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A FAITH THAT ENQUIRES



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TORONTO

A FAITH THAT ENQUIRES

THE GIFFORD LECTURES

DELIVERED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW IN THE YEARS 1920 AND 1921

BY

SIR HENRY JONES

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1922

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First Edition February 1922.
Reprinted September 1922.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
WITH AFFECTION AND LASTING GRATITUDE,
TO
MY OLD PUPILS IN WALES AND SCOTLAND,
THE PARTNERS OF MY ETHICAL ENQUIRIES

PREFACE

I HAVE had one main purpose before me throughout this course of lectures. It is that of awakening and fostering the spirit of research in questions of religious faith.

If I read our times aright, there are many thousands of thoughtful men in this country whose interest in religion is sincere, but who can neither accept the ordinary teaching of the Church, nor subject themselves to its dogmatic ways. I would fain demonstrate to these men, both by example and by precept, that the enquiry which makes the fullest use of the severe intellectual methods, supports those beliefs upon which a religion that is worth having rests. Let man seek God by the way of pure reason, and he will find him.

As to the Churches, I could wish them no better fate than that henceforth they shall regard the articles of their creeds, not as authoritative dogmas, but as objects of unsparing intellectual enquiry. Enquiry not only establishes the truth of the main elements of the doctrines which the Churches inculcate, it transmutes and enriches their meaning. Enquiry is the way of Evolution; His "Kingdom will come" *pari passu* with the development of the more secular forces on which the well-being of mankind depends. And, I believe, that our spiritual knowledge and practice,

both individual and social, is so crude and rudimentary, that we cannot even imagine the splendour of the results which an enquiring religious faith can bring to man.

I hope that the Church will accept my service of its greater ends in the spirit in which it is offered.

I have received from Principal Hetherington, of Exeter University College, and from Mr. Knox White, Mr. Alexander Macbeath and Mr. Idris Phillips most valuable help in the way of the correction of proofs, and take this opportunity of expressing my indebtedness to them. And I wish especially to thank Professor Kemp Smith, of the University of Edinburgh, for the minuteness and fullness of his helpful care. It is the expression of the affection of the earliest of my pupils, who has attained philosophical eminence.

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LECTURE I

THE VALUE AND NEED OF FREE ENQUIRY IN RELIGION

NEARLY thirty years ago I was entrusted by this University with the office vacated by a very great teacher, one of the greatest teachers of philosophy given to the world in modern times. The burden of the trust was almost beyond bearing; for the daily life of Edward Caird was even more flawless in its wisdom and peace than his doctrine. But, as usual, the responsibilities of the office were also an inspiration, and its duties have been a continuous privilege. I have for a long time been grateful for them, and recognized that I can repay the University neither for my life-task as a teacher nor for my nurture as a student.

And to-day my debt is deepened further still. My colleagues, moved by their kindliness and judging most gently, have given me a new opportunity of being of use. They have placed in my hands, for helpful treatment if I can, a theme which every thoughtful man knows to have an interest that is at once universal and intensely personal, and a significance, both speculative and practical, which the wise observer of human history would hesitate to limit. I think I may say that to justify their trust in some measure were the crowning happiness of my life.

Lord Gifford's wishes.

The Gifford Lecturer is expressly relieved of the necessity of "making any promise of any kind." I make none—not even to do my best; for I might fall short of that also. But the Founder of the Lectureship expressed one wish which was evidently deep in his spirit, and made one injunction which he rightly expected to be followed. "I wish the lecturers," he said, "to treat their subject as a strictly natural science . . . without reference to or reliance upon any supposed special exceptional or so-called miraculous revelation. I wish it considered just as astronomy or chemistry is." Then he enjoins that the lectures "shall be public and popular . . . as I think that the subject should be studied and known by all . . . I think such knowledge, if real, lies at the root of all well-being."

A science of religion as having supreme value.

Lord Gifford's aim was thus thoroughly and directly practical. He desired free discussion with a view to the knowledge of the truth, and he desired knowledge of the truth with a view to the well-being of man. The science of religion was to him "the greatest of all possible sciences, indeed, in one sense, the only science." He considered that it deals with matters which are ultimate, by means of conceptions that either illuminate and explain, or distort and falsify all things: for whatever principles are ultimate are also all-comprehensive. And its practical consequences seemed to him no less vital than the theoretical. "The science of religion" was, he thought, the science of human destiny. If valid, if "the knowledge is real," the greatest good of all follows from it, namely, a good life in harmony with the nature of things: if unreal, then it is doubtful if there be anywhere or in anything any real or finally reliable worth.

Will you note, as we pass, two things? 1st. The high *value* he attributes to religion. 2nd. The strong accent thrown on *Knowledge*, on the *Science* of religion, as contributory to religion itself. But both are qualified by the ominous words—"*if real.*" These words, "if real," are evidently not meant to apply merely to some particular form of religion or religious belief. They suggest the possibility that all so-called religious knowledge may, in its very nature, be delusive. Its objects may be unreal, or they may be above or beyond the reach of human intelligence. The suspicion implied in the phrase spreads over the whole domain of religion from the lowest and crudest to the highest, and like mist on the countryside, it at once exaggerates everything and makes everything seem unsubstantial. If the Knowledge is not real, then both affirmation and denial are out of place; they *must* be out of place where nothing is certain. Doubt itself is absurd under such conditions; enquiry is vain, all criticism baseless; there can be neither truth nor error; the intelligence is dismissed as futile.

Doubts if it be real.

It would seem, therefore, that there can be no greater necessity than that of making decisively clear, if this be possible, whether in professing to know religious facts we are dealing with realities that are intelligible, or with the fictitious products of our imagination and the confused emanations of our desires. And there can be no necessity more urgent if, as most men would confess, a man's religion expresses and determines his attitude towards life as a whole. Whatever else religion has meant to man—and it is difficult to say what it has not meant—it may be said that where the religious issue has never been

raised, man's life drifts. He has not faced its meaning, nor has his life any dominant purpose. He has not fixed its standard of values, nor determined what must be sought first. He is like one storm-driven in mid-ocean without a star whereby to steer, or any land in any direction for which to make. His little boat changes its course with every passing breeze, and points in a new way with the rise and fall of every wave. His life is at the mercy of details, it is indeterminate and ineffective and without a home. Religious faith cannot be otiose, nor can religious doubt or error be innocuous. For religion is a practical matter, and so indeed is irreligion. Uncertainty in religion means hesitancy in action, and paralyses the will the more tragically the more far-reaching the issues. Verily, the condition of man is not enviable if the last words he can honestly say of religious knowledge are the words used by Lord Gifford—"Such knowledge, *if real.*" "Would that I could be certain" is the language of the inmost heart of men when they are tried to the uttermost. And there are not many men who, some time or another, are *not* tried to the uttermost.

The removal of the doubt by enquiry—the main purpose of the Lectures.

The purpose of the Gifford lectureship and the first duty of the lecturer are thus quite plain—to examine the causes, and if possible to remove this uncertainty as to the validity of religious faith. The enterprise is as difficult as it is great. And the responsibility of the lecturer is the more full, inasmuch as his liberty is complete. For he is invited to reach no prescribed conclusion, either positive or negative, on any religious issue. He is committed to nothing except to honest dealing with his subject. He may

sail to any distance in any direction, provided only the love of truth sits at the helm.

The value of enquiry in general.

Now, in entering upon this adventure there is one thought that; but for one consideration, would give me complete confidence. Were the results of religious research analogous to those which are attained by scientific research in other fields, I should be tempted to say that mankind may even yet use the words of Paracelsus, and say

> "I go to prove my soul,
> I see my way as birds their trackless way,
> I shall arrive! What time, what circuit first,
> I ask not. But unless God send his hail,
> Or blinding fire-balls, sleet or stifling snow,
> In some time, his good time, I shall arrive!
> He guides me and the bird."

Honest enquiry in every "secular" region, whether of nature or spirit, of mere theory or of practice, character and conduct, is always in itself rich in reward. So far as I know there are no secular facts that do not challenge the intelligence and ask to be understood, and no forces, natural or moral, which are not better understood than unknown or misunderstood. And I am not convinced that it is otherwise with the facts of the religious life. We are told, of course, that there are facts which in their nature are unintelligible; not merely unknown up to the present time, but intrinsically unknowable, and religious facts hold high rank amongst these unintelligibles. But I doubt whether there can be anything unintelligible except that which is irrational, and I doubt if anything real is irrational except as misunderstood. Look to the *assumptions* that lurk in your problems before you call them insoluble or condemn human reason. In any case, we need

not believe in an unintelligible fact until we meet it, or are told about it by persons who have visited the ultimate boundaries of human knowledge and looked over the edge of its limitations into fields which it cannot enter. As a matter of experience, within the fields of natural science no fixed limits are held to bar enquiry in any direction; nor is there any doubt that enquiry is the condition, first, of further knowledge, and, secondly, of effective practical purpose and progress in the mastery of the means of civilized life.

Doubts of the value of enquiry in religion.

Prima facie one might expect the same results to accrue in regard to religion. One would expect that, however opposed religious interests may be to the secular, it were well to enquire into their meaning and value if they have either true meaning or real value, and to expose their emptiness and delusiveness if they have not.

But enquiry in this matter has been held to be vain. Religion has been made to consist in mystic rites and ceremonies; and even by our own Protestant teachers its appeal has been directed often to the whole of man *except his intelligence*—to his feelings, to his emotions, his aesthetic temperament, his prudence, and even to his "will-to-believe"; and enquiry, it has been said, engenders rather than removes doubt.

Now I do not wish to enter with any fulness, at least at present, upon a discussion of these difficulties as to the possibility and value of religious knowledge. But there is one element in the situation that gives it additional seriousness, and we cannot well pass it by. It is that doubt of the validity of religious knowledge and of the uses of enquiry is not, as it would be in any

other field, confined to the sceptics or to men who have not learned by "experience" the worth of religious faith. It is shared, and most fully, by devout believers. They condemn doubt as a symbol of spiritual disease, and denial as not only an error but a sin: moreover, they maintain that the disease cannot be cured and the sin cannot be cleansed away by enquiry. Religion is not, they say, an affair of the intellect. However they may trust the intelligence and depend upon its light (or twilight) in other matters, in the matters of religious faith its activities are out of place, and even mischievous. They believe with Carlyle, probably one of the greatest spiritual forces in this country in the nineteenth century, that, as he said, "Man is sent hither not to question but to work; the end of man, it was long ago written, is an Action not a Thought."[1] Knowledge by itself, however true, is, they contend, a mere looking-on at life. The very attempt to seek it in this province of faith is unwholesome self-scrutiny. What has value is not knowledge but the volition that passes into deeds. "Experience," distinguished by them from Knowledge, and assumed to be independent of it, must take its place. "Faith, conviction," as Carlyle tells us, "were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct. Nay properly conviction is not possible till[2] then: inasmuch as all Speculation is by nature endless, formless, a vortex amid vortices. . . . Doubt of any kind can not be removed except by action. . . . Let him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light lay this precept well to heart—'Do the duty which lies

Carlyle's substitute for enquiry.

[1] *Characteristics*, p. 13.

[2] Anticipating the Pragmatists both in their truth and error.

nearest thee. . . . Thy second duty will already have become clearer.' "[1] " Here on earth," he adds, " we are soldiers fighting in a foreign land, that understand not the plan of campaign and have no need to understand it; seeing well what is at our hand to be done. Let us do it like soldiers, with submission, with courage, with a heroic joy." [2]

The failure of Carlyle's remedy for doubt.

But, supposing that the one thing which we cannot see is " the duty " at hand to be done? Supposing " the soldier fighting in a foreign land " is ignorant not only of the plan of campaign but of the cause and country he is fighting for? Supposing that so far from comprehending the plan, and trusting the Commander, he finds no evidence anywhere that any plan exists or any Commander? Supposing he sees in the whole troubled history of mankind nothing but a confused, purposeless, execrable welter, the result of " the fiat of a malignant Destiny, or the unintentioned stab of chance "? And such *is* the outlook upon the Universe of the man who has lost his religious faith. Momentous happenings within our inner life—an intoxicating success, or a failure that brings despair, deep sorrow, a devastating sin, a consuming hate or disappointed love —may not only disturb old values, rearranging the order of priority among life's aims, but destroy all values. Then does not only the natural life of man become meaningless, and " his days pass away as the swift ships," leaving no trace, but the moral world itself ceases to matter, and right and wrong become terms not to be used by such a being as he is—a wisp tossed about by homeless winds. " If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain? If I wash myself with

[1] *Sartor Resartus*, p. 135. [2] *Characteristics*, p. 38.

snow water and make my hands never so clean, yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch and mine own clothes shall abhor me."[1] Job was acquainted with deeper doubt and darker despair than Carlyle; and so was Shakespeare. His Othello, so far from knowing his duty when Iago had poisoned his soul with doubts of Desdemona, bade farewell to "the tranquil mind." "Farewell content, farewell the plumed troop and the big wars. *Othello's occupation's gone*" —the most pathetic line in all Shakespeare it has always seemed to me. There was no duty next to hand for Othello.

The cure suggested by Carlyle is both ineffective and inapplicable. The doubts which can be cured by plunging into action are shallow; the evil is local. Moreover, they are neither removed nor cured by that method. They are only silenced; and silenced doubts fester. The cure is ineffective. But, further, deep doubt leaves man incapable of action: it paralyses, we say, so that the cure cannot be applied. Bunyan, in his incomparable way, teaches us a better truth and offers a better remedy than Carlyle. He shows us Christian in the fields just outside the City of Destruction distracted with fear "lest the burden on his back should sink him lower than the grave." "He looked this way and that way, as if he would run, yet he stood still, because (as I perceived) he could not tell which way to go. 'Why standest thou still?' said Evangelist to him. He answered, 'Because I know not whither to go.' Then he gave him a parchment roll, and there was written within, 'Fly from the wrath to come.' The man, therefore, read

John Bunyan's better method.

[1] Job ix. 29-31.

it, and looking upon Evangelist very carefully, said 'Whither must I fly?' Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, 'Do you see yonder wicket gate?' The man said, 'No.' Then said the other, 'Do you see yonder shining light?' He said, 'I think I do.' Then said Evangelist, 'Keep that light in your eye and go up directly thereto, so shalt thou see the gate, at which when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what to do.'"

When a man discovers that his past has been spent in the pursuit of a false good, and the fruit he has plucked off the tree of life turns into ashes in his mouth; when even its good things prove evanescent and unreliable, and snap under the strain of experience, then he is passing through his first course of instruction. A light has already begun to break upon him, which is hidden from those who dwell at peace in the city of Destruction. He has known enough to go outside its gates and look to the horizon. And his first need is for more light. He begins to ask questions. *Is* there any healing? *Can* my broken life be made whole again? *Is* loss, bereavement, failure, the last word in my history? Or are there grounds for believing that they are but ways of awakening my soul and revealing an eternally benevolent will? Old convictions have been on their trial and are condemned; enquiry is inevitable.

Honest enquiry in Religion never fails.

