the canon of Scripture — demands the most careful and serious effort at real understanding on our part.

The Day of March Has Come

JAMES D. ROBERTSON

"Wonder is the effect of ignorance," wrote Samuel Johnson, that literary dictator of an age of reason. By and by when our knowledge is more complete, he opined, those phenomena which now fill us with awe will lose their spell over us, for wonder is but a pause in the reasoning process. A century after Johnson, Tennyson plucked a flower from the crannied wall, and addressed is thus:

> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand
> Little flower—but if I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all
> I should know what God and man is.

The two points of view here expressed epitomize from the beginning man's fundamental attitudes both inside and outside the Church toward the inexplicables of life. In the Church of our day they are more pronounced than ever. As the points of the compass make toward the magnetic poles, so men have gravitated about these two positions — rationalism and faith — between which, so far as religion is concerned, there is a great gulf fixed. Asbury's theological tenets place her solidly at that pole which is the very antipode of rationalism. Not only is Asbury one of a steadily diminishing number of seminaries that continue to emphasize a transcendental faith, but in her stand for the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification she is unique. In fact, the spread of scriptural holiness is her ruling passion. In a world and in a Church enslaved by the god of reason she is charged with a great mission, one that will tax to the utmost her intelligence, her courage, and her grace. For her the day of defensive warfare is over. For her the day of march has come.

It is my intention to consider with you the relative merits of two or three modes of aggression — an aggression that is to be directed against modern religious paganism, whether it reside at the top of Mt. Olympus itself or on those broad plains and green valleys below, over which the Olympian gods preside. Inasmuch as campaigns are won not by any single strategy but by a combination of strategies, mine is a question of emphasis, not of elimination.

I ask first, what are our chances of success if we meet our opponents on the cold, altitudinous plains of reason? Let it be said at the outset that our doctrinal position has nothing to fear from even the most painstaking scrutiny on the part of men dominated by the modern scientific temper. This temper requires that the seeker after truth shall have scrupulous regard for two maxims: (1) he shall be sure of his facts and (2) he shall adopt that theory of explanation which offers to him the fewest difficulties while best explaining all the facts. With these things in mind we should convince the open-minded investigator that our theological tenets are at least as sustainable in the light of reason as are those of any other system of belief. It should be remembered too, as Professor Compton observes, that one's faith in a way of life may represent a thoroughly scientific attitude even though he may not be able to establish satisfactorily the correctness of his hypothesis. In our case faith is based upon the assumption that the Biblical standards of regeneration and entire sanctification, as understood by John

Wesley, most adequately meet all our needs.

It is true that the spirit of the age is most hostile to a faith in the supernatural. For this reason believing Christians have often seemed embarrassed and apologetic. As though all the mysteries of life were confined to the pages of the Bible! Is it not passing strange that some men of science — and religion — can coast so easily over the rough places of science — the hills and the bogs and the gorges — only to stumble conveniently upon The Rock of Ages! Why is it only in the church that the mysterious becomes so very disconcerting? Do we forget that in all the areas of natural science there are deep mysteries that never have been or never shall be cleared away? Henry Drummond of Edinburgh is right when he says, "I find so many more puzzling things outside the Bible than in it." At the end of his book, *The Riddle of the Universe,* Haeckel writes, "We grant at once that the innermost character of nature is just as little understood by us as it was by Anaximander and Empedocles, 2,400 years ago. We must even confess that the essence of substance becomes more enigmatic the deeper we probe into its heart." If science does not blush for her inability to explain, why should faith? We need then have no misgivings over engaging in a contest in which the strategy of logic is dominant, for the reasonableness of our theological position is tenable enough, as far as reason goes. It remains for us to shed ourselves of those complexes that dilute our testimony and incapacitate us for strong and decisive action. It is to be borne in mind, however, that in a logical disputation we should expect to meet our opponents on ground held sacred by them; we should expect to use weapons which they from long and continued experience brandish most expertly.

Be that as it may, it is in point to make some brief inquiry into the value of the appeal to reason so far as the history of the Church is concerned. (It goes without saying, of course, that any religious appeal that is without intellectual foundation is worse than useless.) I take an example from the early Church. Stephen arraigned before the Sanhedrin was accused of doing great wonders and miracles among the people, of teaching doctrines calculated to work havoc with the traditions of the Jews. A blasphemer, they called him. You remember Stephen's defense, in Acts 7. How he drained himself of all his logic, of all his art, of all his strength! He spoke of Moses' disappointment with the children of Israel for their failure to recognize him as their deliverer from Egyptian bondage, especially after they had witnessed him avenge one of their brethren at the hands of an Egyptian. When Stephen added that the Israelites "understood not" these things, he put his finger upon the tragic flaw in human nature — spiritual blindness. Both Moses and Stephen failed to get their critics to see the truth. Nor did the faultless arguments of the chief of the apostles avail anything in the face of a Gibraltar of religious scepticism. But Paul had hoped for no more. His letter to the Corinthians shows clearly his opinion of human reason as a mover of men, "And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with the excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. . . . And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." Luther, likewise, before red-capped cardinals and purple-robed bishops spent himself in a vain effort to bring these princes of the Church to a knowledge of the truth. He finally came to the end of himself, "Here

stand I; I cannot do otherwise. God help me! Amen." The German monk had failed to establish his thesis before his ecclesiastical superiors, but he left the Diet of Worms to turn the world upside down. Nor was it the "sweet reasonableness" of his theology that did it. Two centuries after Luther the established church of England refused to see the scriptural soundness of the new evangelicalism and forced John Wesley to retire from its active ministry. Yet who doubts the part Wesley and his Methodists played in lifting England out of paganism and possibly saving her from the horrors of a French Revolution?

In *The Catholic Church and Current Literature* George N. Shuster points out the subjective dangers attendant upon one's attempting to rationalize his theological position. Speaking of the final victory of romanticism over rationalism in the first half of the nineteenth century he writes, "There was also a Catholic rationalism manifest in the habit of restating scholastic philosophy in terms of intellectual science, and in those tendencies to render doctrine 'conformable with reason', which finally developed into 'modernism'." Scholasticism by and large was to the Middle Ages what rationalism is to the present period — its temper was, believe what can be proved. It was not, as Hurst tells us, the dialectics of the scholastics that prepared the way for the Protestant Reformation; it was the teachings and influence of that spiritually-minded group for whom the heart is the home of all true theology — the Christian mystics. Likewise it was John Henry Newman, not Thomas Aquinas, who brought converts into the Church of Rome.

All of this suggests that which has long been a commonplace among our prophets and poets: there is a logic of the heart that transcends the logic of the mind. George Eliot, for example, all her life repudiated Christianity because it failed to satisfy her reason. In her closing days, however, this brilliant and understanding interpreter of the human heart leaned heavily upon the devotional lyrics of the old monk Thomas á Kempis. It was as though she was irresistibly impelled to yield to the wisdom of her heart — she who at one time in the character of Dinah Morris had poured out the message of her soul, a message which for the reader of *Adam Bede* strikes all the chords of the heart in a grand symphonic sweep, but one which the mind of George Eliot wistfully rejects.

In any case the doctrines for which we stand are not theorems to be explained. They are facts, communications from God, to be accepted. One may ingeniously mill out a psychology of regeneration or sanctification but in the end it will be a mere rationalization. For it is not within the province of psychology, or any other science for that matter, to pronounce on matters of faith. The continued practice of such reasoning on our part may serve to promote a high degree of mental fecundity, but it is entirely probable that this accretion will correlate negatively with a corresponding degree of spiritual barrenness. Is it not man's insatiable urge to explain, man's "headiness" in matters of religion, that is responsible for the multiplied sects and schisms in Christendom today?

If our major appeal is to man the reasoning creature we can expect to fare no better than did the apostles and prophets when they resorted to this same procedure. Reason is, after all, but a fractional and elusive instrument in getting at truth. "Some men," writes Arnold Lunn, "expect to find God lying at the end of a string of syllogisms." An intelligent account of our position we must be able to give. Our concern has been with the efficacy

of such an account.

But man not only thinks; he also feels. Some psychologists are of the opinion that emotion is the basis of civilization. John Dewey, considered by many to be our greatest educational philosopher, says that we have lost confidence in reason because we have learned that man is chiefly a creature of habit and emotion. We do know that feeling is a prime mover of men, that most people seem to calculate after an emotional rather than a mental pattern. What are the possibilities of a Christian aggression in which true emotion plays a major rôle?

It is pertinent to note here that much criticism has been directed against the modern church in connection with this word "emotion." It seems that we have either far too much feeling in our religion or far too little. The evangelicals are accused of being surfeited with a facile and effervescent enthusiasm nauseating to the modern temper; the liberals are charged with being cold and lifeless. I do not know which we should fear the more — Wesleyan fervor reduced to the level of mawkish, sentimental effusions, or Wesleyan intellectualism bristling with formal logic. Against the rising tide of emotionalism among the sects some of the moderns have reacted in the extreme. In *The Challenge of Israel's Faith* G. Ernest Wright says, "The Father-son picture is in continual danger of degenerating into a mere sentimentality." As though all the virtues of life are not always in danger of degenerating into their correlative evils!

It needs to be emphasized that this same indictment of superficiality against the more turbulent minorities may well be preferred against Christians generally today. For although the ethics of a well-bred religionism may not exhibit the provincialisms of a crude evangelicalism, even a casual glance at the contemporary scene shows a religious sentimentality that is widespread. It was Mark Twain who quoted Charles Darwin's father as saying that Christianity is a feather-bed on which to catch falling Christians. Modern Christianity has been expansive on the fatherhood and love of God, who is all too frequently represented as a great cosmic nursemaid who helps people out in time of trouble. A brief illustration has been used to make the situation more poignant. At the foot of the Matterhorn the traveler in the Alps one day chances upon a delicate little forget-me-not. He handles it affectionately, for it speaks to him of the tenderness, the gentleness of God. As he lifts his gaze, however, to behold the jagged, snow-covered peak lose itself in the clouds some 15,000 feet above, he is reminded of another aspect of God's nature, one almost lost sight of these days. He remembers that God is greater, sterner, and more awful than a sentimental Christianity suggests. Today we clutch at the forget-me-not; we have lost the high Alps in a fog. Today our ears are tuned only to the soft music of the flutes and the violins in the great cosmic orchestra; for us the boom of the drums and the blare of the trumpets has been silenced. We have desperate need of returning to ponder those attributes of Deity that were a passion with men like Calvin and Knox — the Sovereignty, the Justice, and the Holiness of God. We need a Luther or a Wesley to rescue these words from their dead estate. But however emotion has been debased in the service of religion, whatever the brand of sentimentality, whether it be of the loud, lachrymose variety or something more sophisticated, we can nevertheless not afford to blind ourselves to the validity of strong emotional appeal. Without it we are powerless to effect the good.

To learn something of the value of this type of approach I again glance

at the history of the Christian Church. The student of Church history well knows that no great movement toward God ever took place except under men who were more remarkable for their spiritual fervor than for their unusual intellectual gift. They were for the most part men of the David Brainerd type. Francis of Assissi and his kind influenced their times quite out of proportion to their mental strength. Thomas of Spoleto heard Francis in the year 1220 and expressed his amazement at finding this plain spoken, unimposing preacher the admiration of so many learned men. Two hundred and sixty years later Savonarola began preaching in Florence. His sermons, at first erudite, logical, and polished, attracted little attention. It was only when Savonarola abandoned his love of intellectual display and broke through all the traditions of the pulpit that the crowds flocked to hear him. Michelangelo, they say, could not refrain from shedding tears at the remembrance of these sermons. It is reported of John Wesley, "the best-disciplined mind of the modern pulpit," that he brought to the Gospel the feeling that is most intense when it is most repressed. Of Whitefield, "He was something that burned men like fire, that bent them like the wind, that drove them like a wave of the sea." Of Phillips Brooks, "He drove through our veins like a bolt of lightning." S. Parkes Cadman feels that Spurgeon's provincialism and intolerable theological temper have been singled out for just criticism, but at the same time he is quick to state that for power and persuasiveness Spurgeon had no equal. Examples such as these could be multiplied. It should suffice to observe that the men who moved people toward God were men of passion. But what saith our Lord concerning this matter of enthusiasm? There are times when Christ is represented as being vexed, and times when He is shown as being angry. But only once is He represented as being perfectly nauseated, and that at the church of the Laodiceans, a church proud of her knowledge, and boasting a "deeper than common insight into Divine things." John the revelator records the cause of the divine opprobrium: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." So then the record would indicate that if the slain of the Lord are to be many we must do more than proclaim the truth. (An adding machine can do that.) Evidently what counts is our enthusiasm for the truth.

But man not only thinks and feels. He also wills. It is not enough that we convince men that they should accept a certain pattern of conduct, not enough that we arouse in men an ardent desire to pursue a course of action. Our mission will fail utterly unless we see men embrace with all their heart and mind and strength that which we believe to be the Bible plan of salvation. When Dewey asserts that a philosophic faith can be tried and tested only in action he is but attesting to the scriptural formula for establishing the validity of the Christ way of life: "O taste and see that the Lord is good." (*Ps.* 34:8) The man born blind knew that he was healed because something had happened to him. The Jews could not gainsay his testimony. Paul was forever talking about his Damascus road experience. It was his mightiest argument. Sometimes there is more logic in a single demonstration than in a volume of argumentation. "Come and see," answered Philip to Nathaniel's question, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" "Come and see," urged the woman of Samaria upon her curious neighbors. "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, reach hither thy hand and

thrust it into my side," spoke One to a chronic doubter. It was ever thus! We may dazzle man with Socratic wisdom and move him with excruciating pathos, but until man tastes and sees for himself he will remain as Christless as the untaught native in the highlands of Tibet.