So far from doubting the value of the plain and honest and earnest pursuit of truth in matters of religious faith, I believe that, like the pursuit of moral good, it never utterly fails. The process of enquiry, the very attempt to know, like the process of doing or

trying to do what is right, is itself achievement, altogether apart from what comes afterwards. I know nothing better than to be engaged and immersed in the process of trying to know spiritual truths and of acting upon them. Mankind, when it comes of age, will be engaged in this spiritual business even when it is handling the so-called secular concerns of life. And it will handle these all the more securely. Religion will be the permanent background of life—as the love of his wife and bairns is for a good man. The very meaning and purpose of our "circumstances," as we call the claims of the things and persons that stand around and press upon us, may be to induce and to sustain this double process of knowing the true and doing the right. It is the method—the only natural and successful method—by which men make themselves: and I understand that the final business of man is this of making himself. We must learn yet to estimate men by the fortune they take with them, not by the fortune they leave behind; that is, if religion is true, and if morality and its laws are not fictions of man's vanity.

Contrast of a facile and a tried faith.

Inasmuch as the process of striving to know has, in my opinion, this intrinsic value, I should be glad if I could help were it merely to incite, or sustain the search into, and within, the truths of our religious faith. I would, if I could, awaken enquiry where there has been indifference; foster, strengthen and embolden it wherever there has been doubt or denial, and above all where there has been blind belief and facile confidence. Unless my convictions as to both the possibility and the reward of a religious faith based upon knowledge are altogether false, the man who

would gain most from fearless search is the devout believer, and especially the believer who challenges the sceptic on his own ground and invites the strain of actual experience by *living* his beliefs, *welcoming* the rain that descends and the winds that never fail to blow and beat upon the house of life. The doubt that a man confronts purifies his faith from error, substantiates the truth it contains, and strengthens his hold. Valid belief has nothing to fear from the play of the world's forces upon it; and a delusive faith is better exposed and washed away. Truth accepted without enquiry, from that hearsay which we call tradition, has an ominous analogy to principles of conduct never put in practice. Man's hold of them is insecure, for strength unexercised becomes feebleness. Moreover, no kind of truth yields its richest meaning except under stress and strain. The instance that the scientific man prizes most highly is that which places his hypothesis under the severest test: no instance can either prove or disprove, either effectively expose falsity or ratify truth, except the instance he calls "crucial." It is the crucial instance also that expands the application and deepens the significance of the hypothesis. And the same results follow in regard to religious faith. The words "I know Whom I have believed," when they are uttered by one who has walked hand in hand with his own pettiness and ill-doing, carry a strange convincing and relieving power; and such simple utterances as "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want" have marvellous wealth of meaning when they come from the lips of one who knows what it is to be resourceless and undeserving.

False doubt.

•Now, in thus affirming the value of the search for religious truth and of the doubts and trials that test a religious faith, I do not wish to be understood to advocate• the fabrication of artificial difficulties, either in ourselves or others. Wantonly to excite or foster doubt is not a part that an honest seeker after truth can stoop to play. An earnest believer would as soon make a plaything of life itself as of a religious faith; for faith is the inspiration of life. Such a simple faith as Tennyson describes when he bids him whose faith has centre everywhere, to "Leave his sister when she prays," has not the splendour of the centuries-old, storm-tossed oak, but it has the beauty of the moss and violet. Besides, there is no need of fabricating doubts. *Growing* truth and a maturing experience bring their own doubts; for honest doubt is a new aspect of truth standing at the door and knocking, seeking a place in the system of rational experience. Life can be trusted to bring trials: man's part is to meet them as new opportunities of moving "onward."

Religion and knowledge about Religion.

Nor, in the second place, would I be understood to imply that Religion and the knowledge of Religion are one and the same thing. Knowledge and the object known are never identical: Astronomy, even if it were perfect as a Science, would not consist of stars and planets, nor would a sound Physiology be sound physical health. Nevertheless, religious knowledge may be a condition of a religious faith and a religious life. Knowledge is certainly the condition of all the spiritual experiences which men, rightly or wrongly, distinguish from religion. However true it may be that knowledge of what is right is far from

being the doing of it, that which is done in ignorance cannot be called morally good. The moral life is impossible in the degree in which knowledge of what is right or wrong is lacking. Though the ideal is not the deed, the deed that is not first an ideal known and valued and chosen cannot have any spiritual worth.

The relation between religious knowledge, religious faith and religious life will demand fuller consideration later. It may be sufficient at present to insist that, like vital organs of a living body, they derive their value and meaning, if not their very existence, from their mutual involution. If we sever knowledge from faith, or faith from conduct, we have on the one hand otiose and impotent conceptions, and on the other hand a behaviour that knows not what it is doing or whom it is serving. We are left, I think, with self-contradictory fictions—things that can neither be understood nor even exist.

It follows that if religious knowledge is thus a vital condition of religious experience, then that which hinders the pursuit of this knowledge imperils religion. And if I were asked from what direction come the graver dangers that threaten religious life in these times and in this country of Britain, I should answer, without any hesitation, that they come from the causes which turn aside the minds of men from reflection upon the things of the spirit and arrest or impede enquiry. For what occupies the mind determines conduct. Tell me what a man thinks about and I will come near telling you what he will do. "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." What about him? "He shall

be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither."

The articles of a faith in enquiry.

Believing with all my heart that in the last resort there is only one way of knowing, and that there is no form of human experience where knowledge is not better than ignorance, or where error is not dangerous and costly; believing, secondly, that the more profound and fundamental the practical issues which are at stake, the higher the value of truth and the deeper the tragedies of falsehood, and therefore the more imperative the duty of pursuing the former and exposing the latter; and believing, lastly, that there is no direction in which humble, simple, sincere and at the same time trustful, intrepid and even adventurous research can bring so rich a harvest as that of religion,—possessed by such a creed, how can I but deplore the timid methods of the chief, nay, the only official guardian of the spiritual interests of our people, and yearn for the day when the Church shall wholly entrust the guardianship of the divine authority of its doctrines to their intrinsic truth? "So truth be in the field," said John Milton, "we do injuriously . . . to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple," "who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?" "For who knows not that Truth is strong, next to the Almighty? She needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious, those are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power. Give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps." [1]

Freedom is the condition of every spiritual good—

[1] *Areopagitica*, p. 96.

of religious truth not less than of moral virtue—and it is a plea for free enquiry that I find in the second matter emphasized by Lord Gifford when he said, " I wish the lecturers to treat their subject as a strictly natural science. . . . I wish it considered just as astronomy or chemistry is."

LECTURE II

THE SCEPTICAL OBJECTIONS TO ENQUIRY IN RELIGION STATED AND EXAMINED

THE main purpose of our first lecture was to advocate enquiry in matters of religious faith and experience. In any other field of man's interests nothing could be less necessary. Whatever may be the relation between man's knowledge and conduct, and between his conduct and his well-being, enquiry is regarded as the way to knowledge in temporal matters. The nature and extent of man's knowledge is a clue to the range of his practical achievements, and, as a rule, a necessary condition of his prosperity. In fact, ignorance is a doubtful and insecure bliss, and error a treacherous ally. It cannot be denied that with our best efforts we often fail to arrive at the truth. There seems to be in every least fact a baffling " beyond " ; although, in truth, the " beyond " means *room to press forward*, and is an invitation to come still nearer the fact. Nevertheless, even if the findings of our intelligence are always incomplete and often insecure, we do not condemn its activities as a whole, nor do we subordinate it to any other authority. Its failures are turned into occasions for a more full and severe use of its methods. However defective our intellectual powers may be, we deem it best to make the best use of them that we can.

In all secular matters we make the best use we can of the intelligence.

I dare say you have observed, in the next place, that in every investigation of every kind—whether in our scientific laboratories, or in our Courts of Law, or in our commercial dealings, or in our social activities—whenever we want the truth and nothing but the truth, we endeavour to secure conditions under which the operations of the intelligence are not hindered. So far from appealing to feeling, we desire a light that is "clear" and "calm." We observe, generalize, judge, reason; and however deeply our feelings may be disturbed or enlisted, we try to prevent them from assuming the role of *witnesses*. Of course, our emotions have their own place and value, but we refrain from attributing to them the functions of the intelligence as well as their own.

The timid use of enquiry in religious matters on the part of believers.

Now, the question arises, and we cannot pass it by, why is the attitude of many able, sincere and even devout men different towards Religion? For you will, I believe, agree with me that there is no great, practical interest where the uses of the intelligence are so little esteemed. The mind of these times, it is true, is not disturbed by Aggressive Scepticism, as it was in the time of "Darwin and Huxley and other wooden-headed philosophers," as I heard an old Scottish parish minister call these splendid men. Agnosticism has also lost much of its charm now that Natural Science has recognized the limits of its task. Nor, again, is it a low estimate of Religion that arrests the agnostic's enquiry. It is the conviction that of Religion only one thing can be known, namely, that we cannot know whether the central articles of its faith are true or not. So even good and thoughtful men put the question on one side, just as if the truth or falsity of religious faith

were no very urgent matter. They assent to things they only half believe, and reject things they have never earnestly examined. The attitude is that of relative indifference—the most dangerous of all, I think; for it is the unlooked-for evils that always work most havoc.

On the other hand, the trust in exceptional or miraculous Revelation, at least in the Protestant world, is far less strong and general than it was forty years ago. Intelligent people have begun to think that all human history, or none of it, is sacred—a revelation of a Will to Good that cannot fail; and they also believe that the unvarying and universal order of the world of things may be a more sure and inspiring Revelation than any occasional interruption of that order. Moreover, the age is far less tolerant of dogma in every department of life—economic, social, political, as well as religious—and often prefers to trust its own hasty ignorance. It welcomes the "*Sciences*" of these departments, rickety as they often are. But while the very minds which are most thickly encrusted with the crass stupidity of a merely economic outlook, and believe that lucre is wealth, have discovered the profitable use of Natural Science; the need, the use, or even the possibility of a Science of Religion is doubted.

In the next place, there are religious men who have lost much of their reverence for "ready-made" truths, and in their assemblies would relax or multiply the meanings of the creeds—a thing not worthy of that noble class of men which the Scotch clergy is. But as yet they give too little evidence of a desire to make the Articles of their Creed *starting-points of enquiry*, by the usual methods of growing knowledge. There

is little enterprise in their theology, and *their* science is the only one that has its face turned towards the past and whose doctrines must be static. They do not welcome the severe operations of the enquiring, observing, discriminating, generalizing, judging, reasoning intellect after the manner of the sciences that grow. These laboursome operations by which mankind guides all the rest of life's experiments are held to have a secondary, and even a doubtful, value in religion. There are, we are told, easier means at the hands of the religious, and these means are supposed to lead to results which cannot be questioned. For these results come of themselves, " from above," while the believer is simply a passive and grateful recipient; or they come by way of the emotions; or, again, they issue from immediate labourless perception and are products of the power of " intuition," of which every individual has his own private stock, and whose results, however inconsistent, are always true *for him*. If all this is so, why should we turn to the toilsome methods of scientific enquiry or the still severer ways of philosophic reflection? Let us wait till the intuitive moment comes. Or if any tenets of our religion seem doubtful, let us ask our " hearts "; and if the heart as well as the head doubts, then we must resolve to believe the doctrines in spite of them both. The free use of the intellect—" free-thinking," as it was called—is perhaps not now a sin, but one would certainly gather that fettered-thinking is devoutness. We do not use the same terms to-day: the " Rationalist " is now a person who may be respected. But his successor, the " Intellectualist," is an object of scorn to those who, I suppose, are otherwise equipped.

I must later examine the counter-claims of these substitutes for intelligence quite closely. At present I turn for a moment to another alleged characteristic of our times. According to a very charming repentant Rationalist, the one marked advance of the new spirit of the times "is the substitution of emotional *values* for intellectualized *ideals*." It is being discovered that "natural religion is emotional rather than intellectual *in origin*, is based not on mistaken theory, but on certain individual and especially social reactions; that the province of religion is, in a word, not truth or falsehood, not mistaken ideals, but *values*." What the relation may be between truths and values is left somewhat obscure, and it is not easy to suppress such questions as the following, even though their origin be the intelligence. Does emotion originate anything? Or is it not itself an after-glow of right or wrong apprehension, and of evaluation? Is the value of the emotions independent of their relation to facts? Does it not matter for religion whether in truth there is, or there is not, a God, provided you feel as if there were a God? Is it of no consequence whether he is a God who loves or a God who hates, provided you have certain emotions? Are some emotions to be approved and others condemned? If so, on what grounds except that they are agreeable or disagreeable? Have any emotions any moral or spiritual value in themselves? What or who is to judge these matters, and by what standard, if you cast out reason and regard truth as irrelevant? Are religious emotions possible except in virtue of intellectual apprehension? And is there any apprehension except in virtue of *all* the powers of mind?

Appeal from truths to values.

It is not meant by those who hold this view of value that religion is irrational, or that its contents are not valid. But the cause and the proof of their validity and worth lie elsewhere. The ultimate appeal, they say, is to our sense of worth, not to reason and its processes of observing, conceiving, judging and inferring. The satisfaction of reason is one thing to them, the satisfaction of the *self* is another. Mere truth can satisfy the former. But that satisfaction is incomplete and superficial, for truth is only one aspect of the good and consists of mere ideas. It is only "the good," real and concrete, that can satisfy the self: and the heart is the essential self. They do not reckon that we have reached the man when only his intellect concurs. Nothing touches the self except that which penetrates and possesses the heart; and it is from the heart that man's volitions and character spring. They have thus no doubt as to which is the higher authority, or whether it is the dictates of the reason or of feeling that good men will obey if they happen to disagree.

This view which subordinates the true to the Good (good consisting in the emotional satisfaction it brings) we find in Lotze. I refer to it because it is being revived more or less by some recent writers on philosophy. Lotze in his Preface to his *Microcosmus* says:

Lotze's view of truth.

"If the object of all human investigation were but to produce in cognition a reflection of the world as it exists,[1] of what value would be all its labour and pains, which could result only in vain repetition, in an imitation within the soul of that which exists without

[1] I wish we had time to examine this view of knowledge as a reflection and imitation, and of minds as mirrors.

it? What significance could there be in this barren rehearsal?" "Taking truth as a whole, we are not justified in regarding it as a mere self-centred splendour." "Views must justify themselves by the permanent or increasing satisfaction which they are capable of affording to those spiritual demands, which cannot be put off or ignored."[1]

It does not seem to have occurred to Lotze that *Good* isolated from *Truth* would be just as empty and illusory. But I postpone, at least for the present, all criticism of this view—with one remark. Is there any other province of life in which you would make the validity of an idea depend on the satisfaction it brings?

Causes of the distrust of the intellect in religious matters.

I must now ask a more fundamental question, and turn to the central issue. We must find, if we can, what the reason is for thus ascribing a subordinate part to the intellect in matters of religion, and practically nowhere else. Let us state the case of those who hold this view as fairly as we can. They might say that it is because religion stands by itself as a human experience. The *facts*, the *data* on which man employs his powers in religion, are entirely different from all others. The central fact of religious experience is that it, and it alone, implies the direct relation of man to a divine being, that is to say, to an object that is in every sense perfect. And the intellect, we are told, can neither reach nor comprehend such an object. Religion reaches over to what is beyond the finite and secondary and temporal to that which is infinite and absolute. It occupies the region of the things that are unconditional, *i.e.* of those whose value and validity lie in themselves

[1] Lotze, Preface viii and ix of *Microcosmus*.

alone. Everywhere else objects derive their meaning and their worth from their relations to one another. Their relations, their interactions *are* their qualities. Hence neither the meaning nor the value of an object *by itself*—if you could find one—is ever complete and satisfying. To explain anything, you say that it does this to, or suffers this from, *other* things. Man does well to deal with *these* things by means of his ratiocinating faculties, creeping around from fact to fact. But in religion man must attain his object at first leap, or not at all. The religion that comes by inference, as a conclusion from finite premisses, can have neither value nor validity beyond such premisses. It is based upon, and therefore assimilated to and infected by, the temporal interests of a limited life.

What shall we say to this? When the time comes I shall try to show that the "infinite," which is unintelligible, is no true infinite, but a thoroughly confused notion. Meantime, one thing at least is clear. That for which Lord Gifford stipulated cannot be unreservedly granted. To accede at once to his wish "that the lecturers should treat their subject as a strictly natural Science . . . just as astronomy or chemistry is," were to proceed on assumptions that are admitted, neither by Sceptics, nor by Agnostics, nor by many religious believers.

Moreover, the Science of to-day recognizes this. At least it does not show the same alacrity as formerly in applying uniform methods everywhere and to everything. Natural science has ceased to issue decrees on spiritual matters. It has recognized that its own domain as natural science is limited to natural

Modern science and its discovery of its own limitations.

facts. How far it is on the way to a further discovery that, as natural science, it is limited to natural facts *minus* their relations to man's mind and spirit is a bigger question and, I venture to say, a more vital one for *both* Science and Religion. At any rate, so far from supporting the Agnosticism or Naturalism of last century, Natural Science now leaves the spiritual field comparatively clear for the theologian and the philosopher.

It is *philosophical Idealism* that mainly insists on the *immanence* of spiritual principles in natural facts, and therefore on the comprehensibility of religious truths. But it seems to bring some unexpected consequences. Professing to bring out more fully the spiritual implications—that is, the deepest meaning—of natural facts, Idealism has succeeded, as some think, only in rendering spiritual facts themselves mysterious and in once more exposing the limits of reason. Such Idealism, we are told, tends to Mysticism. "Mysticism in practice," we are told, "is the necessary correlative of immanence in theology." And "the mystic conception of religion" is said to appeal "more and more strongly to the younger generation." "Most significant" (says a recent writer), "even among Anglicans who not so long ago boasted themselves Protestants, sacraments are felt to be of more spiritual value than sermons; not, I think, because they embody any savage and obsolete magical efficacy, but because they stand for a mystical communion." And "the mystic, feeling himself a part of his God, is rid of all his asking." Reason may come in, but only "to analyse and confirm." Even "great apostles of reason," such apparently as Mr. Bertrand Russell, "plead for creative

Idealism and Mysticism.

impulse as the supreme value."[1] And it is only a cynic who would reply that the distrust of reason on their part is not surprising.

The ambiguous position of Protestantism.

Now, without pretending to agree in all respects with these estimates of our time, I must admit that the issue between those who trust and those who deny or limit the uses of natural reason in religion is becoming more clear. The choice of those who are interested in religion must be decisive. In particular the ambiguous position which Protestantism has hitherto occupied is becoming more and more untenable. Protestantism generally must either follow the alleged example of Anglicanism or it must maintain unreservedly that religion not only cannot, but *ought not* to satisfy the heart of man, and control his emotions and will, unless it also satisfies the intelligence. Protestantism has appealed to Caesar, and to Caesar it must go. It has affirmed the Right of private Judgment in religion, it must establish that right, and satisfy the intelligence. And the intelligence cannot and ought not to be satisfied except by a faith whose truth is intrinsic, and recognized as such. And the truth which is intrinsic is valid irrespective of when, or how, or by whom it is uttered. It is objective, it is *present in the facts* as their meaning, waiting there to be set free by the operations of reason, ready to spring into existence in the form of convictions which are at once authoritative and free. It is not only objective, but it is also universal. It is there for every mind that can seize it; and it satisfies every mind. And it is all the more satisfying to the individual's heart, all the more powerful to inspire and guide his conduct, all

[1] See *Rationalism and Religious Reaction*, by Miss Jane E. Harrison.

the more personal, subjective and intimate, in that it is necessarily true for every intelligence and an exposition of the actual reality of things.

The demands of the adventure of the religion of freedom.

Can the religious world rise to the height of this adventure of seeking it? On the answer to this question, I believe, depends all that is best for mankind. There is no other way to secure the fundamental condition of happiness and virtue. That condition is *freedom*. Man is not free if he acts in obedience to necessities which he does not value and choose, and he cannot either value or choose except amongst things that he apprehends and in the degree in which he comprehends. The choice of the unknown is impossible, and his obedience to it is not the obedience of a rational being. And it has no merit. He cannot fully obey, he cannot dedicate himself to the service of the Best, if he is not free. To give himself he must first own himself. Hence I make no apology for entering more fully into this question of the rights and the obligations of the intelligence in the domain of religion, or, in other words, of the possibility and nature and value of a science of religion. Let us look yet more closely into the case of those who deny that possibility, admitting every jot and tittle of truth it may contain.

Why the possibility of a science of religion is desired.

It must be admitted, in the first place, that the question of scientific method does depend, as is maintained, upon the nature of the facts to be comprehended. Hence, if, or in so far as, religious facts differ from secular facts, they must be treated in a different way. That the facts of a science determine the method of science we have been all too slow to learn and to take to heart: especially in its bearing upon the methods of the natural sciences and of the

sciences of man—such as ethics, politics, logic. The *sciences of man* to-day are hindered by problems which not only seem but are insoluble, and it has not been realized that they ought never to be asked, and never would be asked if we did not bring to the field presuppositions and methods which belong to another field. The key that opens one lock will spoil another. Presuppositions which would be valid of a merely natural object will only distort the facts about objects which are natural *and more*. A merely physical, chemical or physiological account of man might be admirable if he did not think, fall into errors and arrive at truths, do what is wrong and sometimes what is right. After all, man somehow *seems* to be more than a collection of material particles, or an ingenious machine, or even an instinctive beast. And this "seeming" must be accounted for. The natural sciences need not be held as alien or even irrelevant to the enquiry as to the nature of man and the meaning of his life. On the contrary, it is well to remember that however "spiritual" man's nature may be, it appears to us to exist and act only in virtue of its relation to natural facts. Whatever more human nature may be, it is one of these; but to ignore the fact that it *is* more is a ruinous error. However much modern science and philosophy may insist on the continuity of that which is real, and deny any break between the physical and the mental or moral (or metaphysical), a living and a thinking thing seems to act in ways different from other material compounds.

Natural Science can at least deal with only the natural aspect of the real.

If it be true that "the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile, and that poetry is a product of the smaller intestines," then we must change our

notions of the brain and liver and intestines. They turn into thinkers and poets under our very hands, if they do these things; and we must give them credit for it, and not call them dead matter any more. So long as the ruling conceptions of the physical sciences retain their present limitations, they cannot explain mental phenomena even if they *are* illusions. A complete mathematical account of man, giving the sum of the atoms that make him up, reducing his shape into geometrical figures and giving the theoretical mechanics of his muscular and nervous contortions would leave much out; and it would not give a complete or true account even of his physical changes. Would we know *man* at all, if we only knew him as a physical apparatus or chemical compound?

It must either omit the spiritual aspect, or discern that only what is spiritual can have spiritual functions.

The quantitative method has limits to its use, beyond which it will not enlighten; so have the physical, the chemical, the biological, the physiological and even the psychological. And that which imposes the limit is always the same. It is the abstraction of the sciences, their dealing, not with *facts* in their fulness, but with selected aspects of them, or (if this saying be hard) with facts some of whose relations have been omitted; and above all, I believe, their relation to the *ultimate* principle of what is real and true.

From Science to Philosophy.

One of the most striking and eventful characteristics of recent scientific thinkers is their discovery of and acquiescence in the limitations of their task. They do not pretend, as they did in the last quarter of the last century, to relate their facts to *ultimate* principles. That enterprise they leave to the philosopher who has no option but to seek THE *True* and THE *Good*—traveller, as he is, on an endless way. And the

restraint of the natural sciences is bringing its rich reward, as Kant indicated nearly one hundred and fifty years ago. They are now progressive. They are advancing steadily in the compass and in the security of their results. But philosophy is always turning back upon its own footsteps, and quite rightly. Like religion, it is at all times seeking to know and to apply the criterion of *final* truth and value. For the necessities of man as an intelligent being are the same as those of man as a moral and religious being in this respect: he can find rest only in *the Whole*. Nothing but the Infinite which illuminates every item of finitude can satisfy either his intelligence or his desires. And we do not arrive at Wholeness, as that which is self-sufficient, self-determining and self-explanatory, till we arrive at the philosophy which is true, and a religion which has valid worth.

LECTURE III

THE NATURE OF RELIGION

In the last lecture we pointed out a grave difficulty in following the injunction of Lord Gifford and treating Natural Religion "as a purely natural science, like astronomy or chemistry." We saw that the method of a science depends on the nature of the facts it professes to explain; and the facts of religion are spiritual facts, and seem, at any rate, to stand in striking contrast, and even opposition, to all "natural" facts.

The attitude of the scientific thinkers of to-day.

The significance of this contrast, we further saw, is realized by scientific thinkers to-day as it never was before. They recognize that even if the natural domain is not separate from the spiritual, but continuous with it, a natural explanation is incomplete and inadequate. In other words, it is now recognized by scientific men themselves that the purpose of the natural sciences is limited. They *know* that they set forth from hypotheses, and they do not pretend to give a final and full explanation of the nature of the real. They are becoming conscious that natural science omits an aspect of what is real. They even realize, to some degree at least, that when they omit the relation of natural facts to man, they may be omitting what is of

vital significance. I have no doubt that they will yet correct the omission and help the philosopher to find room for man in the natural scheme, to re-interpret that scheme in his light, and to restore the wholeness of what is real. At present they acquiesce, as we have seen, in the limitation of their own aims, and they leave the investigation of spiritual phenomena to others.

Now that which imposes limits on a science is always the same. Its *purpose* is limited, and it deals with only single *aspects* of facts. Every science has its particular point of view and purpose, and it recognizes only those features of a fact which are relevant to that purpose. Physics, the greatest, or at least the greatest group, of all the Natural Sciences, is a science of measurement. It deals with quantities. Of qualitative differences it offers no explanation. But there are no facts without qualities. And when we pass on to biological facts qualitative considerations become vital and paramount, and physical conceptions cease to help in any significant way. Still more is this the case when the facts considered are psychical and self-conscious. The quantitative sciences, being the most abstract, become less and less adequate the more *concrete*, that is, the more complex, the unity of the differences of an object.

The abstract character of the natural sciences.

On the other hand, the more that *qualitative* considerations enter, the more the direct convincingness of the proof disappears. Hence some philosophers, like Lotze, have maintained that conclusive demonstration is not possible except in Mathematics and Physics—the sciences of pure quantity or measurement. The moment that differences of quality appear, computation and measurement lose their value, and demonstrative

Only the more abstract sciences held by Lotze to be demonstrative.

proof becomes impossible. Hence in all the sciences, except Mathematics and Physics, there exists a purely conjectural or empirical element. We must wait on events; our process must be *a posteriori*, prediction and certainty are impossible. The province of the ratiocinating intelligence is thus limited. And it is manifest that the facts of man's spirit, that is, of morality and religion, where conceptions of *value*, *worth or goodness* are of primary importance, fall outside its boundaries.

Hence religion is not an affair of the reasoning intellect.

This view will not bear investigation. It implies a wrong notion of proof. It overlooks the fact that there is proof wherever there is systematic coherence and existential interdependence.[1] But at present I shall merely observe that a truth omitted from any system, or a quality overlooked in any fact, batters it from without. The theory is exposed as false and the fact as an illusion: they have only the doubtful value of fragments. The omitted aspect or quality, so long as it is not allowed to enter into and take its own place as an element within the doctrine or system, is a vital objection to it and a constant condemnation of it.

The intelligence, no less than morality and religion, demands what is ultimate and complete.

The necessities of the intelligence are thus, in the last resort, the same as those of morality and religion. The True and The Good make the same claim to systematic wholeness: that is to say, the former must make room for *all* facts and the latter for *all* values. Neither can stop short of the absolute. It is not a moral one-sidedness, however pre-eminent, that can satisfy—a justice that is not also mercy, a kindness or generosity that is not just. As a matter of fact, the

[1] See the author's *Lotze*.

virtues at their best not only hold hands, but, as Plato shows, pass into one another. Temperance will turn under our very hands into courage, courage into wisdom, and any or all of them into unselfish regard for one's neighbour and service of the State. And vices, I need hardly say, pass into and generate one another in the same way. This is inevitable. For the virtues are manifestations of the same ultimate principle, are elements within the same whole, and therefore are only by help of one another. Now, the principle which is ultimate for morality is the perfect Good by which religion holds; and it is also the absolutely self-explaining and self-determining reality which the intelligence demands. It is that in which all things subsist. The intelligence can not, nor should it find rest, except in assured knowledge of that principle. And natural science, as it comes to its own, will be less and less liable to omit to refer its phenomena to it for their final explanation. Science also will make, more and more directly, for wholeness—for knowledge of that which is self-determining and self-sufficient, and which manifests itself in the facts of experience. And I believe it will find that principle of Wholeness, of self-determining, self-justifying reality, that neither has, nor needs, a "Beyond" in the conception of Spirit. In other words, I believe that the time is coming when convincing testimony to the spiritual nature of reality will be borne by the Sciences (merely "natural" no longer).

And the ultimate reality is the same for all of them.

Natural Science will in the future more and more recognize the spiritual significance of facts, but at present the main witnesses are Philosophy and Religion.

At present there are two main witnesses to this wholeness of reality, namely Philosophy and Religion. They are not, they cannot for a moment afford to be, abstract. But in their own way they are not less prone

to be abstract than are the natural sciences. Only the aspect or element which they are tempted to ignore or obscure, or even overlook, is a different one. They are apt to forget that spiritual facts are not real except when they are exemplified or realized in the things and events of time. The moral world is spoken of as if it had a separate and independent existence: Religion is made an affair of the other life. Their natural aspect is taken to be a mere garb, which they can put on or off and do without. But the moral world must be sustained by continued volition. There is no knowledge but only knowing. A spiritual principle which is not active, either in our conduct or our reflexion, is a non-entity. The merely spiritual is as genuine an abstraction as the merely natural; nor, as I may try to show later, is the relation between them external or contingent. The devout who stand aloof from temporal concerns, like many devotees of the Roman Catholic Church in times past, are committing as real a blunder as those who overlook the spiritual meanings in the secular opportunities of life. And I am inclined to think that the error of forgetting that spirit in order to be real, or that principles, whether of morality, religion or knowledge, must be exemplified in temporal facts, is a no less disastrous error than that of the sciences which have not learnt that the natural, when all the meaning of it is set free, blossoms into the spiritual like the tree into flower. Religion and philosophy and science also have yet to learn more fully that all which can possibly concern man, occupy his intelligence or engage his will, lies at the point of intersection of the natural and spiritual. But this is to anticipate matters. What concerns us and has led

The abstraction to which Philosophy and Religion are prone.

The correction of both the abstract views lies in the discovery that the secular is sacred and the natural is also spiritual.

us thus far is the fact that the matter of a system of knowledge determines the method of enquiry; and so long as the sciences treat facts as merely natural, and philosophy and religion do not follow out "the application" of their principles in temporal particulars, their methods must be both defective and different. The contrast between secular and sacred facts must be exposed in all its falsity, and their unity accentuated. In other words (from opposite directions, in a sense), both natural science and the philosophy of religion must extend their claims. Neither can find rest in abstraction, nor should they seek it there. Their theme is at once secular and sacred; they have to deal with principles that are at once ultimate and, if you like, timeless, and which also embody and actualize themselves in temporal events.