In contemplating a campaign for the souls of men we shall by no means ignore the claims of reason, although we know that dependence upon this factor alone is a questionable procedure; we shall remember to invest heavily in the resources of emotion, for truth freighted with feeling will by God's grace bring men to the very borders of Christian experience; but having exhausted all our energies of mind and heart we shall not for a moment fail to proclaim with Job-like tenacity that the faith we seek to promulgate is to be "tried and tested only in action."

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

(Continued from page 125)

process of construction on the seminary campus. The cost of this building, without furnishings, will be approximately one hundred seventy-five thousand dollars. Every effort is being centered upon completing this building by commencement, with the view that it must be completed by the opening of the fall quarter in 1947.

Another significant event in the life of the seminary was consummated in October. The Free Methodist Church has officially designated Asbury Theological Seminary as the seminary to which they will send their students sponsored by the Wesley Foundation. A Wesley Foundation House will be established near the campus of the seminary for Free Methodist students, beginning with the fall quarter of 1947. The plan of cooperation between the Free Methodist Church and the seminary extends over a period of three years.

The next outstanding event at the seminary will be the Minister's Conference for 1947 which will be held February 25-27. Bishop Edwin Holt Hughes and Dr. R. P. Shuler will each deliver five lectures at the conference. There will also be daily class sessions in connection with the conference, and other special features. More than three hundred ministers were in attendence at the 1946 conference, coming from a territory extending from New York to Louisiana. The conference is open to laymen as well as ministers. Those who have planned to attend the conference in February, should make reservation in advance for entertainment by writing to Dr. W. D. Turkington, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky.

Hegelianism and Christianity

JOHN H. GERSTNER, JR.

John Oman has written: ". . . We are waiting today for some change in philosophy away from Helegianism and the process of thought as the key to the universe, corresponding to the movement of science away from Newtonianism, with its assumption of the laws of motion as the efficient cause of things."[1] This statement reveals two things: first, that Hegel is still with us, and, second, that men who think as Oman thinks wish he were not.

Hegel's influence has been greatly under-rated precisely because his own claims were so greatly over-stated. Never in the history of thought did any man profess such exhaustive knowledge and practical omniscience. F. L. Patton, that master of verbal caricature, states it this way: "When Zophar the Naamathite put the question to his class, 'Who by searching can find out God?' an Hegelian, amid the silence of the school, courageously held up his hand."[2] Again: "Here, as a witty writer suggests, is a catastrophe the reverse of that of Korah; the earth has not swallowed up the man, but the man has swallowed up the universe."[3] Unfortunately, though Hegel explained everything no one is sure he can explain Hegel. It seems that a student brought a passage to Hegel for explanation and the philosopher replied: "When that passage was written, there were two who knew its meaning—God and myself. Now, alas! there is but one, and that is God."

There was one thing more surprising than the stupendousness of Hegel's claim and that was that his contemporaries believed it! But they did, and following a period of philosophical inebriation came the morning after and then the revulsion from which, it seems, philosophers are still suffering.

When this revulsion set in, the philosophers not only threw out Hegel's baby with Hegel's wash, but they threw out Hegel too. And it is proving very difficult for him to get back again. Hence, we hear much disparagement and little appreciation. Nevertheless, though Hegel's name may be anathema, many of his ideas, as Oman suggests, have become sacred.

Let us comment briefly on the Hegelianism of two of the world's outstanding philosophers, A. N. Whitehead and John Dewey. Opposed as each of these men is to the Absolute Idealism of Hegel, they nevertheless show striking affinity for his fundamental viewpoint. The German philosopher was most characteristically dissatisfied with anything lurking behind phenomena. Thus, he refuted the substance theory of Spinoza, the thing-in-itself of Kant and the absolute of Schelling. As Weber has stated: "In Hegel, the *absolute is the process itself*; it does not produce movement and life, it *is* movement and life."[4] For Whitehead and Dewey also process is reality. In the former's *Process and Reality* existence and the natural order are ultimate, and God, if anything, appears to be its product, certainly not

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1 *Naturalism and Supernaturalism,* (Macmillan, 1931), pp. 107-108.

2 *Fundamental Christianity,* (Macmillan, 1926), p. 38.

3 Harris. Samuel *The Self-Revelation of God,* (Scribners, 1887), p. 260.

4 Weber and Perry, *History of Philosophy,* (Scribners, 1925), p. 406.

its producer. Dewey's *Quest for Certainty* is significant here. He deplores the philosophical endeavor to find abiding ideas and prefers to believe in the world as flux or process. Thus Dewey finds uncertainty, and Hegel a kind of certainty, but the important thing is that they look in the same place. All of these philosophers find nothing behind phenomena.

Hegel's influence is by no means restricted to philosophical circles. Rather, as Dr. Brightman says:

> It speaks well for the power of reason today that Hegel is still an influence in the world of affairs. No Hegel, no Marx-Engels-Lenin; no communism and no socialist critique of communist dogma. No Hegel, no Nazi theory of the state and no Liebert to indict it. No Hegel, no Gentile to organize the Fascist system of education and no Croce to defy Mussolini. It is from Hegel that Royce received much of his inspiration; from Hegel that Dewey took his start, and to Hegel he still looks as the greatest of the systematic philosophers.[5]

Nevertheless, our concern in this paper is with Hegel's significance in the realm of religion. Himself always an avowed Lutheran, Hegel's philosophy of Christianity was Janus-faced. His identification of the content of religion and of philosophy could be evaluated diversely. If one is impressed with the rational bulwark thus provided for religion, as is Hocking, the effect is conservative. If one is impressed with the complete rationalizing of religion, the effect is radical. Almost immediately after Hegel the theologians chose up sides, forming themselves into right and left wing Hegelians.

Among the conservatives, Daub and especially Biedermann are examples. Daub could write that the significance of Christ was that he exhibited the eternal incarnation of God and redemption of the world in his own person as a historical fact. Thus he was the God-man in a unique sense.[6] Biedermann supplemented Hegel by teaching that religious faith was a distinct element not to be equated with or dissolved by reason. But this faith presupposes revelation which it discerns immediately. H. R. MacIntosh in *Types of Modern Philosophy* describes Biedermann as the philosopher "who meant to be as Hegelian as possible, but always found Christianity breaking in."[7]

The radical wing found in Feuerbach and Strauss their ablest and most devastating exponents. Feuerbach reduced the absolute to man's size and ultimately, as a materialist, rejected all ideas including those of God which he called "Wunchwesen" or wishful thinking. In Strauss's *Leben Jesu*, the pictures of Hegel have become the "myths" of Christianity. In *Glaubenslehre*, religion in general seems to lose its savor. Finally Strauss asks himself, "Are we still Christians?" and answers: "If we would have our yea yea and our nay nay, in short, if we would speak as honest, upright men, we must acknowledge that we are no longer Christians."[8] Pfleiderer points out Strauss' significance in the history of Hegelianism.

> Two previous works upon Immortality, the authors of which are Richter and Feuerbach, were reckoned among the Hegelian school, had indeed, by the radical negative conclusions therein reached by the application of this philosophy, shaken the confidence generally felt in Hegelian orthodoxy; but . . . produced no very important effect. When, however, Strauss brought the heavy artillery of his criticism, distinguished equally by learning and penetration, to bear, first, on the historical foundations of the dogma itself the unsubstantial fabric of Hegelian dogmatism was within a few years completely destroyed.[9]

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[5] In Wieman, H. N., and B. E. Meland, *American Philosophies of Religion*, (Willett, Clark & Co., 1936), p. 319.

[6] Pfleiderer, Otto, *The Development of Theology*, (Macmillan, 1890), p. 132.

[7] H. R. MacIntosh, *Types of Modern Philosophy*, p. 133.

[8] Quoted in Smith, H. B., *Faith and Philosophy*, (Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1877), p. 469.

[9] *The Development of Theology*, (Macmillan, 1890), p. 132.

In England Hegelianism prevailed in a pure form at Oxford, but was gradually watered down. In the classroom, Dr. Brightman once gave his rating of some of the British thinkers and this is the score if my notes do not fail me: Bradley and Bosanquet, 100% Hegelian; Pringle-Pattison, 60%; Sorley, 40%; Ward, 0%. Dr. Ralph Barton Perry, rather more gleeful than sad, has a similar story to tell:

> Thus the weakness of Hegel, from the later idealistic point of view, lies not in his general programme, but in the fact that he boldly set about carrying it out. He made too many positive assertions. The fact that Hegel *did* make positive assertions about natural evolution, about historical development, and about international politics, accounts for the fact that his philosophy was of vital consequence, and to many a source of inspiration. But today no one is more ready than the idealist to point out that Hegel made the mistake of forcing 'psychological' categories upon nature and history. He tried to deduce the actual cosmic process from the laws of spirit; and it is now generally conceded that he failed. Everyone but the idealist explains his failure by the falsity of the project itself; but he attributes it to the fact that Hegel's categories of spirit were not *purely logical.*[10]

Josiah Royce, George H. Howison and William E. Hocking stand as American exponents of modified Hegelianism. Royce turned his attention especially to the problem of the individual and evil, while Howison objected that Royce had not allowed sufficient place for the individual self and contended for a plurality of selves. The place of feeling in Objective Idealism is a particular concern of Hocking.

However, the most significant modern rôle of Hegelian religion is as thesis to Kierkegaard's antithesis. Hegel's was the original "both-and" against which Kierkegaard thrust his "either-or." When Hegel was confronted with what appeared to be contradictions he attempted, as we shall see, to overcome them by his famous dialectical method—thesis and antithesis taken up into (*aufgehoben*) a higher synthesis. Kierkegaard was the policeman who, as soon as he saw the philosophical machine begin to grind its gears, blew his whistle, "Stop!" He was the champion of the unresolved contradiction. For Hegel religion was whole thought; for Kierkegaard it was shattered thought. Hegel relied on rationality; Kierkegaard cast himself upon the irrational. Hegel deified the intellect; Kierkegaard crucified it. For Hegel religion was a steady climb; for Kierkegaard it was a frantic leap.[11]

For all Kierkegaard's earnestness, we doubt that he ever truly liberated himself from rationalism. As John Wild has pointed out.[12] Kierkegaard asserts the good is unknowable and paradoxical. But this is belied by two things: first, he makes no appeal to anything other than reason. Second, his three stages imply that man naturally comes to a knowledge of the good.

The spiritual seed of Kierkegaard, Barth and Brunner, show the same overt opposition to Hegel and the "System." Barth's anathemas are in no sense restricted to Hegel, since, as he says, whatever is Christian is not philosophical and whatever is philosophical is not Christian. His complete abhorrence of immanentism and utter devotion to the "absolutely Other," is hostile indeed to Hegel's God, who is in a very entangling alliance with this world and is the absolutely-not-Other."

Brunner's opposition to Hegel is rather more reasoned, which fact accounts for Barth's distrust of it. First, Brunner estimates Hegel's influence:

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10 *Present Philosophical Tendencies,* (Longman's, Green & Co., 1925), p. 177.

11 Cf. esp. *Philosophical Fragments,* and *Concluding Scientific Postscript.*

12 "Philosophical Review," Vol. XLIX, No. 5, Sept. 1940, p. 544.

Since the time of Herder, Hegel, and Schleiermacher this scheme of a universal spiritual evolution, including also the Christian religion, has become a sort of scientific axiom which anyone who claims to be systematic must simply accept. This thesis of idealism has been rendered unobjectionable to theology by the circumstance that the conception of the individuality of religions seemed to give due place to the peculiar character of the Christian faith.[13]

Then, he criticizes Hegel's position fundamentally: "The decisive difference, therefore, consists in the fact that, for the idealist, the self-disclosure [of God] is fundamentally immediate, whereas for the Christian faith it is fundamentally mediated."[14]

We pass now from a consideration of Hegel's influence to date, back to Hegel himself and especially his philosophy of religion. The Alpha and the Omega of Hegel's system is the inclusiveness of the Absolute. Consequently his most frequently quoted statement, "Das Wahre ist das Ganze" is eminently characteristic of his thought. Being and all other categories are to be regarded as constituting the Absolute.[15] In the *Science of Logic,* this view is set forth as the only adequate one, all other ones being inherently defective.[16] Hegel's use of the term "Inbegriff" is significant.

The "Inbegriff aller realität" is the sum total of all reality and the all-inclusive Begriff or concept. It is not only a sum but a new entity, the whole being more than the sum of its parts.[17] Hegel's universal is no mere abstraction, because an abstraction is drawn off from and excludes reality; but Hegel's universal is concrete, including reality. Bosanquet devotes Lecture II of his *Principle of Individuality and Value* to the explication of this concept.

Because of the all-inclusive character of the Absolute, Hegelians hesitate to use the word "person." F. H. Bradley, for example, uses the designation super-personal. Adherents of the Personalist School may regard Hegel's Absolute as including not one, but many persons, and feel that the Hegelian super-person though he may be more than, is not other than person. It is interesting to note, in passing, that C. S. Lewis thinks of God as "beyond personality" and that Calvin himself was almost tried for heresy because he did not like the term "persona" as descriptive of deity. However, any similarity between the latter's and Hegel's view of the Absolute are purely coincidental.

Since the Absolute includes all things, it follows that all things reveal the Absolute. Since all things are revelations of the Absolute, the Absolute can be known. Since all things constitute the Absolute and there is nothing more, the Absolute may be absolutely known. Hegel, in other words, is champion of the knowability of the Absolute and opponent of even partial inscrutability. This is not merely the logical conclusion of the *Phenomenology* and *Science of Logic,* but the prelude to his *Philosophy of Religion.*

Let us observe this further before commenting. The Absolute unfolds itself in the realm of concepts (cf. *Science of Logic* and in the realm of nature (cf. *Encyclopedia,* §§245 ff.) but only in the realm of mind, or spirit does the Absolute come to consciousness and freedom (cf. *Encyclopedia,* §§482ff.; esp. 553ff.).