We have now to justify this view. We must ask with more relentless purpose than hitherto, what is the real or constitutive character of religious facts? Are they knowable? And are they knowable by methods analogous to those of natural science?

What is Religion?

At first sight it would seem that no satisfying answer can be found; religion has had such diverse and even contradictory meanings, and has played such different parts in man's history. Any attempt at expressing its character in a definition seems to be doomed to fail. "Whatever element be named as essential to religion," says Edward Caird, "it seems easy to oppose a negative instance to it." There are religions of love, and religions of hate, and religions of indifference. There are religions whose Gods are helpers of man, and there are religions whose Gods can be hindered from destroying him only if they can be propitiated by mystic

Endless varieties of religious beliefs and rites.

ceremonies and bloody sacrifices. The Gods have been regarded as human in all things, except that they are fairer in form and greater in strength and stature, and that whatever they do is right. On the other hand, man, it is alleged, has found his Gods in plants and animals and even in stocks and stones and the things most opposite to himself. And there are religions without any Gods at all. Even in our own times and in regard to the Christian religion, we have the greatest diversity of view. Our religious beliefs were too anthropomorphic for Herbert Spencer; they were not anthropomorphic enough for Goethe. Our philosophers are divided as to whether God is or is not the Absolute, and in either case, as to whether he is or is not a person. And they are happy neither in the denial nor in the affirmation of his perfection. Few of them can tolerate an imperfect God—none would attempt to acquiesce in the notion could they otherwise admit and account for the reality of evil. On the other hand, to affirm his perfection seems to imply his changelessness, and the changeless must be inactive. But a God conceived as a static absolute cannot do anything, and is as little satisfactory as a God who is limited and imperfect.

Doubt as to truth and value of Religion the natural consequence of its multitude of meanings.

In such circumstances doubt as to the truth and value of religion, and even as to its meaning, is more than legitimate. It is inevitable. But, on the other hand, amidst all these miscellaneous meanings and doubtful uses, religion has had some characters which are no less universal than they are unique. Let us glance at two of these. Religion has always impassioned the spirit of man, and added consequence to the things which it sanctions or condemns. It

concentrates man's faculties, rouses them to the uttermost exercise of their power, excludes hesitation and expels alternatives. Not only does it possess the whole man, but it leads him onward under the belief that the ultimate forces of his world are at his back. Hence, when he acts "in the name" of religion he knows neither inner nor outer restraint. The impelling, propulsive power of religion is supreme: the passions are at its service.

Every Religion impassions, concentrates, and intensifies human life.

But the direction which religion will take in the exercise of its power is uncertain. It has proved a supreme force in the ways both of reason and of unreason. It has been the most sane and equilibrating power in man's history, teaching him, as nothing else can, the relative values of ends and ways of life: it has also proved the most extravagant, uncontrolled, and I am tempted to add, the most insane of all forces.[1] What rites and ceremonies have not been inspired by it, what articles of faith has it not represented as final and saving truths, and what ways of conduct has it not both commanded and forbidden![2] The deeds which man has done when roused by his religion—done in the name and for the sake of it, and with a rampant certainty of doing what is right—are amongst the darkest in his history, appalling in their crudity and cruelty. On the other hand, the lives of religious men and women have surpassed all description in their spiritual splendour—their gentleness, their wisdom, their courage, and in the spendthrift magnificence of their ministering love. If, on the one side, no kind

Its effects are always extreme, whether they be good or bad.

[1] Because religion impassions behaviour it has been defined as "morality touched with emotion." That its relation to morality is more fundamental is one of the convictions I shall try to prove.

[2] *Vide* James's *Varieties of Religious Experience.*

of selfishness or evil passion and purpose has created such a destructive dispeace amongst the nations of the earth as religion has; on the other side it has broken out into principles of conduct which have united men so that they live in and by means of one another. It has linked the generations together in the continuous and growing experience of stable, and more or less, civilized societies. For human society is welded, not by needs nor by economical but by ethical principles, which operate even when little understood; and the ultimate ground of these principles we shall, I think, find is religion. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that amidst all these discrepant and mutually destructive practical effects of religion, its feature of intensifying human interests remains.

But the fact that religion intensifies human interests, giving them a significance that is often extravagant and new, does not remove it from amongst the subjects amenable to scientific treatment. It really constitutes a more urgent need of it. Nevertheless, it does result in establishing a contrast between the religious and secular life which tends to arrest science at the entrance of the religious domain. That contrast, I am of opinion, is not only general but universal. It varies indefinitely in depth, but it does not always amount to direct antagonism. There are religions in which it almost disappears. The Greek passed to and fro between the secular and sacred domains most smoothly, and was on very familiar terms with his gods and goddesses. The Greek spirit was artistic, and for that spirit there must exist a complete equipoise of inner meaning and outward expression, of soul and body, of mind and matter. The Greek deities were in con-

The contrast of the religious and secular.

It varies but is universal.

sequence simply men and women of greater strength and beauty, and except for the ceremonial observances they exacted, hardly superior to the Greek himself. But for the Israelite a chasm yawned between religious and ordinary concerns. Unlimited awe and reverence entered the soul, and a depth of devotion and contrition hardly intelligible to the Gentile world. It is the Israelite rather than the Greek civilization which reveals and exemplifies the nature of religion. For, however true it may be that the contrast of the secular and sacred must in the last resort disappear, or that, in other words, nothing must prove finally "secular" or "unclean," still religion cannot reveal its true character except where that contrast emerges and obtains full expression. Finite concerns and ends must be tried and be found to fail, and even to betray those who trust in them. Human civilization, it seems to me, must exhaust the uses of the finite ends before it is dedicated to the Best. When man turns to religion, he turns his back upon the world and all that the world can offer, as upon that which has proved worthless. It is not a difference of degree, or of quantity of any kind, that at first distinguishes the secular and sacred. It is, as I shall try to show, the contrast of the finite and the infinite. The inadequacy of the finite must be more than a mere conjecture. Nevertheless, room must be left for it. Man must be allowed "to stand on his own pin-point rock," live his own life, go his own way, make his own choice, discover the good for himself. The value and the power of religion are revealed by the strength of the resistance which it overcomes, by the range of the secular interests which it transmutes; and its

authority is complete only when it is recognized by the free.

Full justice must be done to the contrast, and also to the solution of the contrast.

On the other hand, the solution of the contrast must be as complete as the contrast is direct and explicit: in other words, religion must penetrate and inform the whole of life. I must confess that religion loses its value for me if its presence and power are not made good everywhere in man's daily behaviour, in the social powers which play within him and around him, and even in the natural world which is also bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. It must not merely be present, as one thing amongst many: it must be their truest meaning and highest worth. This religious faith, or view, or hypothesis, is, I believe, that in the light of which alone the universe is left a cosmos and not a chaos, and man's life therein a growing splendour and not a farce too tragical for tears.

The task of the philosophy of Religion and a confession of faith.

Now, it is the business of the science or philosophy of religion to prove this hypothesis, or substantiate this faith; that is, they must demonstrate the universality of the presence and power of the Best we know. They must show that what is most perfect is also most real; that in the language of religion God is, and is perfect in power and goodness, and in the language of philosophy, that the rational is the real. They must seek and find the ultimate meaning, worth and reality that express themselves in a world which seems at first to consist of contradictory appearances and nothing more.

One of the things that I would accentuate and make decisively clear is that in this matter there can be no compromise in which either believers or unbelievers may take refuge. No ultimate law or principle can be

operative *only* occasionally. To maintain that God is Good now and then, and present and operative here and there, or that order rules the universe at times and in certain spots, while elsewhere contingencies are rampant and particulars run amok—all this seems to me as foolish as to say that 2×2 is 4 now and then on certain days and in certain places. Both the theory and the practice of religion demand for it sovereign authority and an unlimited domain.[1]

It is not true that there are some religious and some irreligious, non-religious or secular facts; or that any choice is made as to who shall receive and who shall be denied the experience of the value of the former. Every man who is responsible, and the being who is not responsible is (for our purpose at least) not a man, is according to the extent of his responsibility capable of finding or missing spiritual meanings at every step of his way of life. The flowers of the field, the birds of the air, the whole panorama of colour and form, the music of the winds and waves, and the meaning that lies at the heart of all things are to him that hath ears to hear witnesses to the goodness of God and his care for man. There is no spot of earth anywhere that is not holy ground, and no bush that does not burn, where a leader of men may not meet the Best he knows and receive the message of his God. And if he cannot directly trace the presence of God in the incidents of man's sinful life, he may find hints of it in the misery that sin brings on the world, and in the revolt of his own soul against injustice, cruelty, debauchery, in others, and above all in himself.

[1] For a fuller criticism of Pluralism see *Rice Institute Pamphlet*, 1915, the author's lectures on *Philosophical Landmarks*.

I am loath, indeed, to admit that God reveals what is vital to some and not to others, and reveals only by the rare and doubtful methods of dreams and visions and ancient books and stoled officials. His revelation is universal—all around, always and everywhere—open to every one all the time, or else it does not exist, except as a fiction of a pious imagination. Standing in its place, as a part of the world's context, there is no fact and no event that is not a proof of and a witness to the universal rational order. *And a rational order must be a benevolent order whose principle is Love.*

Does the presence or absence of religion then make no difference, seeing that all facts are capable of either a material or spiritual interpretation, according to the presuppositions of the interpreter, or indeed of no interpretation at all, but remain mere puzzles? On the contrary it makes the same kind of difference as the presence or absence of light to a looker-on at the outer world, or the transparency of the window of his soul. A converted man, as a rule, re-interprets every incident in his past life, and re-values every fact and purpose, setting them in quite a new order of preference. Love for the Good, the unconditional and final Good, which religion is, like all love, finds rare values in some apparently very small facts, and on the other hand shuts out what is a whole world for others as being of no consequence.

In the light of Religion man re-interprets and re-values the facts of his life.

Religion is a new point of view. Taking his stand upon it, man, possibly for the first time, surveys the whole expanse of his life, and contemplates the distant horizon, where the consequences of his deeds and thoughts, and the meaning of it all, dip out of sight. Within that scene, regarded from a new direction,

every fact and incident stands in a new perspective. That which was near, distinct, urgent, is now far, vague and of the least significance; and that which was remote, and vague, and negligible—the moral uses of circumstances, the spiritual opportunities of life, the chance of serving one's fellows, and the possibility of trusting God more fully and loving him with more devoted loyalty—these now are all in all.

At first it seems a little thing to say of religion that it is a new point of view. But

> "Belief or unbelief
> Bears upon life, determines its whole course."

It is indeed the one thing that signifies: for a man lives his beliefs however much he may betray his creed. Nay, I am not sure that it is not misleading to insist on the absolute newness of anything. It is possible that religion is not so much an introduction of new facts as a new light upon the familiar facts of the previous secular life. It is not new except in a limited sense—in the same sense as the conclusion which follows from premisses is new, or an intuition that springs from experience, or a bud that breaks out on a flowering plant. It is an improved interpretation of the meaning of life. It comes from him "Who is the light of *all* our seeing." And a greater miracle than "the nature of things" or a more illuminative revelation than the operation of its never-failing laws man need not desire. It is not a change of scene that religion brings. It opens the eyes of the looker-on. He discovers what was there already. The ordinary facts of his daily life whisper new meanings to him as he moves amongst them, while their outer aspects remain just the same. Not that the slumber of the

secular spirit is ever quite peaceful. Man is moved on from circumstance to circumstance unceasingly, and he himself is always passing through change to change. New demands are ever being made upon him, and these call upon him to awake. As life lengthens, the calls become clearer. Trials thicken, shallow joys grow pale, man becomes more reflective. Instead of seeking new enterprises in the world without, the experiences he has himself passed through engage his thoughts more and more, and he would fain discern more clearly what they all mean. Ends that were his gods turn into idols of wood and stone, and he can worship them no longer: and he knows now that things that seemed treasures are apt to change into trinkets. He yearns for a reliable good that will stand the weather. On the other hand, the soul given to little deeds of kindness and the unobtrusive habits of a gentle life may find a growing good in man and a new benevolence in the world that make the religion which was latent in his moral life explicit. The music may become audible. So, as Browning shows in a passage which cannot be quoted too often, the spirits which neglect or deny the highest are rarely at rest or safe. They ask:

Life as it proceeds demands meditative reflexion and reconstruction more and more.

"How can we guard our unbelief,
Make it bear fruit to us? . . .
Just when we are safest, there's a sunset-touch,
A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
A chorus-ending from Euripides—
And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
As old and new at once as nature's self,
To rap and knock and enter in our soul,
Take hands and dance there a fantastic ring,
Round the ancient idol, on his base again,—
The grand Perhaps." [1]

And the *truth* of Religion is the grand Perhaps.

[1] Bishop Blougram's *Apology*, p. 269.

The " Perhaps " of religion is so magnificent, if it is true: for it gives new worth to everything! While, without it, life is at best petty, its interests are shallow, and it passes away so soon! Indifference as to the truth of this " Perhaps " is not easy for man, and it is not wise.

LECTURE IV

THE CONTRAST OF THE FINITE AND INFINITE

PERHAPS a glance at the road along which we have travelled may be of some use at this stage.

We have been asking whether Religion is, or is not, capable of being treated by the methods of natural science. This, we believe, is precisely the problem with which Lord Gifford desired that the lectures should deal. It meant to him, as it usually does to others: first, the question whether the objects with which Religion has to do are real or illusions; and second, whether they can be proved to be real, and whether their nature can be explained by the methods which have been so convincingly successful in the sciences.

Definition of our problem

As to the reality of the facts there is the greatest diversity of opinion. Religious believers say that they are real, and real in a deeper and fuller sense than any other facts. Sceptics say that they are the fictitious creations of man's fears and hopes, and the most persistent and powerful of all his illusions. Agnostics profess to offer no opinion, either positive or negative, on the ground that man can never find any adequate reasons for either affirmation or denial. Their intention is to refrain from both affirmation and negation;

Divergence of opinion as to the reality of religious objects.

and were their agnosticism thorough and self-consistent both affirmation and denial would be seen to be out of place. What they profess to do is simply to suspend judgment. But that is equivalent to assuming no attitude of mind at all. Hence, the only verdict that agnosticism really invites is that it should be ignored altogether, or that it should count as what it professes to be, namely, a witness that testifies to nothing. But the practical effect of agnosticism, so far from being negligible, is the worst kind of religious denial, namely, that which follows from indifference, from shutting religion outside of both the contemplative and the practical life.

Agreement as to the absence of the need of demonstrative proof of religious ideas.

Now, while there is thus the widest difference of opinion as to the reality of the facts, there is a curious unanimity as to the needlessness or uselessness of all the demonstrative methods of the intellect in the domain of religious phenomena. The facts for the believer are matters of faith, that is (usually) of a faith that is held not to be indebted to reason, nor to rest on proof. Scepticism, again, as a rule if not even always, is deaf to the *implications* of the finite; and, resting its case on sheer particulars (just as if their context did not enter into their constitution), rarely takes the trouble to disprove the opinions it condemns, and never exposes the positive basis of its own denial. The attitude of the Agnostic we have just considered. And

Placid secularism the worst enemy of religion.

the combined result of the low value thus set upon demonstrative knowledge in this region by believers, sceptics and agnostics alike, is a placid secularism of spirit that limits the issues of life and narrows its horizon. But no graver injury can be done to man than to limit the range of his fears and hopes. We

can admit readily that there have been foolish and noxious faiths in this world of ours, but without faith nothing great was ever done or even attempted.

The methods of the sciences vary with their matter and purpose.

As to the application of scientific method of enquiry to religion, we found that the natural sciences, so far from having one method, have many. Every science has its own method; for the method that can be fruitfully employed depends upon the aspect of reality, or the matter which is investigated. There is no more prolific source of utterly baffling problems—the problems which men call insoluble and which they make into a ground for insisting on the incompetence of human intelligence—than the use in one province of methods that are effective in another, where facts are of another kind. In short, the use of the wrong method, so far from explaining facts, distorts them and makes them unintelligible.

A wrong method converts facts into enigmata instead of explaining them.

Fundamental difference of natural and spiritual data.

Now the subject matter of the natural sciences is finite, that of religion infinite. In other words, ordinary or secular experience deals with nothing that is ultimate or final, while it is the nature of religion to deal with naught else. The secular life, the natural life perhaps I should say, in obedience to and extension of the law of self-maintenance, is always seeking what appears good, and moves on in the pursuit of a better. It substitutes one finite end for another. But religion, even when crude and rudimentary, is a pursuit (and therefore a possession) *not of a Better but of the Best.* No doubt that " best," whether of a man or an age or even a race, may be a poor thing. Conceptions of absoluteness and finality of worth may be most inadequate; nevertheless, such as they are, they are operative in all spiritual or truly human life. And

man always gives the name of "God" to his "best." He worships it, adores it, and even serves it in some fashion or another.

Religion seeks the perfect.

Now the conception of "the Best" implies, as we shall see, a reality that is the source of its own perfections, and the cause and guarantee of all forms of good; and the suspicion naturally arises that man in professing to know, to serve, nay to be one with a reality of that kind, having made it into his God, the object of his contemplation and the goal of his desires, has forgotten his own littleness. Carlyle has given expression to this suspicion in his *Sartor*. His "Shoeblack" remains dissatisfied though he were given "half a Universe of an Omnipotence" all to himself, because there is "an infinite in him" which, for satisfaction, desires and demands an infinite object. But instead of satisfying the demand Carlyle suggests as a remedy that man should limit his desires. Let him get rid of his self-conceit, form a better notion of his pettiness and a truer view of his deserts; then he will reduce his claims. "Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot: fancy that thou deservest to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp."

Carlyle would limit man's aspirations in order to satisfy him.

This is a good example of Carlyle's humorous extravagance, but it conveys his serious meaning. His cardinal remedy for man's unhappiness is to limit his aspirations and reduce his claims. "The fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your numerator as by lessening your denominator. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, *Unity* itself divided by *Zero* will give *Infinity*. Make thy claim of wages *zero*, then; thou hast the world under thy feet.

Well did the Wisest of our time write 'It is only with Renunciation (*Entsagen*) that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin.'"

Now Carlyle's remedy, unless the whole direction of my thinking on philosophy and religion is wrong, runs directly counter to both, and betrays man's highest, and truly human, interests. Nothing can, and nothing ought to satisfy man except that which meets the claims of his nature: and what his nature claims, as we have seen, is *the Best*, the absolutely self-sufficient, the Good that knows no limit. The *Entsagung* which Carlyle approves is a negation taken by itself as complete. The *Entsagung* which has value is both an aspect and a result of the discovery of the infinite *fulness* as well as the infinite want of it. As a mere negative, standing by itself, self-denial has no ethical value: Asceticism can not be justified as an end in itself.

His remedy involves a deep wrong, being a betrayal of both religion and of the rational nature of man.

The truth is that Religion invites man to *enlarge* his claims. Its dominant conception is self-realization. So far from limiting man's aspirations or narrowing his outlook or lowering his demands, it teaches that nothing can, or is meant to suit or satisfy him except that Highest, which is also Best. In one word, Religion reveals to man that he needs God, and to know the need of God is to find him, and to find God is to find what secures every final value. Religion is characterized by a radical resistance to limitation. And philosophy, I believe, when most true and positive, is the process by which reason substantiates the main hypothesis of religion and furnishes a rational basis for man's infinite claims, making him no doubt a pilgrim on a road that leads to a very far city. But the way is, at every step, a way of life.

Religion demands the Infinite.

How it passes into Mysticism and devout Agnosticism.

Now, one result of the impatience of limits which characterizes religion is that it often takes the form of Mysticism. Instead of the Infinite, men worship the Indefinite. And this Indefinite means that which resists all definition, and is either "Unknowable," or else has the single known characteristic of being other than entirely exclusive of and excluded by and different and isolated from everything finite: in short, it is the *not*-finite. It has always struck me that to call the Unknowable "God" is a masterpiece of confused thinking: any other name would fit just as well, and no name is really possible. But what is meant is, that whatever else the Infinite may be it is not anything known by minds which, we are told, can know only the finite, and which must limit all that they do know. In other words, we can be sure of only one thing: the Infinite is quite other than the finite. It is "Beyond." It is different from all that we do or ever can know, and, it is easily presumed, surpasses it, and is all the more fit to be an object of worship on that account. Religion takes the form of devout Agnosticism.

While religion demands the Infinite, the scientific spirit seems to demand the definite and limited.

Another result of this yearning after the perfect, the infinite, erroneously interpreted as the indefinite, or the not-finite, is the quarrel between science and religion, or, as it is usually expressed, between the intellect and the heart. The intellect in the service of the systematic sciences distinguishes and defines. In doing so it appears to discover, set forth and fix limits. One fact or feature of a fact seems to be set apart over against all others as a distinct and separate object, standing outside, or in relations that are exclusive to all other objects. If the intellect in defining and distinguishing inevitably establishes relations between

the objects that it defines and distinguishes, these relations must be external. They do not enter into or form part of the intrinsic character of the objects. The objects, it is argued, remain the same whether they are in or out of these relations; and whether in or out they retain all their singularity and particularity. The world which arises on this view of the intellect is a collection of particular facts and events, contingently connected by external laws, which are empirically discovered. The laws do not *constitute* the facts. The facts owe nothing to their being parts of the same universe. The laws are not constitutive principles; and facts are not samples of principles, nor their manifestations and embodiments. The laws are merely names we give, as the result of experience, to the repetitive constancy of temporal events; they are mere notions of our own and they correspond, rest on, point to no objective realities. Universals do not exist. They are mere generalizations. "Particulars are the only *realia*." It is regarded as the characteristic and the good fortune of natural science that it recognizes this truth, and seeks no ultimate and universally constitutive principles. That extravagant ambition and impossible adventure it leaves to philosophy and religion. Commerce with the ultimate and perfect is primarily, we are told, the concern of the heart, that is, of the feeling and willing self. For it is evident that the heart when it desires, the self when it feels and wills, reaches outwards, escapes from its isolation, seeks and often finds fulfilment and realizes itself in and by something other than, different from itself. The self possesses and is possessed by its object. The object is thus deprived of its obstructive otherness. It becomes man's partner

The scientific intelligence and its world of exclusive particulars.

Modern Science leaves room for philosophy by limiting its own aims.

in the enterprises of life. Man's world is in him and he is in his world. And this process is at its highest and completest when the object of desire and of the practical devotion of will, the object whose "otherness" or "strangeness" or "aloofness" it overcomes is the perfect or best, the ultimate object of desire and man's resting-place. The fullest revelation of man and of the range of his desires and will is thus to be found in Religion. It is Religion that brings out most clearly man's natural intolerance of fixed limitations, or, in other words, reveals most fully the implications of infinitude that dwell in him.

The time is not yet for us to examine this view of man's reason. But I may indicate that it identifies the intelligence with "the understanding," confines its operations to finite and therefore particular objects, makes the domain of reason a separate territory and its problems at once inevitable and unanswerable, and finds the progress of the natural sciences to issue from the limitation of their aims.[1] At present I shall simply deny the validity of the distinction, and I shall maintain that the intelligence in *all* its operations, even the simplest, is more and other than a particularized faculty. It reaches over and enters into, or rather finds itself in objects; just as the desires, or the theoretical and practical reason of man are held to do. All its actions refute the view that the object is alien, and a mere "other," limiting the self. Let me illustrate this truth.

If we observe the ordinary attitude of the ordinary man, in his dealing with objects, we shall find that he takes for granted that once understood they may be the

[1] See Preface to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.

means of extending his power. He assumes, in fact, that objects are of use, if he can only find what they mean. Objects are often, possibly always, capable of being man's helpmates, and effective partners. In that spirit the farmer ploughs his fields, sows his corn, and awaits the harvest, confident of the co-operation of his world in the fulfilment of his natural needs. He can overcome the dualism, bring his world over to his side, make it an extension of his own capacities. His whole practical life is a refutation of the sheer opposition and antagonism of nature and spirit. The spiritual uses of objects and their spiritual affinity are not recognized so readily. They reveal themselves only very gradually, and are more unobtrusive and easily overlooked. What man long seeks from, and finds in his world is animal maintenance. He does not realize the part that his world plays in *making himself*—or what an empty and impotent self were left him were the results of his intercourse with his world and his fellow-men taken away from him. Objects somehow guide man's enquiries, refuse their help to ignorance and resist misconstruction. They awaken mind, create and satisfy man's intellectual hunger, which is not less legitimate than his moral aspirations or religious yearnings, nor less a condition of his well-being. Religion and science will be reconciled when it is realized that their domains overlap in this way, and are, in fact, the same.

Rejection of the view of the intelligence as dealing with particulars and of the world as a collection of them.

The world as man's instrument and helpmate in his natural and spiritual enterprise.

At first sight, no doubt, the demand of the intelligence is for *Truth* and nothing else, and that of religion is for the *Good*. Nevertheless, they coincide. There is nothing good which is not true or real, and there is nothing ultimately and finally true which is not good.

The independence of the Truth.

They must coincide, for they are both alike Universal. The real as a whole, and as a harmonious whole, is the object of each. Moreover, the authority of each is final. Truth must vindicate itself, even as goodness must justify itself. It must be valid in its own right, and only reason can substantiate what reason avers. The appeal to utility or value of any kind is out of place. Nothing must be accepted as true simply on the ground that it is profitable or useful. After all, the pragmatic theory rests on an assumption whose *Truth* is vital to it, namely that, in the last resort, nothing "*works*" except what fits into a rational universe or a universe that satisfies the intelligence. It is its own intrinsic content and systematic wholeness which gives to Truth all the certainty it can have.

Truth and Goodness imply each other, and Religion demands both.

Now Religion demands the *absolute* in both these forms, and, as a consequence, it demands that they shall be reconciled. In other words, Religion could not survive a fundamental discrepancy between the Good and the Real or True. It must be *the experience* of their ultimate agreement. In fact, the consummation of religion is the practical discovery that in the life which is dedicated to the Best and also in its world, value, truth and reality are at One. To demonstrate the possibility of their coincidence is the final purpose of philosophy; to experience it as a practical fact is the soul of religion.

But the difficulties are as great as they are obvious. If we profess such a faith, we are asked at once—"What shall we say of pain, sorrow, sin, the agonies of the innocent and the prosperity of the wicked—or in a word, of the whole scene that man's history presents? *Is the Bad not real?*"

At first sight Religion, and the intelligent observation of the facts of life, seem to give answers which cannot be reconciled. The former, apparently, must deny the reality of evil, and the latter must admit it. And I need hardly add that solutions of the difficulty have, on both sides, taken the form of compromises. The perfection and self-determining infinitude which the intelligence, no less than religion demands (*if*, that is to say, it must assume that the Universe is a Cosmos), has been attributed to the Absolute; but not to God. The God of Religion is spoken of as limited either in power or in goodness or in both. He is man's leader in the fight against evil. Moreover, the perpetual nature of the struggle, or its inconclusiveness and the uncertainty of the issue, are supposed to add zest and even reality to the moral and spiritual adventure, and to give God something useful to do. On the other hand, the reality of evil has been weakened or denied by means of a distinction drawn between what exists and what is real. The assumption on which this doctrine rests is that the real must be fixed, and changeless. But it is a costly distinction: for it involves the relegation into a domain that is neither real nor unreal of *all* finite things. They *are*, but they are "appearances" or "phenomena": and so far, I have never learnt the meaning of these terms, for it fluctuates according to the necessities of the moment. But this method does not help religion: for "the good" becomes as passing, and on this view, as unreal, as evil. Indeed, both the world of the intelligence and that of morality, both truth and goodness, turn into phenomenal appearances, that is, into things which manage to exist without being real, and which in

Religion cannot, the intelligent observation of facts must, admit the reality of evil.

Attempts at compromising the contradiction of religion and the intellect.

becoming real and passing into the Absolute ceasé to exist.

Now, it would take me far afield to criticize these doctrines. By and by I hope to make plain the fundamental falsity of the controlling presupposition (or principle) from which they spring. At present, I shall merely say that I cannot deny the claim of religion to the perfection of its deity, nor reject the testimony of the intelligence to the reality of both physical and spiritual evil. And it seems evident that the first involves and the second contradicts the idea of a world that is perfect. Those solutions which are offered are very easy, but they are suspect, as all compromises are. They are so obviously made in order to avoid difficulties, instead of from observation of facts. The view of the divine perfection is moderated in order to leave room for evil, and on the other hand, the reality of evil is denied in order to save religion. But so far as I can see, the religious history of man gives no ground for believing that he *consciously* worships a *recognized* imperfect God. *For the moment*, even the God of the polytheist, whom at any instant he may toss aside, stands for the perfection he needs. On the other hand, the secular or ordinary history of man gives no ground for denying the existence and genuine reality of both good and evil in his life. Even if evil *is* evanescent, or is overcome, abolished, or turned into its opposite in a way which Good is not, it does not follow that it lacks reality in any sense or degree.

These attempts at reconciliation fail. They do not arise from the observation and interpretation of the relevant facts.

The first requisite for the solution of the contradiction between the demand of religion for the perfection of God, and therefore the final and complete victory of

the good on the one hand and the reality of evil on the other, is the honest admission that the contradiction is there, and inevitable: though possibly, like other contradictions, it is there only to be solved. For their opposition may not be a contradiction. There are opposites which not only supplement but exist in virtue of each other. In any case, the contradiction or opposition will certainly not cease to exist in the future. On the contrary, it will grow. As mankind advances, religion will extend and deepen the meaning of the perfection which it demands, and, on the other hand, the evil of evil, the significance of its opposition to the good, will also become more evident. Man will become more fully aware of the resources of the Universe in which he lives; and, on the other side, his knowledge of himself and of the possibilities and demands of his nature will grow, so that any spiritual injury done to the self will have deeper significance. His dedication to his God will be even more complete, and his rest in him and sense of oneness with him will be more full.

The contradiction must be admitted whether it can be solved or not.

Put more directly, I believe that man is destined to become both more intelligent and more religious. His recognition of the greatness of the Spiritual Destiny of mankind will become more clear, and his dedication to the service of the Good will become more complete. And the result is obviously the deepening of the opposition, so long as it lasts, and also the deepening of the reconciliation when it comes. The refusal of both the religious and the intellectual consciousness to withdraw or modify their testimony as to what is real becomes decisive. The contradiction cannot be avoided. The terms of it cannot be softened. The

contrast of the sacred and secular, infinite and finite, in all its forms, must be admitted in its fulness. Then, and not till then, will the possibility of a solution arise, and the contradiction be found to be a condition of the reality and the work of the conflicting terms.