The Absolute unfolds itself in triadic form also in the realm of spirit; first in art, then in religion, and supremely in philosophy. In art it appears in the form of sense objects which, although necessary for art, are an impediment to a purely rational perception by spirit. A more refined manifestation is found in the representations (Vorstellungen) of religion which are

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13 Brunner, Emil, *Philosophy of Religion,* trans. by Farrer & Woolf, (Scribners, 1937), p. 128.

14 *Ibid.,* p. 40.

15 *Encyclopaedie,* §75.

16 Vol. II, p. 456.

17 *Ibid.,* p. 343.

picture-thoughts partaking of the sensuous because they are pictures and of the rational because they are thoughts. In philosophy the Absolute is seen immediately as pure thought.

This brings us to grips with Hegel's doctrine of revelation. Manifestly, his gnosticism was a great improvement over the agnosticism of Kant and Schelling. We agree with Maier in his *Hegel's Criticism of Kant* in which he shows that Hegel exposed the absurdity of Kant's talking about an object which could not be brought in relation to our consciousness. Kant's mysterious underlying reality, having no known qualities at all, could not be anything other than mind itself. This Hegel argued and then proceeded to conceive of mind as all that has being and thereby made reality knowable by itself. Likewise, he indicates the futility of Schelling's undifferentiated Absolute, the hidden reality that includes everything but in such abyssmal darkness that nothing can be seen, "the night in which all cows are black." Mure has pointed out that in his intellectual optimism, Hegel is reverting to the Greeks and away from Kant's revolution by which, as Perry says, the latter succeeded in "internalizing reason." Hegel thought of Plato and Aristotle as fundamentally the same and with them agreed that what is most real is *eo ipso,* that which is most intelligible. The philosopher's task, as Hegel saw it, was to prove this.

In this respect, we need Hegel today. To the liberals who despair of all certainty and are profoundly skeptical of the demonstrableness of truth he would say, "In the mental or spiritual there is now an infinite . . . capable of being communicated,"[18] or, "the humility which affirms that the finite cannot know God nor come into direct relation to him, simply ascribes to God powerlessness to make himself known."[19] To the neo-orthodox, not resigned to but revelling in the irrational, he would say: "Things do not agree with ideas because you are on a level of thought where you cannot take all things into account."[20] And to the positivists and other secularists of our day, he would say: "What knowledge is worth knowing if God be unknowable?"[21]

There are two serious defects in Hegel's teaching concerning revelation. He makes too little of the apparatus for receiving the revelation and too much of general revelation itself. Even Pfleiderer admits that Hegel's sole reliance on thought as the recipient of the revelation is unwarranted. "Religion is essentially a matter of the heart."[22] This criticism has been so generally made that it has become a cliché to classify Hegel as one who exaggerated the intellectual element in religion, alongside Kant who did the same with the volitional element and Schliermacher with the emotional. We need not elaborate.

While it is conceded that Hegel made too little of the apparatus for receiving revelation, it has not been especially noted that he made too

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18 *Ibid.*, p. 355.

19 *Philosophie der Religion,* Vol. 1, p. 195, quoted in Harris, *Self-Revelation of God,* p. 91.

20 *Science of Logic,* Vol. II, p. 397.

21 *Philosophie der Religion,* Vol. I, p. 27.

22 *Development of Theology,* p. 73. Cf. Strong, *Systematic Theology,* p. 120. "Religion is not, as Hegel declared, a kind of knowing for it would then be only an incomplete form of knowledge, and the measure of knowledge in such case would be the measure of piety. . . . God is the subject of religion as well as its object. Religion is God's knowing of himself through the human consciousness. Hegel did not utterly ignore other elements in religion. 'Feeling, intuition, and faith belong to it,' he says, 'and mere cognition is one-sided.' . . . 'what knowledge is worth knowing, if God is unknowable.' . . . he gave even less place to the will than he gave to the emotions and he failed to see that the knowledge of God of which the Scripture speaks is a knowing, not of the intellect alone, but of the whole man."

much of general revelation. It would appear obvious that Hegel has obliterated the distinction between general and special revelation. If all things reveal the Absolute, because they are the Absolute, there can be no such thing as special revelation. What confuses the matter is that Hegel refers to Christianity as absolute religion and calls it "revealed."[23] Dr. Strong is correct when he states that: "Hegel, in his Philosophy of Religion, says that Christianity is the only revealed religion, because the Christian God is the only one from whom a revelation can come."[24] Nevertheless, it should be noted that this is quibbling with terminology. True, Hegel believed that the Christian conception of God was the only adequate, *viz.*, absolute, one. And only the Absolute could reveal the Absolute. And so the Christian God is the only one from whom revelation could come. But that is not the equivalent of saying that Christians were the only ones *to whom* it came or Christianity the only religion *in which* it came, which is the historic teaching of the Church.

The writer was once asked to demonstrate the fact that the church has maintained the views here indicated of special revelation. We referred the questioner to Schaff's three volume *Creeds of Christendom* where anyone who runs may yet read that the churches have uniformly testified to a unique once-for-all revelation in no sense to be confused with that natural revelation which is called "common" precisely because it is universal and at all times present. Let me give but one citation at random. In the Westminster Confession of Faith, for example, we read:

> Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation; therefore it pleased the Lord . . . to reveal himself, and to declare . . . his will unto his Church.

In orthodox thinking special revelation is unique, once for all revelation. It occurred at one time and one place and to one people and is no general world phenomenon at all. The late Dr. Machen, who is regarded by Wieman and Meland,[25] as the outstanding representative of traditional supernaturalism, stresses the strict historicalness of Christianity:

> Christianity depends, not upon a complex of ideas, but upon the narration of an event. Without that event, the world, in the Christian view, is altogether dark, and humanity is lost under sin. There can be no salvation by the discovering of eternal truth. . . . A new face has been put upon life by the blessed thing that God did when he offered up His only begotten Son.[26]

Brunner also, one of the ablest exponents of neo-supernaturalism, sees through the spuriousness of Hegel's "special revelation," contrasting it with the Christian view:

> To him the idealist history is merely a picture-book, whose text he knows without the aid of pictures; to him it means the idea made concrete, hence there is nothing decisive about it. In its absolute and serious sense, there is no room here for the category of uniqueness. . . . Hegel seemed able to absorb history into thought as Plotinus and Schelling did with Nature.[27]

Oman, likewise, is not deceived:

> Though Hegel's idea that in history we see in the furnace what is now built into life as cold and commonplace, was a great contribution to the whole method of studying history, in the end real history has no place in his intellectual construction. What masquerades as history is a show staged by dialectic, not history as a record of man's slow, laborious, often mistaken, constantly discouraged, learning from experience by the real hazard of dealing with environment.[28]

We return to Hegel's exposition. On

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23 *Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. II, pp. 329-330.
24 *Systematic Theology*, p. 27.
25 *American Philosophies of Religion*, p. 62.
26 *Christianity and Liberalism*, p. 70.
27 *The Mediator*, trans. by Olive Wyon, (Lutterworth Press, 1934), pp. 36-37.
28 *Naturalism and Supernaturalism*, (Macmillan, 1931), p. 291.

the level of religion, the dialectic, of course, moves through three stages. The thetic stage is that of the universal. God is the universal mind. When this universal mind, which cannot remain in this splendid isolation, sunders itself into particularity the antithetic stage is reached. This moment corresponds to the various positive religions. As a result of the union of the universal and particular moments the synthesis is achieved and we have what corresponds to the absolute religion.

In Christianity, with which we are primarily concerned, God is concrete spirit the first moment of which is God as He is before creation, the second is God in creation, and the third is God in the Church. In the first, God, as the universal in itself, is the Father. In the second, God, as particular, is the Son. In the third, God, as individual, is the Holy Spirit.[29]

The pure heresy of such a view of the doctrine of the trinity is self-evident to anyone versed in the Biblical doctrine. Rather than submit my own criticism I will cite McTaggart whose testimony on this point is especially significant insofar as his concern in comparing Hegelian Trinitarianism and Christian Trinitarianism is purely academic, since apparently he is not devoted to either conception himself. As something of a neutral observer, he regards Hegel's Trinitarianism as missing the mark of ecclesiastical Trinitarianism.

> According to Hegel's exposition, the Father and the Son are the Thesis and Antithesis of a triad of which the Holy Ghost is the Synthesis. It will follow from this that the Holy Ghost is the sole reality of the Trinity. Insofar as the Father and the Son are real, they are taken as correlative with the Holy Ghost, and as on the same level with the latter, they are taken wrongly and are not real. In other words, the Father and the Son are simply abstractions which the thinker makes from the concrete reality of the Holy Ghost.
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> This may be the correct doctrine of the Trinity, but it is not the usual one. It must be noticed that it does not merely place the Holy Ghost above the other two members of the Trinity, but merges these latter in the Holy Ghost, which is therefore not only the supreme reality, but the sole reality God. And, again, the doctrine is more than the assertion that the relation of the members of the Trinity is not merely external. Doubtless it is not merely external, but internal and essential. But the point is as to the particular sort of relation. The Father and the Son are related to the Holy Ghost as something which is they, and more than they. But the Holy Ghost is related to the Father and the Son—if it is to be called a relation—in a very different manner. Each of them, so far as it is real at all, is the Holy Ghost. But each of them is less than the Holy Ghost. And so are both of them taken together.[30]

McTaggart might have said that Hegel's doctrine was the procession of the Father and the Son from the Holy Spirit. Mackintosh does say: "This is certainly a piece of heterodoxy; possibly an inversion of Church teaching."[31]

We have dealt with "God in His eternal Idea in-and-for-self; the Kingdom of the Father." This phase of Christian revelation Hegel associated with the First member of the Trinity and reserved for consideration the other two members under the titles: "The eternal Idea of God in the element of consciousness and ordinary thought, or difference; the kingdom of the Son;" and "The Idea in the element of the Church or Spiritual Community; the kingdom of the Spirit." It is with the latter two divisions of the discussion that we are now concerned.

Much in the manner of John's statement that "no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him"; Hegel says: "this Idea is now to be considered as it

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[29] Cf. Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion,* Vol. III, pp. 1, 2.

[30] *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology,* (University Press, 1901), pp. 203, 204.

[31] *Hegel and Hegelianism,* (T. & T. Clark, 1903), p. 259.

appears in the second element, in the element of manifestation in general."[32] What was latent in the universal, namely differentiation, now becomes patent in the particular. Before, differentiation was "merely a movement, a playing of love with itself, in which it does not get to be otherness or Other-Being in any serious sense, nor actually reach a condition of separation and division.[33] Now, differentiation has become entire otherness: external, independent, alienated, different. Nevertheless, we are reminded that the separation or differentiation is still not yet complete. "What we have here is merely abstract difference in general, we have not yet got to difference in the form which peculiarly belongs to it."[34]

The Notion, which we have already seen consists of three moments, now passes into nature. "The absolute freedom of the Idea means that in determining itself, in the act of judgment, or differentiation, it grants the free independent existence of the Other. This Other, as something thus allowed to have an independent existence, is represented by the World taken in a general sense."[35] This transition is one of logical necessity and is not to be confused with a temporal order although the term creation is used. Seth maintains that Hegel does not bridge the gap here between the logically necessary and the temporally generated otherness. And alienation is the result of otherness. Nevertheless, alienation is not fully manifested until man appears, for, as Pfleiderer remarks,

> . . . the difference is not fully developed in nature, which remains true to its own essence and character, faithfully obeys its own laws, and does not step outside of the substance, the necessity of its being. Man, on the contrary, is called to be or rather to become what he is essentially; it belongs to the notion of him that he should place himself over-against his nature, his present state, and enter into the division between his essence and his actual state. And his consciousness is itself the act by which this division is set up, for consciousness is the distinguishing of him, this particular subject, from himself, his universal being.[36]

Thus Hegel has a doctrine of the fall but it is not the fall of man but the fall of God. That is to say, God by becoming finite or other, alienates Himself from Himself. This differentiated and finite self Hegel speaks of as man and thinks of him by virtue of his finitude and otherness as fallen, as evil.

> Man is by nature evil; his potential Being, his natural Being, is evil. It is just in this his condition as one of natural Being that his defect is found; because he is Spirit he is separated from his natural Being, and is disunion. One-sidedness is directly involved in this natural condition. When man is only as he is according to Nature, he is evil.[37]

It would appear that "man" was born fallen. Evil is not something alien to his nature but of the essence. He was born in sin and in iniquity did his God conceive him. Because he was a free, independent, particular being, he was a fallen being. It was not because he misused his freedom but because he used it; not because he violated his nature but because he expressed it, that he was a fallen creature. When Hegel's God rested from His creative activity He saw everything that he had made, including man, and, behold, it was very bad.

This account of the Hegelian conception of evil is thus far one-sided and inadequate. First of all, Hegel conceives of an original state of naturalness, a somewhat non-moral state; and secondly, man even in his fallen state is, in a sense, good as well as evil. This is what provokes William James' protest that Hegel "encour-

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[32] *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* Vol. III, p. 34.
[33] *Ibid.,* p. 35.
[34] *Ibid.,* p. 35.
[35] *Ibid.,* p. 36.
[36] *The Philosophy of Religion,* Vol. II, p. 105.
[37] *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* Vol. III, pp. 47, 48.

aged men to *see* the world good rather than to *make* it good."