But the nature of contrast must not be misinterpreted.

The nature of the contrast must, however, not be misinterpreted: the conditions of its possibility must be clearly admitted. And these errors are committed by all those who find it impossible to reconcile the terms and, therefore, betray either the one or the other of them, denying either the perfection which Religion demands or the reality and the imperfection of the finite to which the intelligence testifies. It may be useful to shew this in a preliminary way before we come to the deeper contrasts of finitude and infinitude.

All contrast must fall within a Unity.

The error, briefly stated, is that of overlooking the fact that every rational contrast falls within a unity of some kind; or in other words, that the contrasting terms are in truth elements within a whole, and that they neither do nor can exist otherwise. To give them a separate and independent existence, or even to raise the question of their separate existence is to raise *insoluble* questions—insoluble *because* irrational. Contrasts made absolute, as is often attempted for the defence of religion, lose all meaning, for they destroy the terms contrasted. So we are told by the Logician, and we would be none the worse of occasionally sitting at his feet. The contrast, possible and rational only within a unity of some kind, and as between the elements of a whole, implies that the contrasting elements borrow their meaning and their very existence from each other. Make it absolute, turn the contrast within a unity into a complete separation, where there is reference to no

unity, and the elements are destroyed. Unqualified sameness and unqualified difference are, both alike, meaningless. Neither of them was at any time the object of any rational intelligence. A whole that has no parts, parts that are parts of nothing, we never can know. Knowledge is a system of systems: every part of it is a unity of differences. It is complex throughout. It is systems that agree or disagree in our rational experience. The simplest unit that can be an object of the intelligence is already a system. Every judgment man makes is a saying of something about something. It is either a further articulation of a whole as the emphasis falls on the elements, or a clearer expression of their congruence as the emphasis falls on their unity. And the thinking in the first case is directly analytic and indirectly synthetic, and in the second case the reverse. Every judgment is thus a unity of differences. Every fact known is a system. "This" is a system—the mere "this" as distinguished from "that." It is something distinct as against something else, rounded off as against something else; and it has its own character or quality were it only that it occupies a different spot in space. Every "particular" is a system, and has its character, arising out of its qualities. The Universe as a whole is but a system of such systems, cellular throughout, so to speak, like the living body.

LECTURE V

THE WAY WE KNOW

The omission of the Unity of differences.

At the close of our last lecture, I ventured to suggest that the cause of the failure of the attempts at reconciling the demands of religion with the facts of human experience, except by compromising either the perfection of God or denying the reality of evil—and of finite existence—was a wrong view of the implications of *contrast.* The unity that makes contrast possible is overlooked. The nature of that unity, its relations to its contents, how both it and its elements can be real,—these are among the more difficult problems both of philosophy and religion. And we must confront them; but, in the meantime, what we have to observe is the omission and the results of the omission of all reference to any unity behind, or rather within the contrasted elements. We were occupied, in the first place, with the contrast between the data, and consequently between the methods of the natural sciences and of a science of religion, and the argument of those who deny the possibility of applying scientific methods to religious phenomena on the ground of the uniqueness of those phenomena. Nor do I wish to deny the validity of their argument: method does and must depend on material. Nevertheless, the differences of

method that thus arise are relatively superficial; there is, in the end, only one way of knowing. Wise men and simple, religious and irreligious, scientific and vulgar, the intuitive and the ratiocinative mind, the affirmative believer and the negative sceptic, all employ the same ultimate means of ascertaining the truth or the falsity of an appearance, and of comprehending facts. They all employ reason, and reason has always its own way of acting. The same method, however, may be put to a more or less clear or confused, perfect or imperfect use, and it is within these limits that it varies with the range and character of the data and with the purposes which the enquiry is intended to serve. The method of reason, or the way in which the intellect does its work, is exemplified in *every* judgment that man makes, and expressed in every complete sentence, written or spoken. It consists, we may say, in exposing the elements within the unity of a judgment, making their presence explicit; or in revealing the unity, by indicating the interdependence of the elements which constitute it. As a matter of fact, every sentence we form exemplifies *both* this (so-called) analytic and synthetic movement. And, as a result of knowing, the system of our more or less sane and coherent experience is enriched by the harmonious inclusion of some new appearance, or else by a fuller exposition of its contents. On the whole, the sciences exemplify the former way. Their progress, broadly considered, consists in their application to new facts (as we say), or in the discovery at the heart of some fresh particular of the presence of the dominating principle. The particular becomes an *example* of a law. The progress of philosophy and of religion and of all reflective thought

There is only one way of knowing.

The Sciences seek, Philosophy and Religion apply ultimate principles.

is of the second kind. The *implications* of experience are brought out, and the principles operative in its formation are the objects of first interest. Religion and philosophy start from these ultimate principles, live in their presence, follow them out as they exemplify themselves in particular facts and events. The reference to them is always direct and immediate. For the sciences the ultimate principle is a *terminus ad quem*, something reached after. They proceed synthetically, as we say; and they seem to the superficial observer to create and establish relations that are new, and to invent colligating conceptions. They work upwards *towards* universals, it is thought, and are in pursuit of the illuminating vision which religion and philosophy profess to have in their hands from the first.

But really they are all both synthetic and analytic.

Beyond this difference I know no other between the methods of the finite sciences and those of philosophy or of religious experience, and even this difference will not bear pressing. For, as a matter of fact, every movement of knowing is *at once* (not merely consecutively) both synthetic and analytic. Every science carries with it from the first "the law" which it is seeking to find exemplified in the facts. It has its own unique and absolutely indispensable hypothesis. There is no science till there is a hypothesis on its trial. No science consists in a collection of facts, however similar, and no science is purely descriptive or is the result solely of observation. Hence, on no hand is the contrast between the conditions of research in secular and religious phenomena anything more than *relative*. It is a contrast within, or of, the elements of a deeper unity. The contrast which was represented

No ultimate contrast of method between them.

as an obstacle in the way of scientific enquiry in the religious field is real enough within its limits, but it is not absolute nor prohibitive.

But, inasmuch as the possibility of applying scientific method to religion is a vital question, it may be well to dwell for a moment upon another aspect of it.

The whole of the rational self enters into its thinking and doing.

In every case of knowing, *all* the powers of mind are employed, and they are employed upon a datum or object, which participates in a vital way in the knowing process. So far as I know, there are now no surviving examples of the psychologist who avows belief in the existence and activity of separate faculties; but, on the other hand, neither are there many psychologists who do not make use of the conception of separate faculties. Occasionally an attempt is made to give priority to feeling, or to the intellect or to will—the will is probably the favourite of the moment. But, on the whole, I think we may dogmatize on this matter, and pass on our way. We may assume that the self is one and whole in all that it does. After all, it is the personality, A, B or C, who feels, knows or wills; and personality is not an entity hiding behind the faculties and looking on as they work.

I turn to the second point mentioned, and accentuate the fact that the cognitive powers are always employed upon, and helped by data or objects, supposed to be "given." No one ever thought of *nothing*, recognized as such. We can no more know or try to know, without the apparent resistance of an object, than we can walk without the resistance of the ground. Moreover, the object of a knowing process guides that process. The object opens one way and blocks up another; for the subject's knowing of an object is the object's

process of self-revelation through the medium of the subject. The nature of facts is shown in that which they *compel* the observing intelligence to see; or, in other words, objects *are* what they do, in relation to one another and to the mind. We recognize them by their functions. They do not stand aloof from the changes or the process through which they pass—with the process in front and the fact itself "behind." If they did, then the process would be impossible and the fact unknowable. Processes apart from facts, and facts aloof from their activities, are abstractions—the products of a way of thinking which not only distinguishes but severs and annihilates. They are the results of tearing up a unity, and in doing so destroying its elements.

But minds differ most widely in the conceptions (or experience) which they bring to the facts, and in the light of which they have no choice but to interpret them. And no *human* mind observes the whole of a fact at any time; for every fact is finally explicable only in the light of the universe to which it is related. It follows that there is no fact which we do not observe through the medium of presuppositions,—presuppositions, be it noted, which enter into the constitution of mind and affect all it does. Some of these presuppositions are true and some false, some of them relevant and some of them not, but all of them are more or less formative and constructive. The result is that the data of experience are like wet clay in the hands of men. They signify little or much, according to the mind and character which moulds and makes use of them. This is what is meant by saying that "the mind brings with it what it sees"—a truth which is

Every mind brings with it its own presuppositions.

illustrated every day in the differing interests and purposes and capacities of men.

In the next place, most of our presuppositions, especially of those presuppositions which play a decisive part in determining the direction of our lives, are unconsciously entertained, and their truth has never been examined. We are as little aware of their presence and of their activity as is the healthy man of his digestive apparatus. Psychologists who speak of consciousness as if it were extended, and refer to it as a " field," have invented " a subconscious region," in which these presuppositions abide and from which they may emerge at times. As a matter of fact, there is no such region and there are no such denizens. Consciousness is *a process*. And every process of mind reacts upon the structure and powers of the mind, persists in the results it has produced and, in that form, is carried into and takes part in the present activities of the Ego. Everything that we do not happen to think about at the moment and which has been an element of our previous experience is subconscious in this sense, but the moment it is the object of our attention it ceases to be subconscious.

The " subconscious region."

What we have now to observe is that, in this respect also, while ordinary and scientific, learned and unlearned, secular and religious men look at the world with minds which differ deeply, still the difference is the surface of an identity. All men alike are oblivious of the greater part and the deeper meanings of facts, and all alike make their own selection. Were it not that they live under the influences of the same age and that they are heirs to the same social inheritance, traditional or other, fashioned by the same creeds and habits, men

could not understand one another nor live by means of one another. But, in virtue of these influences, the differences between them become superficial and secondary. In the end the same kind of mental powers are employed by all, and they are employed in a way and under final conditions which are the same. Some minds, I need hardly say, are more imaginative, emotional, intuitive, judicious, etc., etc., than others; and psychology cannot well omit speaking of "faculties," as if they were more or less separate. In truth, these mental powers can neither exist nor act in complete independence or isolation, so long as there is sanity. There can be no judgment where there is no memory, and no memory where there has been no judgment. There is neither memory, nor judgment, nor observation, nor ratiocination, nor intuition except where there is coherence—the coherence of a system which is the more or less adequate expression of a single, sane and purposeful experience.

The ultimate condition of knowledge is a subject and object indiscerptibly related.

Further, any fact or datum of which we become aware in any way, even as a mere "this" calling for explication, already bears the marks of the working of our minds upon it. It already has a double aspect. It *is*, it is an "object" standing over against us, and it has some more or less vague meaning, value or interest for us. In a word, we never do get back to the manifold of mere sensation, nor to an "undifferentiated continuum." Nor has psychology the least right to attribute a cognitive function to feeling. We cannot even imaginatively justify the dualism of pure Ego and pure datum. We do not know what a subject having *no* object or an object of *no* subject could be. We have never discovered either except *in relation* to

its other. From beginning to end we detect them only in their interaction. We are born into and awake within a world which has been for countless centuries moulded by men; we come into it equipped with a mental apparatus at the forming of which centuries of civilization have been engaged.

The differences between men and their intellectual methods are thus relatively shallow. They fall within a deeper unity. No contrast is absolute. There is nothing quite unique. The unique were the unknowable. We speak of intuitive minds, as if there were some men to whom the laborious processes of ratiocination were a mere cumbersome redundancy. As a matter of fact, the musician and painter and poet can as little do without observation and judgment, purposeful reason and will, as they can without their intuitions. Their intuitions are always the fruition of a toilsome experience. And what is true of the aesthetic is not less true of the religious spirit. I have no difficulty in admitting, not only that there are markedly intuitive minds and that aesthetic and religious experience gives ample evidence of what is called "intuitive apprehension"; but also that the steps of that method, even if they do exist separately, cannot be separately indicated and described by psychology. Intuition leaves no footmarks. The musical movement arises within the soul, possesses it possibly to intoxication, and passes away. It has not been summoned, and it cannot be retained by any act of will. The significance of the conception of the Fatherhood of God, the consciousness of the overwhelming presence of a boundless and everlasting love, these sudden inundations are familiar to the religious mystic, and they have been

The premisses of an intuition is the whole fused and united self.

experienced by some very humble and inconspicuous followers of what is right, and they are in a sense quite inexplicable. We cannot break up the experience into the separate steps of a more or less continuous or prolonged process. But they are inexplicable only in the same sense as the breaking into blossom of the plant is inexplicable. The bud is there to-day and the rose blushes: they were not there yesterday. But the *conditions* were present and they were in operation. The change had its causes, and we can point these out. Similarly as to the intuitions of Art and Religion. Their roots, conditions, causes are real; they are elements of experience. Indeed, to call religion the noblest blossoming of human experience were not a bad definition of it.

What is characteristic of intuition is, not the absence of the conditions of a new experience, but the fulness of their presence and the intense fusion of their functions. Mind is never so really at one as in its intuitive activities. Nor at any other time is the past experience so fully present and living and active. Intuitions are the emanations of a past experience. They come only to minds or dispositions that are saturated with their conditions. They do not come out of the blue. They are not without their premisses; little as we are able to point them out when they occur. They are examples of "judgment," expressions of mind and character, and in the end differ in nothing that is fundamental from the laborious activities of slow minds. Just as all the parts of the body are involved, more or less directly, in every physiological process, so it is with mind. But with this distinction—as I may try to show more fully hereafter—that the

An intuition rests upon previous judgments though we cannot trace them.

parts of the mind, if we may use the phrase, differ from one another in a more far-reaching way than the parts of the body; and at the same time that the former interact and interpenetrate and form a unity that is much more intense. In no kind of experience, whether secular or religious, are any of these powers omitted as redundant. Whatever differences of method of enquiry and progress there may be, they fall within the unity of personality.

Mind is, we may further point out, receptive as well as creative in both its natural and its spiritual experience. It can itself furnish the data for neither. It professes to find the facts, not to fabricate them. Not one step can it go beyond the given. Man as an intelligence is as completely shut within his world, and has as completely borrowed from his world all the material of which he is made, as he is as a physical being. He cannot step outside of it. The man who is in advance of his age owes his advance to his age and is really its best product. The powerlessness of man which religious apologists have accentuated in order to emphasize the unconstrained freedom of divine benevolence is not confined to the spiritual world. Man is as little creative, he is as dependent on that which is granted him, as much an almsman standing at the door of a benevolent power in the natural, as he is in a spiritual sense. I have somewhere compared the soul of man to a city with many gates, situated on a plain and besieged by the benevolent powers of his world. Both nature and spirit, both the world of things and the world of men are perpetually proffering their gifts to him, and in the most diverse ways. If their truth and beauty and value cannot get in by one gate, they may by another. If they cannot force a

Mind is always receptive as well as formative.

And man's world is always pressing its gifts upon him.

passage, panoplied in the armour of reason, they may creep in through the darkness and silence like the mist into Milton's Eden. The aesthetic sense may give them entrance. He who is slow to hear the voice of truth speaking of morality and religion, and who is callous to all reasoning may hear them in music, or recognize their appeal in colour and form. The truth I would impress is *the friendliness* of the world to man, the co-operation and final identity of the purposes of nature and spirit. The contrast is real, but it is not absolute.