This doctrine of evil proceeding from the Absolute Spirit implies that God himself includes evil. We have here the reverse of Christian Science reasoning. Mrs. Eddy argues: God is all, God is good, therefore, all is good. Hegel argues: God is all, all includes evil, therefore, God is evil. Of course, this conclusion is a logical one on a pantheistic presupposition. If the Absolute is all-inclusive, as Hegel believed, it must include evil. [38] Consistent as the conclusion may be, it is, as Mill believed, the reduction *"ad absurdissimum."*

To say that man is by nature good amounts substantially to saying that he is potentially Spirit, rationality, that he has been created in the image of God; God is the Good, and Man as Spirit is the reflection of God, he is the Good potentially.[39] With this qualification in mind, we may state again that man although good in one regard, yet is alienated from God by nature. This condition of separation, however, sets up a longing, a feeling in which a tendency to reunion is generated. "In this division independence is set up, and evil has its seat; here is the source of evil, but also the point from which atonement ultimately arises. It is both the beginning of sickness and the source of health.[40]

Separation produces sin and sin a desire for reconciliation. As the prodigal son became dissatisfied with his loneliness and his swine's fare and longed for the father's house where there was plenty and to spare, so the particular in the state of separation requires reunion with the universal. This desire is the tendency toward reconciliation which is as much in the nature of things as is the separation. Finite minds are restless till they find rest in the infinite mind. This reconciliation is realized when the infinite assumes finiteness. This logically necessary, eternally recurring movement of the infinite to the finite finds doctrinal expression in the Incarnation and Death of Jesus Christ.

> It is a proof of infinite love that God identified Himself with what was foreign to His nature in order to slay it. This is the signification of the death of Christ. Christ has borne the sins of the world, He has reconciled God to us, as it is said.[41]

The movement back from the finite to the infinite is expressed doctrinally in the Resurrection and in the Ascension of Christ. God assumes finite nature even to the extreme point of the death of the infinite. This death, however, is swallowed up in infinity as God rises from death and ascends again. "This death is thus at once finitude and in its most extreme form, and at the same time the abolition and absorption of the natural finitude."[42] By His Ascension to the right hand of God, Christ, says Hegel, demonstrates the dignity, worth, and identity of human nature with that of the divine nature.

We have arrived at the stage where the re-union has been effected. God and Man are one again. They had been one from the beginning but their diversity had been implicit. Now, after having affirmed most emphatically, and even tragically, their diversity they re-affirm their unity, not in spite of diversity but because of it.

The Spirit of God is in Man but not in the individual man. Rather His presence is where two or more are gathered together in the Community or Church. On the disciples the Holy

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38 Cf. *Encyclopaedie.* §573; Mansel, *Limits of Religious Thought,* 3rd Edition, p. 46; and Brightman, *The Problem of God,* (Abingdon Press, 1930), p. 83.

39 Hegel, *Lectures on Philosophy of Religion,* Vol. III, p. 46.

40 Pfleiderer, *The Philosophy of Religion,* Vol. II, p. 106.

41 Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* Vol. III, p. 93.

42 *Ibid.,* p. 93.

Ghost descended at Pentecost and became their immanent life. Real and present life in the Spirit of Christ, that is Hegel's definition of the Church.

> In the Spiritual Community as actually existing, the Church is emphatically the institution in virtue of which the persons composing it reach the truth end appropriate it for themselves, and through it the Holy Spirit comes to be in them as real, actual, and present, and has its abode in them; it means that the truth is in them, and that they are in a condition to enjoy and give active expression to the truth or Spirit, that they as individuals are those who give active expression to the Spirit.[43]

For Hegel, the Church is a "thinking as well as loving and practical communion. It *thinks* the contents of the gospel narratives and of the Christian sentiment in the form of *the* Faith."[44] Hegel's anti-Pietism is never seen more clearly or more usefully at work than in his insistence that "dogma is necessary, and must be taught as valid truth." It is not sufficient that the Community feel, it must also think. When the Son of Man comes again, will He find knowledge? Hegel asks.

Proper appreciation of the importance of the sacraments is evident to Hegel. If he was not a Romanist, neither was he a sectarian.

> The Eucharist is the central point of the doctrine of Christianity, and the highest act of worship. While, on the one hand, the constant preservation of the Church . . . is the continued repetition of the life, passion, and resurrection of Christ in the members of the Church, this, on the other hand, is expressly accomplished in the sacraments of the Lord's Supper.

Thus he holds the Lutheran rather than the Catholic or Zwinglian view.

We will ask one final question of this Hegelian exposition of Christianity. How does it compare with the Church's exposition as embodied in the historic Church creeds? In spite of many points of some similarity between the Christian and Hegelian doctrine, I fear that the differences are fundamental and radical. Hegel may be correct but I doubt if it can be maintained with any seriousness that he is orthodox. His view of revelation we have already sufficiently criticized. Certainly his conception of the Trinity is not that of the Church which believes in a single substantial identity, God, in which single substance there are three Persons. The Hegelian Trinity is at most a ghost of this. In the Hegelian deity the world is implicit, or at least the idea of an other is implicit. The Church would question first whether this otherness is a concrete world at all; second, it would deny that if it were a world it emanated necessarily from the nature of God; and, third, the Church affirms that this "other" is not the world but the Son of God.

Again, according to the church, God saw His world that is was good, not evil. Hegel's identification of finitude and evil is a distinctly pagan conception that, so far as I know, has never found expression in a creed of any orthodox Christian Church. Hegel's insistence that the world, including man, is in a sense good does not offset the radicalness of his departure from the church at this point.

Lastly, if the Church and the Bible be not in error then Christ came into the world to save sinners and not to merge finitude in the infinite. Since Hegel's conception of sin is different from that of the Church, it follows that his notion of grace and associated doctrines must be diverge. Christ came not to call the finite to repentance but sinners; not to preach a metaphysical reconciliation but an ethical one; not to make man into God, but like unto God.

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[43] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

[44] Sterrett, J. MacBride, *Studies in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, p. 297.

The Alumni and The Seminary's Motto

J. HAROLD GREENLEE

The motto of Asbury Theological Seminary, "The Whole Bible for the Whole World," has today an increasing significance. It is not that any increase of obligation to "the whole world" has recently been laid upon the shoulders of us who claim an evangelical faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; it is rather that international events are demonstrating with awful and increasing clarity that the world's alternatives are "Christ or chaos." Furthermore, the remotest corner of the earth is now but a few hours away from us; and we are surely without excuse if we rest content with a life service which means anything less than "the whole Bible for the whole world."

We rejoice, therefore, in the recognition that through the years Asbury Theological Seminary and her alumni have had the vision of a responsibility which extended even to the remotest regions of earth. Yet there is a more immediate part of "the whole world,' and one before which we and our fellow evangelicals have too long tacitly acknowledged our helplessness. This is the increasing number, especially of younger people, who have become confused by the assumptions of a naturalistic philosophy and have come to believe that enlightened intellectuality and vital Christianity stand in irreconcilable opposition to one another, and that naïveté and obscurantism are necessary constituents of a vital faith in Christ as Savior and Lord.

To the tremendous task of meeting these challenges our seminary has set itself; and we who are her alumni are inescapably bound up with her in responsibility. Our prayers and gifts are needed, but also our own informed personal interest must be manifested. We believe that the administration is properly fulfilling the seminary's responsibility to the world in its enlarged program for training men and women in sound intellectual scholarship combined with consecrated evangelism. Let us give our full support, and we shall share its benefits. Let us to that end unite our efforts with our fellow alumni through our Alumni Association, that we and our seminary may mutually be aided in meeting our responsibility to the world.

One of the ways in which we can keep ourselves informed concerning the progress of Asbury Seminary is to take advantage of Alumni Day every Commencement. In 1947, Alumni Day is Saturday, May 31. We are fortunate in having secured President Clyde Meredith of Taylor University as the Alumni Day speaker. Let us make it a reunion day for *every* graduating class! Asbury Seminary has without doubt been raised up "for such a time as this"; let us, her alumni, "rise up and make her strong"!

—Secretary-Treasurer,
Asbury Theological Seminary Alumni Association
Wilmore, Kentucky.

The Perfection Concept in the Epistle To the Hebrews *

ALVIN A. AHERN

INTRODUCTION

The idea of perfection has long intrigued the moral philosopher as well as the theologian. Plato's ethics envisaged the final attainment by man of moral perfection through *eros*. Immanuel Kant's postulate of immortality was based on the idea that moral value is potentially complete. Some of our contemporaries, for instance, Wilbur Marshall Urban, stress a teleological ethics that contemplates completeness in full self-realization.

Perhaps the moral theorist generally has thought beyond his own time, but he has also rendered a practical service for his time. Though the practical interests of politics and economics, for instance, often try to ignore moral requirements, the ethical thinker is generally on hand to show that eventually they must find that any security they have is a moral security.

Recently science seems to have shocked most of the thinking world into a realization that humanity's problem today is essentially a moral problem. Perhaps it is not rash to infer, therefore, that the confusion of our post-war world is primarily a moral confusion. If this is true what can Bible instructors do to help correct this situation?

They can do what many of them are doing. They can help an otherwise literate world turn again to the Scriptures with eyes to see and ears to hear the great moral pronouncements and to understand the moral provisions found particularly in the ancient prophets and in the New Testament. The Bible is always contemporary; therefore, the present study approaches the Epistle to the Hebrews in the confidence that a message for our day may be found.

In 1889 Brooke Foss Westcott opened the preface to his commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews with the statement: "Every student of the Epistle to the Hebrews must feel that it deals in a peculiar degree with the thoughts and trials of our own time."[1] Three years later he concluded the preface to his second edition with the observation: "The more I study the tendencies of the time in some of the busiest centres of English life, the more deeply I feel that the Spirit of God warns us of our most urgent civil and spiritual dangers through the prophecies of Jeremiah and the Epistle to the Hebrews. May our Nation and our Church be enabled to learn the lessons which they teach while there is still time to use them."[2]

Was Westcott's hope fulfilled? Apparently not. Within twenty years World War I broke and subsequent events are familiar to us all.

McNicol, writing of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the *Biblical Review* for October, 1930, on the eve of the recent world conflict, declares, "The message of this unknown, but clear-

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[1] Westcott, Brooke Foss: *The Epistle To The Hebrews*, p. v.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. x.

sighted, first century leader was never more needed than it is today."

The present study foregoes treatment of many interesting and rewarding topics and concerns itself with a somewhat neglected emphasis in the epistle, viz., the concept of perfection and its ethical implications.

The Idea of *teleiosis*

Mr. Westcott suggests that "The idea of *teleiosis,* consummation, bringing to perfection, is characteristic of the Epistle."[3] Christians have often if not generally faltered at the thought of perfection. It is awe-inspiring, as awe-inspiring as the atomic bomb. Perhaps it even more real and more weighted with significance.

In the epistle the Greek word *teleios,* ordinarily translated perfect or perfection, appears in one form or another sixteen times. The whole family of words connected with *teleios* is found here: *teleios* (5:14, 9:11), *teleiotes* (6:1, elsewhere only in Col. 3:14), *teleioun* referring to Christ (2:10; 5:9; 7:28) and to men (10:14; 11:40; 12:23).

The noun *teleiotes* is quite common in classical Greek. According to the Liddell and Scott lexicon it "means having reached its end, finished, complete. . . . It is used in reference to animals as full-grown, to persons as complete or accomplished." Thayer says it means "brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness; perfect."

In the epistle the idea is related particularly to Christ and to his followers. First, he himself is "perfected" as indicated in the three passages, 2:10; 5:9; and 7:28. Second, he "perfects" others, noted in three more special passages, 10:14; 11:39, 40; 12:23. The writer also seeks to show that whereas man should be perfect (5:14; 6:1) he could not become so under the Old Covenant provisions (7:11,19; 9:9; 10:1).

Space here permits only a summary of a rather extended investigation of these various passages. The whole argument leads to the conclusion that:

(1) In spite of sin God's purpose and plan for man's moral perfection is ultimately and effectively achieved through Christ as Redeemer.

(2) The writer also holds that in order for Christ to become the Saviour He must follow the tedious and painful process of encountering and overcoming sin at every possible point in human experience.

(3) Furthermore, the perfection of the believer is a sort of paradox. Though perfect in Christ, his achievement is a continuing process. The teaching of this phase of the epistle might well be thought of as the "perfection paradox."

The Standard for Man

In outlining these provisions of redemption the author indicates God's standard or goal for man. Furthermore, he reasons that this standard is within reach and that responsibility for its attainment is upon man himself. In chapter two, verses six through eighteen, the standard is presented and Christ is shown to have met fully all specifications and in so doing has made it possible for every man to do the same. Elaboration of this point must also be omitted from this report. But it should be noted that right here in this second chapter there seems to be suggested a metaphysical basis for a teleological Christian ethics of self-realization.

In his Fondren Lectures of 1945, recently published, Edgar S. Brightman emphasizes the distinction between an ideal and a value, pointing out that an ideal is not a value but a goal. A value is the goal attained or the extent of its attainment. In Hebrews 2:6-18 we see man's exalted

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[3] Westcott, *Op. cit., p.* 63.

goal or destiny. But we see more. We see Jesus as Son of Man attaining that ideal. *That is value.* And for us that value, according to the author of the epistle, seems to lie in the fact that his accomplishment makes it possible for all men to achieve in like manner through Him. One of the chief purposes, if not the chief purpose, of this epistle, therefore, seems to be to show that though the Old Covenant under the Law could not free man from the power and condemnation of sin, the "more perfect" covenant through Christ makes victory over sin, as well as freedom from a sense of its guilt, a present and continuous reality in the life of the believer. Jesus Christ is at once man's *Ideal* and man's *Value.* Through man's identification of himself with Christ the moral quality of Christ's own being is imparted. The writer of the epistle cites Jesus as the perfect embodiment of God's ideal for man and concludes that through this "perfected" One all men may find moral completion a present and at the same time a progressive reality.

Thus through the use of the word-family of *teleios* and a few related terms the author seeks to show that the *Perfect Offering* (7:26-28; 9:14, 15, 26; 10:10) of the *Perfected One* (2:10; 5:9; 7:26-28; 10:10) *Perfects the Believer* (6:1; 7:25; 9:14, 15; 10:10, 14; 12:23).

The Perfection Paradox Clarified

In his comprehensive work, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience,* William Ernest Hocking, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University, proposes an idea that throws light on this discussion and deserves far more attention than it has received. He speaks of religion as "anticipated attainment." Says he, in comparing art and religion,

> Art is long; religion is immediate. The attainment in every art is future, infinitely distant; the attainment of religion is present. . . . Religion, we may now say, is the present attainment in a single experience of those objects which in the course of nature are reached only at the end of infinite progression. Religion is anticipated attainment.[4]

On the other hand he shows that,

> Whatever may be the nature of that anticipation of all attainment, genuine religion is not inclined — as far as hard work goes — to take advantage of its advantage. If being in the world it is not of the world, it is none the less with the world and for it—in brief *in for it,* and with no loss of power. This is an extraordinary attainment *which one must still labor forever to possess*: but just this paradox is inherent in the religious consciousness.[5]

In this same connection Hocking also notes that,

> In time my moral task will never be finished, for my imperfection is infinite and my progress by small degrees; but religion calls upon me to be perfect at once even as God is perfect, *and in religion somehow I am perfect.*[6]

This same idea also seems to be illustrated by St. Paul in Philippians, chapter 3, verses 12-15.

> Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect (*teteleiomai*): but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as *are perfect* (*teleioi*) be thus minded.

In one instance he considers himself to be perfect, complete, mature in Christ, in another as not being perfect. He seems to say, in harmony with the writer to the Hebrews, that his perfection, though in a very true sense a present reality, is something for which he must strive continually with single purpose.

The perfect, striving for perfection! It sounds paradoxical. Perhaps it is. Have not the holiest saints been the

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[4] Hocking, William Ernest, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience,* p. 31.

[5] *Ibid.,* p. 32. (Second italics are my own.)

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 31. (Italics are my own.)

first to declare their constant need of holiness, perhaps just as Socrates insisted that he knew nothing, though declared by the Oracle at Delphi to be the wisest man in Athens?

While emphasizing the experience of inner perfection through faith the author of the epistle recognizes that the perfecting process continues as long as life itself. The Christian is able to make progress in the direction of the ideal goal of moral perfection simply because, through faith in Christ, he actually experiences Christ's moral perfection in kind, though not in degree. And though a man may be becoming progressively more perfect, Kant was probably right in a sense, when he conceived of man's moral endeavor as an eternal thing.

The author of our epistle makes this progress in perfection particularly explicit in the eloquent benediction at the close of the letter.

> Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus, make you *perfect* in every good thing *to do his will,* working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.[7]

He prays that the inner perfection of his readers may be externalized through everything they do. Interestingly, here the word translated "perfect" is not a form of the verb *teleioun,* but is *katartisai,* which is the first aorist optative active of the verb *katartizo.* It is a combination of *kata,* which here denotes "in succession, in course," and *artios,* which means "entirely suited; complete in accomplishment, ready." It would appear that the writer has employed this compound word to emphasize the thought of perfection being achieved in the successive experiences of life, "in every good thing to do his will." Thus the paradox continues. He who is morally perfect in Christ through faith in his sufficient atonement for sin must go on in his endless quest for perfection in Christian living.

Possibilities of Further Development

Dr. W. E. Sangster, an English writer, in his recent book, *The Path to Perfection* (1943), quotes from an address by Dr. R. W. Dale in Carrs Lane Chapel, Birmingham, England, July 27, 1879. The distinguished divine and educational reformer was attempting a dispassionate appraisal of John Wesley's influence. Among other things Dr. Dale declared:

> There was one doctrine of John Wesley's—the doctrine of perfect sanctification—which ought to have led to a great and original ethical development; but the doctrine has not grown; it seems to remain just where John Wesley left it. There has been a want of the genius or the courage to attempt the solution of the immense practical questions which the doctrine suggests. The questions have not been raised—much less solved. To have raised them effectively, indeed, would have been to originate an ethical revolution which would have had a far deeper effect on the thought and life—first of England, and then of the rest of Christendom—than was produced by the Reformation of the sixteenth century.[8]

It is my personal belief, after a rather careful study of the Epistle to the Hebrews during the past ten years, that this concept of perfection, as there presented, suggests a metaphysical basis for a teleological Christian ethics of self-realization whose social implications are far-reaching.

Is it possible that Christians might exert a greater moral impact on the life of today if they more nearly realized in their own experience the possibilities of the "perfection paradox"? Perhaps believers have always been conscious of the *Ideal* and of their failure to measure up to it. But have they been conscious enough of a present inner moral completeness in an experience suggested as possible by

[7] Hebrews 13:20, 21.

[8] Sangster, Dr. W. E., *The Path to Perfection,* p. 168.

Dr. Hocking's theory of "anticipated attainment"? Might not such an experience afford a moral dynamic and resourcefulness that would enable man to win his individual and social struggle with the problems of evil? Is it failure at this point that is responsible chiefly for the recurring indictment that Christianity is not "practical"? Is Christianity being really (or realistically) practiced by its professed followers?

In this day of breath-taking discovery in the fields of the sciences perhaps there can be found a frame of mind that is prepared not only to entertain but to demand a solution of our moral problems in terms of this "perfection paradox," which appears to characterize the Epistle to the Hebrews. Dr. Sangster seems to have been in such a frame of mind when in concluding the study mentioned above, he declares,

> *To believe that the human heart can be cleansed from sin* (experience moral perfection) *is a bold, big thing to believe,* and we have protested against any easy assumption that it has been done because this is fraught with dreadful dangers, not the least of which is a subtle discouragement against being honest with oneself. *But the opposite conviction,* so it seems to the writer, *is not less terrible.*[9]

The unmodified core of this statement is especially provocative. " To believe that the human heart can be cleansed from sin is a bold, big thing to believe . . . But the opposite conviction . . . is not less terrible."

If John Wesley was on the right track in his doctrine of perfection, and the Epistle to the Hebrews seems to suggest that he was, surely it is time this doctrine received more serious consideration with a view toward its future development and toward its enlarged social application.

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9 *Ibid.,* p. 190. (Parenthesis and italics are my own.)

'Can Religious Education Be Christian?'

A Critique Of Harrison Elliott's Volume

C. Elvan Olmstead

Perhaps the greatest value of this recent contribution to the Coe-Bower school of thought is the panoramic — one might almost say kaleidoscopic — view which it affords of so much that is being said in theological and educational circles. It makes a number of emphases which are of considerable significance. Our first concern, however, in order that we may discuss the book intelligently, is to bring into focus just what it says. For this purpose perhaps the best procedure will be to state in one sentence what seems to be the main point in each of the fifteen chapters. Such a statement is herewith given:

I. The modern educational approach "has implications which challenge the theological assumptions of the churches,"[1] and especially of those theologians who stress the thought that "Christianity is a revealed religion."[2]

II. Religious liberty was won in America as far as public education was concerned, but the "Sunday School carried on the authoritarian tradition."[3]

III. The Herbartian procedure, which attempts to impose an idea upon pupils and then leaves to them putting it into practice, has at last been "challenged from within the official Christian education of the churches themselves."[4]

IV. There is at present a clash of opinions as to whether the educational and missionary work of the church should be conceived as the propagation of an authoritative "apostolic theocentric" faith,[5] or as a shared study of religion with liberty for all to arrive at personal interpretations.

V. No uniform interpretation of the Christian faith is given in the New Testament, therefore people today must be free to "find for themselves the meaning of the Christian faith."[6]

VI. Paul and Barth to the contrary, human knowledge is important for the understanding of religion and for "revising the interpretations where they have been influenced by inadequate or false conceptions."[7]

VII. The conception of the autocratic sovereignty of God leads, not to "the direct reign of God but the authority of parents, teachers, ministers, and rulers which is identified with the will of God."[8]

VIII. There is need for more discrimination in the use of the word "sin," and for suiting "what is done in the educational process to the character of the difficulty."[9]

IX. The effort to deal with the human predicament through an educational process is not made impracticable by the evil tendencies of human nature, for "there are no such well-defined inborn tendencies in man, either good or evil."[10]

X. The social strategy of education is that of organizing the life of groups in such a way that "the individual is turned from individual striving to cooperative effort,"[11] thereby removing

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[1] Elliott, Harrison S.: *Can Religious Education be Christian?* (New York, Macmillan, 1940), p. 4.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 78.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 120.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 135.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 153.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 176.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 191.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 212.

the clash between egos.

XI. "If religious education is to be thus basically reconstructive, there must be a shift from efforts to help individuals as individuals to the enlistment of individuals in the reconstruction of the life of which they are a part,"[12] and by which their own characters are inevitably conditioned.

XII. Christian ethics is relevant to an educational process centered in actual situations: "the ideal of love can be made both the goal and the dynamic of such a process."[13]

XIII. "The social process of religious education, which critics of religious education fear because they think it is centered too much in human life, is the very process which gives the largest promise of bringing about a vital experience of God."[14]

XIV. Religious education "will need to embody in worship the recognition . . . that whatever the interpretation of God, his manifestations and resources are immanent in his world; second, that these resources are available only as man discovers and meets the conditions for their release."[15]

XV. A social and experience-centered educational process may be trusted when "individuals and groups have been captured by the possibilities of love made manifest in Christ."[16]

This summary of Elliott's thought reveals that the integrating idea in the negative phase of his argument is that "An experience-centered educational process is inconsistent . . . with positions dogmatically and finally held."[17] His constructive proposals call for engaging people in cooperative effort toward that approximation of the Kingdom of God "which is possible to human beings in their social arrangements."[18]

There is much truth in the position that in order best to help individuals we must get them moving cooperatively toward a goal. A pamphlet entitled "Goal-Conscious Churches" recently sent out by Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago (now McCormick Theological Seminary) says, "When the members of a church are working together with a common purpose that is worthy of their combined resources, trivial personality-adjustment and social-adjustment problems are submerged. They are kept out of the area of serious concern and of action." Truly, the wholehearted service of a cause has power to lift one above petty worries and jealousies. A lack of something significant to do is a factor in even major personality disorders. An organism is set to function, and when it is prevented from functioning disruptive results may be expected. And then, whether people need the physical and spiritual exercise or not, there are needs which call so imperatively for self-sacrificing attention that it behooves the church to move toward meeting them. A church which sits idly by while Satan is mobilizing his forces can hardly expect to survive itself.

In the final paragraph of the book Elliott says that confidence can be placed in the educational process, that is, in the sort of program he has been sketching, "only as individuals and groups have been captured by the possibilities of love made manifest in Christ, as the goal of the Kingdom of God has become the dominating purpose of their lives, and as fellowship with God has become an actual experience."[19] In this statement he comes very near to giving away his whole case. He admits that his program of action is valid only after what may be considered the chief aims of

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12 *Ibid.*, p. 226.
13 *Ibid.*, p. 246.
14 *Ibid.*, p. 278.
15 *Ibid.*, pp. 297-98.
16 *Ibid.*, p. 321.
17 *Ibid.*, p. 317.
18 *Ibid.*, p. 321.
19 *Ibid.*, p. 321.

Christian education have been attained. What he has done is to move the focus of attention out beyond the individuals with whom we have to deal into the social scene. The task of the church is to reeducate society, not simply to save souls. He as much as says that changing society is the way to save souls. There are, he says, enough church members in the country to turn the tide. But as valid as this phase of his program is, we need to remember that such was not the method of the early Christian church. The members of that church did not go out preaching a message of social reform to be carried out by their still pagan neighbors as a means of bringing the Kingdom of God. Rather, the message was an offer of salvation from sin and an invitation to fellowship with God and the brethren in Christ. On the basis of Elliott's own statement some such evangelistic work had to precede the program of social education. People had to be captured by Christian ideals before they could be expected to act in accordance with them. Almost the only attention he has given to this phase of the problem in this book is to admit that some people will not accept the Christian way of life. The main objection, then, to his program of social education is not what he proposes, but what he leaves unsaid.

There is, however, an assumption behind all of Elliott's thinking which will be unacceptable to many members of the existing churches, and which clashes sharply with the point of view of this paper. This is his position of naturalism. Elliott would not consent to be called a non-theist, though he leaves it an open question as far as the subject in hand is concerned whether God is other than "distinctive and pervading characteristics of the universe as it impinges upon human life."[20] At any rate Elliott places all the stress on the immanence of the divine, rather than on God's transcendence, and on human activity in discovering and using the given resources in the universe rather than on the self-revealing and saving power of God.

Such an emphasis furnishes a corrective for an uncritical supernaturalism. On the other hand, it leaves out what is most distinctive in New Testament Christianity. The central emphasis on love is retained, but the question of the personal existence of God is treated as so unessential that it may be passed by. The whole tremendous issue of life after death is waived with the single word "otherworldly." Jesus is central in the Christian religion, but such teachings of his as have been preserved for us hardly supply us with an authoritative faith. Sin is treated as a psychological and social problem. The communion of saints is passed by as a worth-while goal of Christian education. The element of tragedy in life is recognized at least verbally, but is hardly handled seriously. The possibility of direct aid by God in answer to prayer is not a part of the pictnre. The experience of the "new birth" has been more or less a failure as far as the larger condition of society is concerned. Thus Elliott leaves in the background everything which reaches beyond the natural order of events, and says that if conditions are to be changed, we are the ones who will have to see that it is done. If it were convenient, one wonders what would keep Elliott from taking the final step into out-and-out humanism.