Intensity of the inter-dependence of spiritual facts.

It could be proved, I believe, that no facts are more interdependent than those of mind—the facts of knowledge, morality, art and religion. There is far less evidence of "It does not matter to me" on the higher than there is on the lower levels of mental life or spiritual life. It is the "Good" Shepherd that goes into the wilderness to seek the hundredth sheep. It is the enlightened and illumined spirit in which the purposes of its times throb, and whose good or ill fate is its own. Below the domain of mind, apart from the marvellous fact of Motherhood, animal and human, in the region we call natural there is *relative* independence and mutual externality. It is the region of *comparative* indifference, even though it is true that "we cannot change the position of a pebble without moving the centre of gravity of the Universe." In the region of mind and spirit, of truth, goodness and beauty, the contrasts are deeper, but the interpenetration and interaction of the elements are also greater. No differences are deeper, no antagonisms more direct or uncompromising than those of the spirit of truth and of falsehood, or of the wicked and virtuous will. On

the other hand, there is no unity so deep and indiscerptible as that of the mind or spirit or of the "personality" which conceives the truth or falsehood and does the right or wrong. Destroy the rational soul and there is nothing either true or false, good or evil; let it work out its destiny, and it may express itself in ways whose difference material estimates cannot measure.

I have already spoken of the concentration and intensification of interests which is the practical result of religion and the theoretical result of philosophy. Religion when it consecrates man's secular energies and powers reconstitutes them, and philosophy casts a new light upon a man's world. Such, indeed, is their true function. But, all the same, to sever the religious from the secular life, or philosophy from common-sense, as is too often done, is to take away the kernel and leave only the shell. Except as the consecration of the secular life and the new use of inner and external circumstance, religion has no value or function, and, except as the reflective re-interpretation of experience, philosophy has no cogency or truth. To sever religion from ordinary life or philosophy from the experience of the scientific and of the plain man were to empty them of their content. So that the contrast between these is at once the deepest of all contrasts, and at the same time it is constitutive of them. Religion and Philosophy are in a sense nothing more than points of view—man's *Mount Nebo*, from which he may survey his wanderings in the wilderness of his past and catch a glimpse of the land beyond his Jordan, and at least *conjecture* the destiny of a being endowed as he is with responsibilities and sleeping potencies.

The 'secular content' of the religious life and the dependence of philosophy on ordinary experience.

But the facts must be there: the scene must be before him. His religion must have what is temporal for its content. Except as re-interpreting, re-directing, transmuting the practical life of man, it has little value. Has it any at all?

Low value of the life that is severed from Religion.

But, on the other hand, what value would the secular life retain if it were completely sundered from religion? Expunge all traces of religious belief; delete all the effects it has ever had in the life of man and of human society; extinguish the hopes it has kindled, the fears it has awakened, its restraints and its inspiration, its trust in the ascendancy of what is good; reduce the meaning and reach of good to purely secular values, how much of what man treasures most would remain? Is a genuinely irreligious consciousness entitled to regard the world as a cosmos, and would any higher form of morality survive than that which is prudential and radically self-regarding and responsive to no imperatives that could be called duties? What is the range of the purely "natural" virtues of man? Could any virtue survive if an ultimate good were known not to exist? The moral lights would certainly be very low, and man's strides to his ill-lit purposes would be hesitating. And would the conception or the hope, or even the desire of immortality survive? Could man wish to extend his existence in a world where there was no Best in power; pursuing interests incapable of being reconciled, all of them perishable; the inequalities of the present life finally uncorrected and justice sitting powerless? For it is such a scene as that which the life of mankind presents if no spiritual principles connect its details and give them significance, and if it terminates finally here.

Huxley, standing at the side of the grave of his little son, was shocked at hearing the words of Paul—"If the dead rise not let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." "Paul," he said, "had neither wife nor child, or he must have known that his alternative involved a blasphemy against all that was best and noblest in human nature. I could have laughed with scorn." Huxley was right in rejecting the Pauline alternative, and in attributing high value to the natural affections. But the best and noblest in human nature of which he spoke were themselves the slow results of the faith in the possibility and power of the Best, which religion is and of which mankind has never been altogether bereft. Human nature owes its sublimity to a faith in a sane order, within which failures are not necessarily final. Destroy the possibility of the Best, and the very thought of it, secure the complete triumph of the secular spirit,—one wonders what ties would bind human beings together in any form of society, and what manner of love would remain between man and maid, parent and child, or neighbour and neighbour.

Huxley on St. Paul's treatment of the natural affections.

I venture to say that both believers and sceptics would be less ardent in their advocacy of their severed regions, the one all sacred and the other all secular, if they faced the meaning of the exclusive contrast somewhat more fully and frankly.

I do not deny the contrast: I do not even minimize it. I am trying rather to show the conditions of its possibility. It must rest on a deeper unity: or, in other words, its elements must fall within what comprehends them both, and they must imply that unity in their very antagonism.

Difficulty of reconciling the demands of religion with the character of man as a "natural" being.

This unity is not discoverable if we seek it in anything "*beyond*" their difference. It is not a thing standing by itself. It consists in their mutual interpenetration. But how shall we define it? What is the character of the bond that unites the divine and human, as all religion, and as the Christian religion so explicitly, demands? What community of nature can exist between the Infinite and the Finite, the Everlasting Real, the Might and the Goodness that are Unlimited and man's petty and sin-stained phenomenal existence? Every detail of the work of the Being which men worship as the World's Creator, every least fact that falls within man's comprehension extends also beyond it; we can touch only the outer rim of the secrets of the simplest natural phenomenon. There is infinite suggestion in everything, and we know nothing fully. How then can we presume to know *Him?* Are not all our conceptions necessarily anthropomorphic? And how can anything that is true of man, his mode of knowing little by little and, at the best, of learning goodness by petty stages —a life spent in the flux of time and change, dying and being born again at every instant, always making and never made,—how can any figure we borrow from it be true of the static perfection usually attributed to the Deity? Our minds are not only influenced by, they are built up of our own shifting experiences. We call our God—Leader in Battle, Lord of Hosts, Judge, Father—we speak of him as angry, as taking vengeance on his enemies, as condemning, approving, caring for man, all according to the level of culture we presume to possess and the mood we are in. What do we ever see, except the reflection of our own faces? How

dare we create our gods in our own image? What *can* bridge the difference that divides the Everlasting God from the passing show we call man? And yet, when the religious consciousness is at its noblest height, and is most worthy of man, and, I will add, most true in its testimony, it makes man share the divine life. The infinite perfection of limitless love actually lives in man. Every good man is the Child of God, and his life in its strivings for goodness is the divine perfection operating within him. God incarnates himself anew in all his children. What is merely human is lost to view. Even man's will, his inmost being and ultimate self, as we think it, is swallowed up. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13). "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (II Cor. iii. 5). "So now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. i. 20, 21). Here is complete identification, a losing of one's self in utter devotion and dedication, and at the same time that marvellous recovery of the self which entitles man to say—"I and the Father are One."

Man makes God in his own image but often draws a false picture of both.

In the presence of such an amazing elevation of the human into union with the divine, there is small wonder that the contrast even of the highest moral life with the religious has been regarded as final. The value of morality seems to sink into nothingness. The whole moral region is one scene of failure, a striving that never attains. For does not the very striving rest on unsound principles? As moral, man professes

The contrast of morality and religion.

to work out his own salvation, and instead of religious trust there is self-dependence.

Does not the contrast amount even to discrepancy? Morality leaves no room for God: man is the maker of his own destiny. Religion leaves no room for man: it is not I that live, but Christ lives in me. And yet, what value would we set upon a Religion that does not saturate the moral life and lift it into sublimity if it be great; or if it be a very humble life, impart to it imperishable beauty?

The contrast solved in practice by truly religious men.

I believe you will agree with me that if we look in a simple and truthful spirit upon the lives which we would unhesitatingly call "religious," they possess both of these characteristics. They differ decisively from the lives we would regard as typically secular; and yet they are occupied, and necessarily occupied, with the same natural wants, hemmed in, like all other lives, by space and time, and the objects and events which jostle each other therein.

What solution can there be of a problem which demands at the same time a unity and a difference of such depth? For there is no doubt that religious faith demands both, or that it loses both its truth and its worth in the degree in which either the unity or the difference of the secular and the sacred is reduced.

LECTURE VI

SCIENTIFIC HYPOTHESIS AND RELIGIOUS FAITH

I HAVE attributed the failure of the attempts to reconcile the presuppositions on which religion rests and the demands it makes with our ordinary secular experience to the fact that the unity which must underlie the contrast has been overlooked—an oversight which makes the contrast absolute and unconditional. The last lecture was occupied throughout in pointing to evidence of the existence of such a unity. Beneath the differences of method, which are quite real, and which both the scientific and the religious enquirers must admit and respect, there lies the fact that there is only one ultimate way of knowing. It consists in finding a place for new phenomena within our system of experience, or in re-interpreting that experience in the light of the new demands of life. For experience grows like a living thing. It is always a system, always analogous to a living organism, and every part of it participates in every process and all of it is always changing. No one maintains that one part of the organism is nourished one day and another part another day. And, in like manner, it should be admitted that the whole system of our experience is enriched by a

Only one way of knowing.

new truth, or a new practical triumph. I indicated also that all the powers of mind were involved in the process of knowing, whether the data were religious or secular, and that every mind brought with it presuppositions which controlled and guided the knowing process. Moreover, I tried to show the part which the objects of knowledge took in the process, and ventured to represent "nature," "natural" facts, "natural" tendencies, "natural" interrelations between man and man, "natural" or secular interest as a whole, not as obstacles to the life of spirit, but as supplying that life with its content. The world, both natural and spiritual, is constantly proffering its gifts to man, and he that hath ears to hear listens to its beauty, its order, its goodness and its truth. Those who best know the history of religion, know best what a profound change of attitude towards "nature" on the part of religion this implies. Finally, I tried to suggest what poverty-stricken abstractions the religious and the secular life would be were they sundered. And I ventured to say that both those who value religion rather than morality, and also those who deem religion of little import if the course of life be moral, would gain by facing more frankly the contrast which they set up. For, beyond doubt, the truly religious man does, somehow, in his practical life reconcile these forces, and no unprejudiced observer can deny the splendour of the result.

Natural facts, our helps to spiritual attainment.

Emptiness of both morality and religion if parted.

The problem of a science of religion is to set forth, in a definition which can be justified, that principle which, in the practice of the religious man, brings about the miracle of the harmony of the divine and human and lifts the secular to the level of the sacred.

The rival conceptions of the believer and the sceptic.

It may be of use to recall our conception of Religion as, on the theoretical side, a point of view from which man sees what seems to him, at the time, to be ultimately real, self-sustained and absolutely worthy, in the light of which conception he re-interprets and re-valuates all the facts of the secular life. The reflective religious spirit, so far as I have found, never doubts but that somehow, somewhere, some-when, the restoration of man is complete and the redemption of the world is final. "God's in his Heaven: All's right with the world!" is a vital conviction to religion and true to him who thinks of "the world" in its context and not as a separate item. For it means that, in the light of his belief in a God who is perfect in power and goodness, this world of ours, and the most wild and incalculable facts within it, namely the lives of men, are factors in a system, to be judged not by themselves but as parts of the system into which they fit and which amply justifies them. On the other hand, so far as I can see, the sceptic who considers that the conceptions on which religion is based are man's own inventions, and that man's gods are just the reflections of his own face, and his faith a farce, must regard the whole realm of the real as also a farce, and a tragically sad farce. The whole order of the Universe must collapse for the sceptic. He possesses no explanation of his own, and can suggest no conception for the solution of the riddle. Between the view that affirms and that which denies the existence of a unity that makes the universe a rational whole there comes, of course, one of the most inept of all metaphysical theories, namely, the *Pluralism* that "lets contingency into the very heart

of things." I shall not try your patience by criticizing it.[1]

Objections to identifying religious faith with scientific hypothesis.

From this point of view, namely, the theoretical, the faith of the religious man is strictly analogous to the hypothesis of the scientific man. But the religious consciousness is ready to revolt against the notion that its faith is just a hypothesis. A hypothesis is usually held to be a mere guess, invented by man's ingenuity as a possible solution of some problem, or as a tentative explanation of some facts. A hypothesis is a conjecture on its trial. Its existence is threatened by every relevant fact which it cannot explain, and it is finally destroyed by one single "crucial instance" that refuses to illustrate it. Moreover, it is liable at every moment to be supplanted by some simpler, more fundamental or far-reaching hypothesis. An Einstein comes after our Newtons, and at least startles the world. The whole progress of science, when it takes long strides, illustrates this revolutionary kind of advance that comes from the substitution of one hypothesis for another.

In the next place, a hypothesis, however true, is only a theory. It concerns, primarily at least, the intellect only, not "the heart" or the will or the ends of men. In short, a hypothesis is a mere conception, we are told, a universal that promises to colligate ideas, but points to no fact and is not a reality which a man may experience as a force within or without him, against which he jostles whether he understands it or not. No man will commit his life to the care and guidance of a hypothesis recognized as such. What

[1] See my "Philosophical Landmarks" in *The Rice Institute Pamphlet* for June, 1915.

guides conduct must be assumed to be *ontologically* true, it must be a *faith*. But, for the scientific man to convert his hypothesis into a faith were to betray the very spirit of science. A hypothesis must not turn into a dogma, and the scientific man is the servitor of no *creed*. Hypotheses, consequently, can not transform character. They have no practical *vim*. They have by no means proven themselves, as religious faith has done, to be of all forces the strongest in man's history. The difference is vital, and must not be obscured. Even philosophers, who are supposed to attenuate realities into abstractions, will say that "If the belief in God is simply an hypothesis . . . it is worth nothing at all. Ideas have certain sustaining powers, even though they are wholly our own fabrications; but no idea that is such a pure launch of our own imagination into the unknown—and nothing more—has any permanent sustaining power. . . . God can be of worth to man only in so far as he is a *Known* God."[1] As long as we have only probabilities and hypotheses to refer to in these matters we have nothing at all.

A hypothesis inadequate for religion.

The difference between a scientific hypothesis and religious faith seems to be fundamental. The sciences may conjecture, religion must "*know*": that is to say, it must be a matter experienced. Our ordinary beliefs rest on grounds, follow from premisses, are held to be valid in virtue of their connection with other truths. The truths of a scientific system must in this way depend on one another. If you demand a proof of anyone of them you are referred back to something else—and it has been maintained that such a reference is endless and that, in the end, *all* our knowledge rests

Religion a matter of experience not of theoretical conjecture.

[1] Hocking's *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, pp. 214-15.

upon conjecture, or is hypothetical, and hangs in mid-air by an "if." But religion as a matter of experience is held to be a witness to its own validity. This experience itself is the final court of appeal, and its authority is supposed to be higher and more unerring than that of any logic. The religious believer on this view is not required to uphold his faith by means of his intellect. Arguments have no force; they cannot touch, either to strengthen or to weaken, what springs from a man's own "experience."