We must not allow ourselves to be thrown into a Barthian type of reaction against this immanentist point of view. God has called his children to be workers together with him. Truly, the fields are ripe and the laborers are few. But it is God who both gives the harvest and sustains by his fellowship

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 293.

those who go to reap it. We should not allow ourselves to be deceived by the remnants of conventional terminology which Elliott retains as to his real meaning behind them. There must be fellowship with God — yes. But it is not clear in what sense one is to have fellowship with "the Given, which we call God,"[21] or how one is to find "that courage in the presence of defeat and calm in the face of tragedy, which the experience of the providential relation of God to human life and destiny in historic prayer and worship supplied."[22]

In view of the fact that Elliott shares a point of view which has diverged so widely from traditional Christianity, it is not surprising that he should lay great stress on freedom from any fixed orthodoxy. It is well also to keep in mind that Elliott is a discussion leader, and that for him "conference" is the central educational method.[23] It would be easy for such a person to drift into an attitude that anything which is not problematical is not important. Some such assumption lies just below the surface in the present book. It is important for us, however, to distinguish two aspects of the question, whether real education must be based on problem solving. One is whether this is the only approach which results in vital learning, which Elliott clearly implies is the case. The other aspect of the question is whether this is the only approach which is desirable, even if other approaches are practicable. Elliott's attitude on this is strongly in the affirmative, as far as the general spirit of an educational process is concerned. A school without the discussion of problems would be to him a very stupid place.

Relative to the first half of the problem, N. E. Richardson says, "The convictions are spreading rapidly in the churches that an authoritative scripture can be taught creatively . . . that spontaneity of belief can be realized as a result of indoctrination . . . ."[24] This doubtless represents the point of view which Elliott characterizes as a modified Herbartianism, according to which the best educational techniques may be adapted to teaching ideas determined beforehand. It hardly seems that it will be possible for Elliott to rule this out as effective education. Certainly he would have to go beyond the rather superficial way in which he disposes of Herbartianism in the present book. But even on his own psychological grounds the effectiveness of such a program as Richardson suggests seems probable. Elliott accepts the theory that human nature is quite plastic in the young, and so avoids a defeatist emphasis on human depravity. But this very plasticity makes possible a wide variety of educational procedures which may be used with success — if making mental changes may be called success. Besides, is it not a matter of common observation that a person with convictions can pass these convictions on to others without necessarily going through all the reasons for and against his point of view? Indeed, Elliott himself says there is a need for some authority. Adults should give guidance "as the basis for a true autonomy."[25] So he implicitly admits that at least some elements of so-called Herbartianism can be effective.

We turn to the more important question of the *desirability* of indoctrination. It is a timely question, in view of the recent upsurge of the militant forces of totalitarianism and the consequent reemphasis on the democratic way of life. It is a question which calls

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21 *Ibid.*, p. 293.
22 *Ibid.*, p. 290.
23 *Cf. Ibid.*, p. 247.
24 In a review of Elliott's book in the *Alumni Review*, Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Vol. XVI, No. 3 (Jan. 1941), pp. 179-80.
25 Elliott, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

for careful and discriminating thought. One recalls William James' recognition of the fact that the needs of the audience have a bearing on the attitude which a speaker should take. He said in the preface that if he had been addressing the Salvation Army he should have reversed the emphasis given in *The Will to Believe*. There are dogmatic groups which need the corrective of such an emphasis as Elliott has given. Indeed, because of their fixed ideas, conservative people are often unable to interpret the actual content of the Bible as accurately as those who do not take that content as seriously. Perhaps Elliott's book would have some influence on such groups, if they would read it. But it does not have as much at this point to offer to those who are already confused and confusing their hearers in the name of liberal Christianity. Perhaps it will furnish them the rationale with which to approach their traditionalist neighbors in a continnued spirit of controversy. At least, Elliott brings the issues out into view.

The real point is, not that there is no place for the authority of those who know, but that Elliott does not believe that traditional Christian beliefs can be substantiated. If what is asked for is absolute proof, that is true. On the other hand, the interpretations favored by the immanentist view cannot be proven either as having the exclusive truth. Yet Elliott does not exactly say that since nothing is conclusive we might as well let everybody take his choice. He certainly would try to keep people from accepting a Barthian point of view. He wants the educational process to be based on his premises. These premises involve his naturalistic point of view. Because Homrighausen holds that (in Elliott's words) "the religion which is to be taught is authoritative because it is a direct revelation from God," Elliott says of him, "He is basically in conflict with the theory of progressive education."[26] This shows that a basic consideration is the validity of revelation. For the most part Elliott tries to sidestep the question by showing that, whatever valid revelation there may have been, the interpretations of it are not dependable, or at least do not all agree. He goes through the New Testament with his magnifying glass looking for divergencies, rather than for basic unities. With a similar approach it is probable that he would find that even progressive educators are in disagreement with one another. Still he would have us see the real source of authority "in the educational process itself."[27] Apparently we must choose a point of view before we can project a program.

Elliott grants the importance of convictions.[28] But are we to be allowed to pass our convictions on to others? He holds that religious education should not become "a means for indoctrinating children and youth in a particular set of Christian interpretations."[23] If by this he means that it is undesirable to make children feel that in order to be a Christian one must be a member of a particular church, certainly his position is justified. But he goes much farther than this. He sides with the report of the Laymen's Inquiry which would rescind Christ's commission to make disciples of all nations and would have us look forward to the "continued co-existence"[30] of Christianity and non-Christian religions. This is not acceptable as the program of the churches. What the church is commissioned to preach is Christ and the power of his resurrection, not the eventual merger of all faiths into a sort of Baha-ism. As believers that Jesus embodied the way,

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[26] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 320.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 317.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 318.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

the truth, and the life, Christians must witness to that conviction and persuade men of its truth.

We now turn to certain other aspects of Elliott's thought which may be approached by a consideration of the concept of "experience." This is a good Methodist word as well as a progressive educator's word. The two lines of thought mingle in what Elliott says. In fact, a certain basic relationship exists between the meanings of the word in the two senses. The parson and the pedagogue would both tell you that it is not enough for a youngster to learn his Sunday-school lesson; the truth must enter into his experience. It begins to come into view that "experience" should not be understood simply in the sense of activities. It is something psychological, and as such centers in the mind of the individual. Sleepwalking does not qualify as experience in the full sense of the term. Likewise, a hurried repetition of the Lord's prayer to get it out of the way does not qualify as constructive experience. What is done must be planned so as to have its full effect within the personality of those participating. This vital emphasis is brought into play by Elliott in his treatment of sin. One needs to be guarded; psychiatric treatment should not be substituted for faith in God. But Elliott sounds a much-needed note when he points out the disadvantages of applying the word "sin" to nearly everything we do regardless of the attitude of the persons involved. It is in this area that one may be most enthusiastic in support of Elliott in his opposition to a Barthian and Calvinistic theology.

Here, also, at the point of experience, we shake hands on the question of authority. However sure one may be of the truth of Christianity, yet individuals must not be forced in their acceptance of it by inquisitorial methods. This is not to say that no distinction is to be made between Christians and non-Christians; it may be insisted upon, when men are applying for positions of leadership in the church. But a faith which is to operate from inside a person must be willingly accepted by the person. He must begin to act on it as his own chosen way of life. The thought of Christ waiting patiently outside the door is of the utmost significance. Whether he stands at the threshold of a child or of an adult, the door must be unlatched from within. Otherwise the motions of piety may be secured for a time, but deep convictions have not taken hold of the life.

This should not be interpreted as meaning, as Elliott would lead us to believe, that the Herbartian procedure has no place. A restudy of Herbart would reveal that Herbart was concerned that learning should become a vital part of children's experience. The main difficulty probably was that his emphasis was too exclusively intellectual. For the teaching of content the Herbartian procedure is still valid. What must be pointed out is that other procedures in line with Elliott's program should be combined with it to give a rounded experience of Christian education, expressing and based on an abiding faith.

Book Reviews

The Creative Mind. By Henri Bergson. (Translated by Mabelle L. Andison.) New York: Philosophical Library, 1946. 307 pages. $3.75.

Philosophical Library has rendered a service in publishing a series of essays, dealing with philosophical method, by the late Henri Bergson. All but the first two were published before, between 1903 and 1926, but were in French and out of print. The two introductory essays at the beginning of the volume are now published for the first time and afford an introduction to this volume and to the author's philosophical system . These are significant chiefly for their autobiographical interest and the light they shed on the early development of Bergson's thought. One does not find therefore the maturity of thought that is best seen in his later book, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion,* (1935).

The new essays describe the author's admiration of Spencer's philosophical system and his dissatisfaction with his method; he found Spencer's doctrine of evolution blind to the nature of change itself and in need of recasting (p. 13). Along with this he was disturbed by the complete lack of precision in philosophy and sought to define more accurately the concepts of time and space. He found that they are generally confused so the "when we evoke time, it is space which answers the call." Ambiguity of language he found responsible for the equating of time and space and discovered that duration, transition, process is the elusive concept which leads to a discovery of reality. When considering duration the mind ordinarily thinks only of fixed points in a sequence, "immobilities, real or possible, . . . simple snapshots we have taken once again along the course of change. (p. 16). He concludes that it is "the continuity of transition," flux, "change itself that is real." Logic or intellection is too bound to the past; it must be made more supple in order to grasp the present, the immediate, the factual.

Bergson found that intellectual intuition, "the direct vision of the mind by the mind," rather than reason alone, is the path to certainty. While Kant said the "thing in itself" escapes us because we do not possess an intuitive faculty to comprehend it, Bergson insisted that "at least part of reality, our person, can be grasped in its natural purity." Thus he felt that he had found the way to achieve more precision in philosophical method.

As William James pointed out Bergson's style, even in translation, is remarkable for lucidity of expression. Like Aristotle he surveys all his predecessors and asserts his superior insight and accuracy. Like Kant his earlier writings are more provocative and original than his later ones in which a more cautious and conservative attitude is discerned. In his later books he apparently makes a greater effort to come to terms with traditional Christianity. The influence of Heraclitus and Zeno on Bergson's mental development is apparent in this intellectual autobiography. Like his contemporary William James he revolted against the fixed intellectualism of his day and like James and Whitehead he went from science into

philosophy. While insisting upon the discipline of the scientific method he does not stop until the nature of things is perceived by direct insight or experience.

While many sentences and epigrams of Bergson are attractive the total picture is disappointing. The lack of precision which he deplores in philosophy seems to characterize his own verbiage. He is perhaps more the creature of his age than the pioneer of a new one. In revolting against a static intellectual universe he has gone to the other extreme of deifying flux. Reality is to be found in the static as well as in the dynamic; both are equally essential.

More valuable are his counsels on educational procedure. He pleads for the inductive method in public education, saying that manual training should be intellectual discipline as well as relaxation. "Bookish learning represses valuable creative urges." (p. 102). The teacher's task is to stir up initiative. Valuable also is his insistence, in Platonic fashion, that direct insight is won only at the price of the most arduous intellectual discipline in the exact sciences. By insisting that philosophy be more precise, that it welcome the intuitive as well as the intellectual, and in showing that science should go beyond description to interpretation, he has suggested the possibility of a better synthesis between these two disciplines. Any effort to make philosophy less intellectually complacent and science more aware of its limitations should be interesting to religion.

GEORGE A. TURNER

The Meaning of Sanctification, by Charles Ewing Brown. Anderson, Indiana: The Warner Press, 1944. 232 pages. $2.00.

In the opinion of the reviewer this title is one of the finest on the subject to appear in recent years. It is not written for the scholar primarily nor is it intended as a polemic; it "is not written to give battle, but to give light" as the author expresses it. It is written for Christians to help answer intellectual difficulties and afford practical guidance in understanding and expounding the doctrine and experience. The viewpoint frankly is Wesleyan and in harmony with the Arminian branch of the modern holiness movement. Within these limits the author may be said to have abundantly fulfilled his stated purpose in writing. While popular and practical in style the background of careful scholarship is everywhere apparent. There is also noticeable a spiritual insight, maturity, and sanity which inspires confidence. While little originality is claimed or desired there is a freshness of treatment throughout. The author takes cognizance of some Jewish literature outside the canon and indicates acquaintance with theological thought apart from the Wesleyan tradition. This is used effectively to enforce and enrich the writer's Wesleyan interpretation.

From the standpoint of pure scholarship assumptions are sometimes made that would be inacceptable to many. In most instances however the author treads carefully and indicates an awareness of the critical problems involved. Most important of all the reviewer has not noticed any instances where evidence was consciously or unconsciously distorted in the interest of a theological position. The material could probably have been organized in a more orderly plan, but perfection is not claimed in this respect and the organization is no worse than most others on the same subject. In parts of the book one wishes that a clearer distinction had been drawn between the Biblical meaning and the theological traditions that have subsequently developed.

The author is Associate Professor of Theology in Anderson College and Theological Seminary. He is also Editor in Chief of *The Gospel Trumpet,* official organ of The Church of God, having as its purpose, "the salvation of sinners, entire sanctification of believers, divine healing of the body, and the unity of all true Christians in 'the faith once delivered to the saints'."

In several places the author expresses some fairly original viewpoints. For instance, issue is taken with Sangster's statement that instincts cannot be sinful. Brown insists that these primary urges have been infected as a result of Adam's sin; the original pattern is distorted by selfish motives, resulting in infection with a sinful condition analogous to fever in the body. What is needed therefore is not something to be extracted so much as a diseased condition rectified. (p. 93). He again defends tradition against Sangster's criticism of sin as "a thing" by noting that in the New Testament, as in Wesley, such language is admittedly figurative rather than analytical or descriptive. (p. 97). Following a suggestion from Bergson, Brown maintains that temptations are present even to the sanctified because of man's high level of intelligence. Man's complex behaviour patterns have been broken up by the expansion of the intellect and even a holy man finds "a tension in deciding against personal selfish impulses in favor of his godly moral instincts." (p. 91). Perhaps Brown has here been influenced too much by Bergson. How could "the moral image of God" be an instinct (p. 92)? What is the difference between "instinct" and "impulse" in man (p. 91)?

Like W. B. Pope this author finds that Reformation creeds were under the influence of Manicheism in their refusal to admit the possibility of complete deliverance from sin in this life. (p. 153). Valuable also, among other things, is the emphasis on the positive aspect of holiness and the insistence that consecration means investment.

While not intended as such, because of its clear, sound, and judicious presentation of the Wesleyan message, the book is perhaps as valuable for apologetic as for devotional purposes.

GEORGE A. TURNER

Philosophy In American Education—Its Tasks and Opportunities. Symposium. New York: Harper & Bros. Contributors: Brand, Blanshard, Swarthmore College; Curt J. Ducasse, Brown University; Charles W. Hendel, Yale University; Arthur E. Murphy, University of Illinois; Max C. Otto, University of Wisconsin.

Early in 1943 a proposal was made to the American Philosophical Association that they undertake an investigation of the present status of philosophy, and of the part philosophy might play in a post-war world. The Rockefeller Foundation awarded a generous grant to the Association for such a study, and the volume, here reviewed, is the outgrowth of the inquiry. The five contributors to the book were the ones appointed to the task. They followed a procedure of counseling, conferences, correspondence, and every other available avenue of contact. Those consulted were teachers, members of the American Philosophical Association, scholars in other fields of learning, poets, editors, lawyers, clergymen, educators in public schools and junior colleges, administrators, business men, government officials, etc. A wealth of critical observation piled up, which serves as the background for this symposium.

The book is divided into three main divisions with two or more of the writers presenting their particular

viewpoints in each. The first division deals with the contemporary situation —the present status of American philosophy. Dr. Blanshard asserts that philosophy in the schools is flourishing as never before, and its influence extends far beyond the walls of the classroom, but he feels that it does not hold the place of importance it should have. It is a commonplace that philosophy was once the "Queen of the sciences," but today it has been pushed from its central position by recent, more aggressive curricular material.

The primary reason for the present survey is that liberal education has been open to question as a result of the war. We have a wealth of educative materials and tools, but is this mass of knowledge integrated? Can the immature learner find his way through the maze of course selections to clear sighted goals? Many of the severest criticisms come from educators themselves. The demands on educators and particularly philosophers is that they provide (1) an integrated program, (2) a unity in education, (3) a reinterpretation of democracy, and (4) an adequate philosophy of life. Many other demands were expressed, but the above were the most insistent ones.

An issue frequently expressed concerned the nature of philosophy itself. Is its function to reveal the nature of things, to put into operation principles of goodness, truth, beauty, etc., or is it an agency of adjustment, an instrument for molding nature into the service of desire?

Too many times philosophers have been criticized for their "ivory tower" seclusion. They have remained aloof from the objective realities of the world's needs. We cannot but admire the writer for his review of the criticisms that have been hurled against his profession.

In the survey of the present status, Arthur E. Murphy presents a review of contemporary philosophy in the American colleges. He discusses such topics as "Speculative Idealism," "Pragmatism," "Realism," and the place of "isms" in modern thought. His plea is for a philosophic saturation for every college student.

In the second division of the book, each writer contributes a chapter on the task of philosophy. A picture of the modern philosopher is drawn for us. The criticisms, just and unjust, are examined carefully, but his place of leadership among scholarly thinkers is carefully safeguarded. In the chapter entitled "The Opportunity of Philosophy" the emphasis is put on the need for some unifying influence on the selection of courses for the college student. There is a growing feeling that the vocations and fields of specialization have tended to develop insular thinking; philosophy could and *should* offset this by utilizing its resources of integrative values. The other writers of this section continue in the same vein; a plea for philosophy's place in the sun.

Today there is the feel of academic stirrings in the direction of curricular rebuilding. Most of our colleges and universities are contemplating more or less radical changes; some are already far ahead in a reconstruction program. At least three reasons account for this: (1) The war made major changes in teaching staffs and student bodies; (2) Financial limitations have forced sharp reductions in the breadth of course selections; (3) The impact of contemporary criticisms is making curricular changes imperative.

In the third section of the book the authors present an excellent pattern for the liberal arts college and graduate school. The program outlined lays special stress on unity and integration. The place of philosophy as a subject, and its various divisions — ethics, logic, metaphysics, etc., are discussed. The relationships between

philosophy and the humanities, the sciences, arts and letters are thoroughly presented. To be sure, much of the proposed revision is quite nebulous in outline; also, there are some differences and disagreements; but all in all, the pattern for curriculum building suggested, could, by any educational group, be considered with profit.

HILDRETH CROSS

Christ and Man's Dilemma, by George A. Buttrick. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. 224 pp. $2.00.

The Reverend George Arthur Buttrick has produced in his *Christ and Man's Dilemma* one of the outstanding religious books of the year. This most recent volume from the pen of the author of such previous studies as *The Parables of Jesus, Jesus Came Preaching, The Christian Fact and Modern Doubt,* and *Prayer* strikes the same high level of literary and religious excellence as is found in his other volumes. With thorough-going and deep spiritual insight the dilemma in which modern man finds himself is set forth on the one hand, while on the other hand the complete adequacy of Christ to meet man's entire needs is presented. And this Christ is none other than God Incarnate who must needs suffer the death of the cross and who rose again. The Incarnation, the death, and the resurrection are among the essentials for Dr. Buttrick.

Man's dilemma grows out of these facts concerning him; he is ignorant, he is wicked, he is mortal. As for his ignorance, it is constitutional. The basic questions of life are unanswerable by him. His science and philosophy, though making valuable contribution, come far short in ultimate solutions. Man in his ignorance desires a revelation. That revelation has come to him in Jesus Christ who is God incarnate. It is the Christ who is presented in the New Testament, One who claimed *unique authority,* who is *ultimate truth, ultimate love,* and who claimed to *forgive sin.*

As for his wickedness, man is aware of it, but at the same time is unable in himself to effect any release from it. The losses incurred by our wickedness are beyond man's power to adequately compute. Sin *sears the memory, cankers the will* and is of such a nature that human responsibility cannot be evaded. In its inner tyranny and outer ruin, sin is beyond our power to cure. Therefore, only God can redeem our wickedness, and in this work of redemption, God must come to earth and suffer, which He did in Jesus. The redemptive act of God calls for a response on the part of the redeemed in *faith* and *life.*

Though our modern age may try to escape from the dilemma of mortality by various devices, the fact still remains that man is mortal. Man is aware of his mortality and yet there is within him an instinctiveness of a certain deathlessness. The New Testament with its emphasis upon a resurrected Christ is the answer that is needed. And the New Testament does not simply set forth immortality as continued existence, but rather as *eternal life,* life that has been redeemed from sin. The Christian doctrine of the hereafter is inseparable from the Christian doctrine of atonement.

In Chapter V our author finds that the ignorance, sin, and mortality which plague our humanity, enter as well into man's business relationships. Business, being human, has its ignorances, wickednesses, and mortality; for man impresses upon all his enterprises the dilemma of his own life. And Christ as redeemer, Christ in the individual business man is the only salvation for business. Man must be made good at heart if he is to do good in life's relationships. Motive in business as elsewhere must be love toward Jesus Christ.

In his discussion of *Christ and Education,* our author finds that education in America has become secular, largely as a result of our traditional doctrine of separation of church and state and a fear of religious indoctrination. This fear has brought about a silence concerning God and Jesus in secular education, which has "indoctrinated children to believe that God does not exist and that Jesus Christ does not matter."

Secular education, while professing great faith in facts and priding itself in "objective mind" has its own assumptions concerning God, Christ, and man. God is disregarded, Christ may or may not have lived, and man needs only to be set free for he is sufficient in himself. As to the conflict between authoritarian education and free education, Dr. Buttrick points out that the universe is authoritarian yet freedom is honored—within limits. Any sound education is both authoritarian and free.

The "hidden assumptions" of secular education concerning God, Christ, and man are unacceptable to our author. God cannot be disregarded in any sane education. "Christ cannot be dismissed except at our bitter cost." Man is not born free in any absolute sense. Relativism in morals has been the logical result of disregard for authority.

Toward a solution of the problem which confronts us, due to secularism in education, the author suggests that the Church and the home must do a better and more extensive service in Christian education. The center of the education process in which the Church and home engages must be Christ, Son of Man and Son of God.

The closing chapter of the book deals with man's response. The crux of this response is faith. The author's analysis of faith will not be altogether satisfactory to all readers, for the faith which brings salvation is quite unique and does not lend itself well by way of comparison with faith in other areas of life. The faith which is man's response is not only a single, separated act but is also a *life faith* and is generated by prayer.

Faith, however, is not man's only response. Daily action is also essential. Faith and prayer must be translated into and supported by deeds which are Christian. It is "faith which works by love." It is works without which faith is dead.

Christ and Man's Dilemma should be read by every minister of the Gospel. It contains a stirring message for our day when secularism and sensate philosophy have almost usurped the field of modern thought. Conservative thinkers will rejoice in Dr. Buttrick's presentation.

W. D. TURKINGTON

The Theology of John Wesley: With special reference to the doctrine of justification, by William R. Cannon. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. 284 pp. $2.50.

It is a wholesome thing for scholars to re-examine the springs of a vital religious movement such as Methodism, for by doing so they can help prevent a lack of power due to ignorance of first principles. Dr. Cannon has presented us with a stimulating study of Wesley's theology, written with care and vigor. The treatment is largely objective, so that responsibility for the views set forth is placed upon Wesley himself. Certain comments, if taken alone, seem to carry at least a suggestion of the economic view of the Trinity, which is abroad in the land (pp. 161, 214).

Essentially, the work is sound. At Yale, this reviewer enjoyed Cannon's friendship while both were working on doctor's dissertations in somewhat related fields. He was known on the campus for his conservative position, as we understand he now is at Emory

University.

The manner in which Wesley's doctrines are placed against the background of Anglican and other views is especially worth while. Wesley's Aldersgate experience is pointed out as a turning point in his theology, being the point at which he personally grasped the way of salvation by faith. It is pointed out that, instead of a sterile theology, Wesley stood for a form of doctrine that led to a real change in the lives of men. This change is not at first so complete, however, as to free one from "all inward desires that are evil," which must be progressively overcome (p. 250).

Though not coming from the ranks of the holiness movement, and though centering on the doctrine of justification in this study, the author has seen the fact that in Wesley's view Christian perfection "is the free gift of God" (p. 242). The book ends with these words:

> Justification, in the last analysis, is not superseded; it is transfigured and transformed, for the same Lord who is rich in mercy and plenteous in redemption is able also to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think and, according to the power that worketh in us, to deliver us from the bondage of sin and to make us conformable to the blessed image of his Son. (p. 254.)

The careful student of Wesley will value this book, which ranks favorably among the volumes written upon the subject of historic Methodism. Dr. Cannon deals with ideas rather than with the history of external facts, so that his work makes a welcome contribution to Wesleyan literature. It should be helpful to the serious student of Arminian literature in this day.

C. ELVAN OLMSTEAD

Calvinism, by A. Dakin. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1946. 223 pp. $2.75.

There has come in our day a revival of interest in Calvin and Calvinism. One reason for it is this: our world is bristling with problems, and many of them are the very ones Calvin wrestled with in his famous *Institutes.* A growing number of thinkers are turning to Calvinism for help and guidance as they strive to cope with these acute problems. Even though they may not be able to accept Calvin's proffered solutions they find in them many vigorous suggestions and a point of departure for their own thinking at least.

This interest is world-wide. In Hungary, France, Germany, Holland and elsewhere new biographies of Calvin, new translations of the *Institutes,* handbooks and commentaries have appeared. The most significant movement, signalling the revival of Calvinism, is, of course, Barthianism. "In and through Barth it is found that many of the fundamental notes of Calvin's theology are capable of modern statement in such a way as to win favorable consideration, and the question inevitably arises whether they are not of permanent value for Christian thinking."

The author sees a violent reaction from the theology which has developed "since the time when Arminianism triumphed over Calvinism." Since Wesley's day there has been a growing sentimentalism in religion with the emphasis upon the fatherhood of God and the idea of his love. Not that Arminianism or Wesleyanism were in any manner responsible for the rise of modernism, but they were perhaps landmarks in the progress towards the new outlook which made man the center of thought rather than God. This was reinforced by the nineteenth century idealism which expressed unlimited faith in man's ability. Other humanistic doctrines, such as the immanence of God, the idea that God is discoverable by the processes of thought without revelation, and that

religious experience can form an adequate basis of theology have led to an "interpretation of Christianity far removed from that of the New Testament."

The book is designed "to give a concise statement of what Calvinism is, and some indication of its influence." As such it is something of a commentary on the *Institutes,* an exposition of the doctrines and ethics of Christianity as interpreted by Calvin. To those who are instructed in the specific teachings of Calvinism, the doctrinal part may not be of paramount interest save as some of the traditional interpretations may here and there be somewhat revised.

Part Two deals with Calvinism as an ecclesiastical system in various lands. Geneva was the base, and this was regarded as the pattern for all new organizations to follow. But the master-plan was modified perforce as Calvinism adapted itself to varying conditions in other sections of Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and the English-speaking world. The author does not exaggerate in saying that "it did much to teach ordinary men to organize, to set them to the task, and to supply them with guiding lines for it. For this, if for nothing more, Protestantism and the democracies of the world owe the Genevan Reformer an incalculable debt."

Part Three deals with some aspects of Calvinism. These include the Calvinistic view of Scripture, the principle of Authority in Calvinism, the Calvinistic way of life, and Calvinism and the social order. Many interesting and pertinent truths are discussed, some misapprehensions of Calvin's teaching are corrected, and some of his positions are freely criticised.

The author sees "affinities between the spirit and underlying aim of the Barthian theology and the social and political aspirations of the continent of Europe." If Barthianism should come to terms with the political aspirations of our world, then "we might well see a revived Calvinism forming the theological background of a new constructive and international life."

WILDER R. REYNOLDS

Faith and Reason, by Nels F. S. Ferré. New York: Harpers, 1946. xii, 251 pp. $2.50.

This book, in the field of philosophy of religion, is the first volume of a projected work on "Reason and the Christian Faith" by the professor of Christian theology at Andover Newton Theological School. The second volume, soon to appear, will be entitled, "Faith, Society, and the Problem of Evil." The treatise before us is another attempt to reconcile faith and reason, this time a good one.

Since past methods and conclusions in science, philosophy, and religion are being questioned, the author pleads for a re-examination of all methods of knowing, in the light of all that we know. The dogmatic attitude has been self-defeating. One of the most serious flaws among thinkers is the "psychological tendency," i. e., "the natural temptation to identify one's profession and intellectual position with public prestige and/or inner security." (p. 54). For example, some religionists claim that the world is to be saved only by their particular way of salvation.

Chapter I assays to clarify the meanings and relationships between religion and reason. "Religion is our whole-reaction to what we consider to be most important and most real." (p. 5). Right reason is "the fullest and most consistent explanation of what is now and here actual based on the most thorough description of it and such reasoning beyond it as may be warranted by the facts found within what is here and now actual." (p. 22). The central problem of the book is

whether right reason and right whole-reaction do or can go together. Reason and religion, Ferré later in the book suggests, are ultimately indistinguishable.

The other three chapters, which with the first chapter comprise the main body of the volume, show the proper spheres and inter-relationships of the Circles of Science, Philosophy, and Religion respectively. Each of these areas must be carefully cultivated if we are to get at truth; for truth is like a field in which oats, rye, and wheat are to be harvested, each requiring its own peculiar threshing screen. The chapters on science and philosophy are the strongest. They are, too, the most readable. Thirteen logical and psychological "tendencies" are outlined, against which science needs to be on guard if she would arrive at the truth. Philosophy and theology are defined at length. We find the truth that saves only as we seek the full interpretation of fact (philosophy) and the full interpretation of faith (theology). The three standards of philosophy are inclusiveness, coherence, and objectivity; of religion—inclusiveness, coherence, and subjectivity. Philosophy and theology differ not only in function but in standards of truth and contents of coherence. The one is coherence of the actual, the here and now; the other coherence "goes beyond the present stage of process." (pp. 22, 124). This difference of coherence between philosophy and theology constitutes one of the major theses of the book. Ferré calls for a more effective philosophy of religion, one that will resist the temptation to make itself into a substitute for theology. The Circles of Science and Philosophy can be drawn. But no human compass can draw the Circle of Religion. It concerns itself with the "Most High," which cannot be measured. The interpretation of the existential ultimate is its chief business. It includes knowledge but is not centered in it. "It is the highest delective event that most fully and most meaningfully lights up all else." (p. 214).

The reader will long for a more specific Christian commitment from the author. His treatment of religion is too general, too ambiguous. The terms "theology" and "religion" are sometimes used with disturbing confusion. Many a reader will proceed the more haltingly through this already complicated text because of the author's usage of uncommon theological terms such as, "selective actual," "selective ideal," "dynamic-self-verification," and "reflexive superspective." A more straightforward diction would strengthen the treatment. Mr. Ferré fails to make clear, furthermore, just what the "concrete content" should be to which his definition of religion would fit in. It will be agreed, nevertheless, that "Faith and Reason" is a most stimulating and challenging book. Its author for the most part tackles his problems squarely, without bias and without ignoring the rational difficulties involved. The next volume will be eagerly anticipated, but only by the initiated. Mr. Ferré has promised to deal more fully there with some of the issues that are raised in the book now being reviewed.

JAMES D. ROBERTSON

The Basis of Christian Faith, by Floyd E. Hamilton. Third revised edition, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946. 354 pages. $2.50.

It speaks well for a book when popular demand makes imperative a third edition. The former editions (of 1927 and 1933) of *The Basis of Christian Faith* were designed to serve as a textbook at the college level in apologetic courses of a non-technical character. As such, they were designed to touch the field of Christian apologetics at all

of its principal points, avoiding on the one hand the expenditure of time on aspects of controversy which were not of contemporary concern, and on the other, a too-technical treatment of the material in hand which might discourage the undergraduate.

The present revision seeks the same objectives, and aims to supplement the former editions at the point of those areas affected by newer discoveries in atomic physics and genetics, and by newer trends in New Testament criticism. A review of such a volume must be undertaken in the spirit of sympathy with the needs of the undergraduate whose confidence in the essentials of the Christian message has been disturbed by a non-Christian system of education. Thus Professor Hamilton's work should be judged in the light of its effectiveness in the accomplishment of this task.

In an attempt to cover the entire field of apologetics, he has found it necessary to sacrifice thoroughness; and in so doing he has left some statements open to attack from the more critical type of reader. For example, notice his use of the term 'innate ideas' in speaking of time, space, existence, and cause. Perhaps a happier term might have been employed. Professor Hamilton is on more certain ground in his discussion of such topics as "The Reasonableness of Supernaturalism," "The Unity of the Bible," "Old Testament Criticism," "and "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Beyond his specific handling of his factual material, our author is vigorous in his insistence that the opponents of historic Christianity are operating upon the basis of certain assumptions which are open to question. Welcome is his clear view of the rôle of initial premises in the erection of systems of thought. He may prejudice his case with some, in his emphasis (fundamentally correct in the opinion of some of us) upon the element of *will* in belief. In other words, he has touched upon a sensitive point in the mind of the 'modern man' in his observation that "Men will ignore all possible solutions of a difficult passage that would remove contradictions, and seize upon the one possible interpretation that would produce a discrepancy, and then insist that the Bible *must* be wrong." (p. 273.)

On the whole, the volume is far from superficial; while it is pitched at the college level, it embodies observations which are basically significant, and which do not come amiss to conservatives in more advanced stages of preparation. A constructive conservative apologetic must have both method and direction; both of these are indicated in Professor Hamilton's book, the study of which ought to lay the foundation for more advanced study in the field.

HAROLD B. KUHN

Doom and Resurrection, by Joseph L. Hromádka. Richmond, Virginia: Madrus House, 1945. 122 pages. $2.00.

The late war brought to our shores a number of able thinkers, among whom was the author of *Doom and Resurrection*. Dr. Hromádka took refuge in Switzerland when the armies of Hitler invaded his native Czechoslovakia, and has been for five years professor in Princeton Theological Seminary. Out of his rich background as professor of theology in the University of Prague, he gives in brief compass a penetrating analysis of the causes of the decay of our modern culture. Representing in his own way the theological tradition known as The Dialectical Theology, our author seeks to show the relevance of the issues of sin, salvation, human destiny, eternal life, and God in an age of catastrophe — an age in which the loss of the sense of *the* Truth is a factor more to be

dreaded than the loss of economic security.

The volume is one of a series which has appeared in our generation, whose purpose is to protest the tendency in modern theology to "domesticate Christ and His majestic truth and to subordinate Him to our 'religious experience'." Its author pleads for a renewal of the consciousness of the "sacred line between good and evil, right and wrong, God and devil," and illustrates his point by reference to a group of prophets not well known to the average English reader.

Most writings of this type make primary reference to Kierkegaard; it is refreshing to find an appeal to Feodor Dostoyevski, who saw behind the impending breakdown of Europe's political and economic system to the dissolution of the invisible pillars of its moral order. Dr. Hromádka sees in Dostoyevski the literary expression of his own theme, namely *resurrection beginning only at the bottom of humanity's abyss.* In addition, he has rendered us a valuable service in introducing to the English reader the thought of Thomas Masaryk and his pupil, Emanuel Rádl.

Masaryk appears as the appreciative but critical eclectic, who read with patience Kant, Fichte, Comte, Hegel, Marx and Goethe, but finally found in Jesus "the synthesis of truth, responsible freedom, and love." Rádl, continuing his master's regard for the peoples of the Anglo-Saxon West, seems to have seen better than most in Britain and in America the factors which were precipitating the spiritual crisis in America: "The breakdown of the pre-war revivalism, the waning of Puritanism, the economic convulsions, religious relativism, and naturalistic trends in theology, the growing indifference toward missionary programs . . . ." (p. 81)

Chapter V, entitled "The Crisis and Theology" is enlightening as an exposition, from a somewhat novel point of view, of the Dialectical Theology. Dr. Hromádka seems to find the cure for the sickness of our culture, not in the prescriptions of the Slavonic consultants (Dostoyevski, Masaryk and Rádl) but in Karl Barth, and especially the Barth of *The Epistle to the Romans* (second and subsequent editions). In this work the theologian of Basel is considered to have pointed to "the only unshakable rampart of thought and action, to the majestic authority of the revealed God, to the God of the Old and New Testaments." Our author apparently prefers *this* Barth to the Barth of the *Dogmatik.*

It is hoped that this review will serve to whet the appetite of many readers to study this keenly diagnostic work. Without agreeing with the concessiveness of Dr. Hromádka toward liberal historical criticism, the reader will find much to stimulate his thought with respect to the contemporary world scene. Some may be frightened by the author's dedication of the book to Henry A. Wallace, or distressed by its lack of an index. Most will wonder why it has had so little attention from reviewers.

HAROLD B. KUHN

David the King, by Gladys Schmitt. New York: Dial Press, 1946. 631 pages. $3.00.

It is not surprising that the character of David, embodying in such large measure both the practical and the poetic, should hold an attraction for the literary mind no less than for the mind of the student of history. Once again the novelist has undertaken the task of delineating the son of Jesse, this time from a point of view which renders the book an object of no little concern to the Christian mind.

The broadest characterization of the volume is that it is a product of the "debunking" era — an era which some

of us fervently hoped might before now have come to an end. Specifically, Miss Schmitt has sought more earnestly to make a 'best seller' than to portray faithfully her character. She has majored upon the inconsistencies in David's life; one gains the impression that she has grossly overplayed the mystic strain in David, as a result of abnormal stress upon his rôle as a lyricist.

Turning to specific criticisms, this reviewer cannot avoid the conviction that the author has played fast and loose with the facts in the record of David's life. With a complete disregard for the spirit of Biblical antiquity, she presents the life of David as a series of peccadilloes, strung together with miscellaneous and relatively unimportant military and political activities. In this respect, the volume appears to have been written to appeal to the mentality which lifted Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* to the place of a best-seller.

Lest it seem that the reviewer's comments are but the product of squeamishness, let it be said that Miss Schmitt has accepted, with a naïveté almost charming, the conclusions of liberal criticism of the Old Testament. Illustrative of this is her categorical attribution of the slaying of Goliath to Elhanan; any serious student of the Old Testament knows that even scholars of the more liberal schools of criticism recognize a problem at this point too difficult to be dismissed with gaiety. Again, she has accepted without criticism the view that Samuel was a frothing ecstatic; by making young David to note the "foam of prophecy" upon his mouth, she betrays a cavalier disregard for the active possibility that while there were doubtless wandering bands of ecstatics, Samuel may have been in the category of the articulate prophets. Again, she consistently employs the alternative *-baal* forms of the names of Ishbosheth and Mephibosheth as though no possible doubt could exist with respect to the original naming of these men.

These samples are characteristic of the handling of the religion of Israel throughout the volume. Miss Schmitt obviously belittles the place of religion in the life of David, and makes his regard for Jehovah too largely a matter a matter of the-tongue-in-the-cheek. Characteristically, David's view of God is *dynamic;* toward the close of his life, he is portrayed as a disappointed cynic, whose "God neither sees nor hears" or elsewhere as an erotic pantheist, who desires to be reunited with the Everlasting Being from Whom he has been absent for a little while, and Whom he has really been seeking in his amorous pursuits. This is, of course, an interpretation wholly unsupported by the records and reflects the general tendency of our author to lack seriousness in treating her character.

Of the many portrayals which evidence the author's opaqueness to religious values, one may be cited as an example, namely that of her treatment of David's repentance following the visit of Nathan. Here Miss Schmitt in her usual facile manner turns his attitude from that of penitence to one of self-justification, which is mingled with a desire to be done with the customary period of mourning. His supposed soliloquy completely subverts the element of repentance: "O God whom I do not know, I bitterly repent that I have murdered Uriah the Hittite. But I rejoice in the depth of my bowels that I have taken his wife to be my beloved. I have sinned grievously in Your (sic) sight. And yet I am a better man in the days of my sin than I was in the days of my guiltnessness."

It goes without saying that the volume will serve to type the opinion of the uncritical reader with respect to David for some time to come. This review takes for granted that multitudes who never read *I* and *II Samuel* are

reading *David the King*. It is probable that long after the connoisseurs of literature, whose jaded appetites will receive a middle-sized thrill from the book, have forgotten it, the unthinking will accept as gospel Miss Schmitt's literary rehash of the more negative features of historical criticism. In the long run her distorted portrayal of David's religion will prove more damaging than the overemphasis upon the element of sex in the volume, done as it is to emphasize the motif expressed by Cathal O'Toole on the book's jacket, that of evoking "the story of God's most magnificent sinner."

Books of this type, which overplay their materials, have a tendency to be ultimately self-defeating. Perhaps it will be so with *David the King*. Meanwhile Israel's Psalmist and his religion stand in the pillory.

HAROLD B. KUHN

The Contributors' Column

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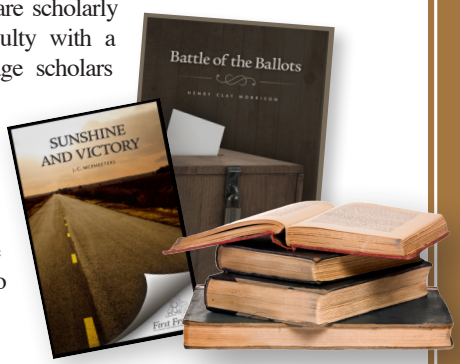

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