On such grounds as these religious experience has appeared to have a claim for exceptional regard and reliance. He who maintains this view may see that by this method he loses the support of the intellect, but he certainly does not, as a rule, realize the results of losing that support. He does not see that, without the testimony of the intellect, he is not entitled to say that his experience is *true*, however undeniable it may be that he has had it. That he has had an experience is no proof of its truth, otherwise all personal experiences would be true. They have all occurred as events of some inner life, but some of them may have a very low value, or even be deceptive. The happening of an event in a man's inner life is one thing, the meaning and value to be attributed to it is another. It is quite certain that we can call nothing either true or false until the intellect has dealt with its meaning and found its place amongst facts which are open to the observation of *every* intelligence. The privacy or subjective nature of it destroys its uses for knowledge. But the religious devotee overlooks these facts, and refuses to make any appeal to the intelligence at the very moment that he claims credence to his

Hence it is independent of the support of the intellect and likewise of its attacks.

assertions. Browning's Pope refuses even to raise the question of the being or character of his God:

> "I
> Put no such dreadful question to myself,
> Within whose circle of experience burns
> The central truth, Power, Wisdom, Goodness—God."

He assumed that because this *conviction* burnt within him, it must be true; and thought there was no need for argument. But have not false convictions burnt? His evidence was within, deep as his own life, a veritable part of his life; he could not but accept it.

> "I must outlive a thing ere know it dead;
> When I outlive the faith there is a sun,
> When I lie, ashes to the very soul,—
> Someone, not I, must wail above the heap."[1]

Someone else must deny, and very likely someone else will be found to do it, on the ground that *he* has had no such experience or even that he has experienced the opposite.

But we must examine this very common attitude of men towards religious experience with some care, and find out what truth it uses as gilding to its errors.

1. It cannot be denied that religion verily is, through and through, a matter of experience. The domain of religious faith is that of practice, while hypotheses, scientific or other, are, as a rule, considered to be essentially and primarily theoretic affairs and nothing more. It follows naturally that proof, disproof, and doubt must differ in the two cases. The test of a religious faith lies in the kind of behaviour that it inspires and controls, and in the contribution it makes to human well-being. The proof is pragmatic. It is

That Religion verily is a matter of experience and subject to the Pragmatic test.

[1] *The Ring and the Book*, 1630-7

like the test of an invention, and in nowise like the arguments for or against a theory. It consists in observing "how it works." But the test of a hypothesis is its agreement or disagreement with other ideas which are regarded as true, or with the system of experience that is relevant. If I accept such and such a statement, what opinions, if any, must I change? Can I admit that the three angles of a triangle are together equal to two-and-a-half right angles? Not without overthrowing the whole system of my mathematical experience. It is all a matter of the coherence of thoughts with thoughts.

Now this difference between a matter of faith and a hypothesis is real, but it is quite superficial, and in the last resort disappears. The practical test is also a test by the intellect. The intelligence must look on, guide and judge what the hand does. Practice only supplies new premisses, and it supplies these only to the observant intelligence. Handling a thing, placing it in different relations reveals new qualities. You know more about a piece of leather if you hammer it, bend it, cut it; you multiply the ways in which it reacts, and give new opportunities for your intelligence to observe the new aspects. But, without the intelligence, nay, without previous relevant knowledge, great or small, practice amounts to nothing. Man must *interpret* his experience, and *find* all the meaning and value they can have; and he finds nothing that does not penetrate his intelligence, more or less, and pass muster before his judgment. Practice supplies data; it is the intelligence which proves, disproves, accepts or rejects; and in questions of truth and error there is no appeal from it, nor the need of any appeal.

2a But if religious experience does not render the operations of the " theoretical " intelligence superfluous, it must not be concluded that it has no value. It does supply data. The religious man in virtue of his experience can call a witness and appeal to a court which are beyond the reach of the non-religious man. He is entitled to say what religion has meant for him : how it has determined the direction of his life, transmuted it in every detail in virtue of the supreme worth of its ends, sustained him in the pursuit of these ends, and made the pursuit itself a triumphant attainment. But the non-religious man, not having had any such experience, must do without its testimony and speak from incomplete knowledge. The fact, process, reality of religion is not known to him on its inner, or subjective side. Religion is a matter of hearsay to him. At the very best he can only form the opinions of a looker-on. He is like a deaf man who, having been taught the physics of sound and laws of harmony, approves or condemns a piece of music; but he has never heard a note, he knows nothing of the ravishment of music and cannot conceive what it is like. Neither the non-religious man, nor the deaf man, know all about their subject so long as they are without the personal experience, however correct their theories. Do they know the real thing at all, seeing that they have never known its splendour invade the soul ?

Religious experience supplies data, lacking which the irreligious man is a mere looker-on.

The looker-on at religion, the secular-minded sceptic, must recognize his limits. And I may say quite plainly here that a great deal of the scepticism of the present day is for these reasons not worthy of respect. Men reject what they have never tried, and condemn what they have never seriously or systema-

Shallow scepticism.

tically reflected upon. They have been engaged with other things than those which are spiritual, and which concern the making of their manhood. The affairs of religion are as foreign to them as the computations of higher mathematics, and their judgment of the former has as little value as their knowledge of the latter. They have not tried it in practice; they do not know its history; they are not within reach of advanced argument either for or against religion. Their morality is traditional, and the whole movement of their thoughts is in another region and on another plane than that of religion. And, many of them being prosperous in a worldly sense, they are not in the least aware how contemptible they are in a higher and deeper sense.

The two aspects of Truth and of Goodness.

But having thus fully conceded the value of the personal aspect of religious experience, I must point out that religious experience is in this respect the same as every other experience, wise or foolish, of every other object, however secular. Every experience is on one side unique and private. Every act and attitude of my mind is my own and no one else's. My neighbours and I may know the same things, form the same opinions of them, will the same good, seek to serve our fellows in the same ways; nevertheless, every one of my activities is my own, and theirs is theirs. However many men may conclude that $2 \times 8 = 16$ (or children may think that 2×8, may be "9, or 10, or 11," giving one an option !), each comes to his own conclusion and has had his own little mathematical experience. Human personality and everything belonging to it are very private—even though privacy is by no means the whole truth concerning them. No other being, human or divine, can occupy the seat of

my individuality, and look at facts with the eyes of my soul or with my volitions. But we cannot conclude from this that every experience I happen to have had is out of reach of criticism. It may be misleading even to myself. The privacy of an experience is no test of its value. Otherwise all experience would be true and good. We should ask, rather, whether truth is ever a private affair, and nothing more. Must what is true not be true for every intelligence that can apprehend it? And what of the Good? It cannot be willed except privately, and by a personality which is, at least in one sense, lonely and exclusive. But, on the other hand, the Good has an intrinsic and universal character which depends upon no individual, not even upon God. Or, is the moral world made up of beings every one of whom has his own private moral code, and special kind of virtues, which no one else can share? On the contrary, the universality, the community of spiritual realities is, to say the least, as real and as fundamental, as their individuality. "To every one his own Religion," in an exclusive sense, is as absurd as—"To every one his own Mathematics." Reconcile the privacy or singularity and the community of different experiences as we may, it is evident that neither religion nor any other kind of rational experience can lack either of these two characters.

The test of the validity and worth of an experience is always objective.

But the validity or truth of an experience lies in its universality, and in no sense in its privacy. The experience as an occurrence, or event, or process, or fact is personal, like my holding this pen at this moment. As mere happenings all experiences are on the same level. They mean nothing, and, therefore, cannot be true or false till they are dealt

with by the intelligence. But the moment meaning or worth is attributed to a matter of experience, the moment it is held to be true or false, good or bad, that moment the experience has become an interpreted and evaluated fact, an object of observation and judgment, a thing in the object-world, standing over against the knowing mind, just as truly as the pole-star. That a man is moved by a religious faith is thus one thing, that his faith is valid or valuable is quite another. The subjective side of experience furnishes no test. Men have been deeply moved by bad religious beliefs, and they have done "heroic deeds" of the most atrocious kind.

It remains that the objective side of religious faith, as of all other beliefs, is that which counts. "By their fruits shall ye know them." Things declare their nature by what they do. They *are* what they do. In no way, or degree, can religious belief escape the tests we apply to other convictions. Its claim to be true and not false brings religion out into the open. It is liable to be attacked by the whole world, and, if it is true, it is capable of being upheld and ratified by the whole world. Indeed, so far from being less a matter for the intelligence than others, less liable to attack, or less capable of support, it is much more. Religion claims ultimate truth and final worth. It comes forth as the supreme interpreter. If religion is, in its nature, true, then it must provide the possibility of reconciling all the contradictions of existence and perverse incongruities of man's behaviour and apparent destiny. Its truth will be justly tested and tried and even doubted as long as there is one incident that has not found its fitting place. Religion cannot

Hence the fundamental conceptions on which Religion is made to rest must stand their trial like all other conceptions.

be true now and then or here and there only, any more than Mathematics can. On the other hand, if religion is in its essence a delusion, then, so far as I can see, the whole order of the universe collapses. For religion professes to reveal the ultimate principle of that order. The only alternative that lies before the sceptic is the view, that at the heart of the real there lurks the insane.

Religion must to the end of time, for mankind as a whole, swing somewhere between these two extremes. It must be the healing of all man's sorrows, if it is to heal any of them. Hence any new event, any fresh sorrow, or any added ill, summons religion before the bar and tries its sufficiency. Religion is always on its trial, always under judgment, and it is on its part always judging man and pronouncing his destiny. Ages and individuals may vary indefinitely as to the degree and the grounds of their belief or unbelief. There are individuals, and possibly there have been ages, so peaceful or so triumphant that the hardest of all trials brings to them no devastating doubts. Their faith is

> "Safe like the signet-stone with the new name
> That saints are known by."

Their God is not dead but living, and he is not far away. They lie upon his bosom always. Such souls as these we have seen. They have the beauty of flowers and their sweet modesty. There are other souls, however, and these are the greater helpers of mankind as a rule, who, like tall oaks, must battle with all the winds of heaven. These greater servants of man, these Redeemers of the world, have not laboured their life-long under a clear sky. They

The power and value of the religious believer.

have striven in darkness with despair and doubt. Who was it who cried, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani"? Do you think that his despair, the conviction that God had *already* abandoned him, was unreal? He asked not whether but why. And do we not hear the ring of battle, even in the song of triumph of St. Paul, as it breaks out in the battle's pause? It was, verily, no carpet knight who challenged the powers and cried, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?.... Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."[1] The heroes of the religious life

"Grapple danger, whereby souls grow strong,"

and they prove anew that—"All, to the very end, is trial." And the trial is not at its height so long as any faith in final issues remain, and there is any outlook onward. It is a fiery, it is a life-or-death trial, not when a particular item in a creed or a particular kind of religion fails, but when the truth and possibility of any religion is uncertain. As long as any good survives and is unconquerable, any Best on which man may place either his trust or his life, things are not at their worst. The waters of the deluge have begun to "assuage" already if there is food on the earth, were it only for ravens. But the failure of religion is the collapse of the hypothesis on which every true or real good rests. If the perfect is not, then are all minor degrees of good unreliable: man dare not lean against them. The Universe were an arch without a key-stone.

The break-down of religious faith.

[1] Romans viii. 35 and 37.

It is for this reason that I call religious faith the supreme hypothesis, because religion bears upon the whole destiny of man and of all that he values, as does the scientific hypothesis upon all that comes within the borders of the science. There is nothing real except in virtue of it, nothing intelligible except in its light. If the hypothesis breaks down, nothing remains except unintelligible chaotic particulars.

Religious faith the supreme hypothesis.

There would be less reluctance to call religious faith "a hypothesis," if the functions of hypothesis in knowledge and in practical life were better known. But we are least aware and most oblivious of the value of those conditions of well-being which are at once permanent and universal. The gifts that come to man by inheritance, as potencies in his very structure at birth; the treasury of slowly accumulated traditions and habits of living into which he enters little by little, day by day, as a member of society, are by far the richest of all his possessions. But they are not even known to exist until reflection enters, and those who reflectively reconstruct their experience are very few. The absence of these elements, the foreign make of the soul of a neighbour, may reveal their value. So it is with the hypotheses on which depends the order of the world and the possibility of rational conduct therein: I mean the hypotheses of morality and free religion; the conviction that the spiritual powers are in the last resort dominant, and that there is nothing finally good except goodness. Their presence and their use are universal, but the recognition of them is rare.

The function of hypothesis in ordinary life.

Except for hypotheses, facts and events would seem to us to stand in no relation of any kind to one another.

We could not call some of them causes and some of them effects: for causality is a hypothesis or conjectured relation. No one has ever actually perceived a cause. According to Hume we can perceive only sequence; if the sequence is unvaried and we expect it to be invariable, we call it a "cause." Again, looking within ourselves we affirm that we are selves, or have souls. On what grounds? We are told on all hands that we have never perceived our self or our soul as a fact, apart from its passive and active changes. What we perceive—at best—are occurrences, activities, feelings, thoughts, volitions; but of the self supposed to lie beneath, in which these events seem to occur, we have no direct evidence. The idea of a soul or self is on this view another explanatory supposition. We are told that we merely assume, or form the hypothesis, of a continuity behind these events and changes, and we give the name "soul" or "self" to it.

It is usual to regard hypotheses as the rare products of rare minds during moments of inspiration. They are supposed to be inventions of the imagination, intuitive creations that seem to spring up of themselves, lightning flashes from a blue sky, due neither to objects nor to mental effort. As a matter of fact, they are born from the intercourse of mind and objects like all other knowledge; and as I have tried to show, they are as genuine a result of the previous interaction of the inner and outer conditions of knowing as any other conceptions. No doubt there is an instant when "the light breaks," the happening of what seems new. And we cannot explain it. Nor do we realize that to try to explain "the new" is absurd. It is to try to

The contradiction of explaining the "new."

prove that it really is not new; for the explanation of an object runs it back to a previous state and finds it there. We cannot, in fact, catch change and arrest it in the act.

As regards even the simpler changes, like the transmutations of physical energy, they occur we know not well how. But first there is one form, then there is another, and there is a fixed and definite quantitative relation between the two forms. This relation the Physicist will reveal to us; and as his science progresses he finds ever new stages or differences or "links," which are a more and more suggestive revelation of the reality which changes. For change implies both of these opposed aspects. It is never known except as a process in and of a continuous reality, and that reality is never found except in the succession of its differences. And these two, the continuous and the changing, the same and the different, the one and the many, mean nothing apart and must be grasped in their relation.

The occurrence of the new is thus characteristic of all growing experience, however stunted it may be. And we err greatly in confining our notions of hypotheses to those great scientific occasions on which a new science is born, or born again—as when a Copernicus, Newton or Darwin makes his revolutionary contributions. Maturing experience, which finds new depths of meaning in old truths, exemplifies the operation of hypotheses in a more peaceful way. The same miracle happens whenever the puzzled mind extricates itself from a difficulty, masters a problem, and cries, "I see." Such vision always seems sudden, and it *is* an event, and an event of great importance.

The hypotheses on which our experience rests are modified by the growth of that experience.

For the conception, mere guess though it seems at first, illuminates with meaning the whole extent of the material to which it is applied. More accurately, the meaning that was in the material all along is discovered. The facts express themselves more fully in the new mental process which supervenes when the two related factors of knowledge co-operate.

That every step in the growth of knowledge comes through this outbreak of hypotheses, that the operation of hypotheses is universal, only enhances their significance. There is everywhere, in different degrees, evidence of their illuminating power. They explain what was unintelligible before, connect what seemed to be mere irrelevant and scattered contingencies, and they culminate in systems whose elements fit into and support each other. The details of the system illustrate the hypotheses, and the hypotheses reveal the real being of the details. For the universal is the truth of the particulars, and the particulars are the manifestations of the universal.

The significance of hypotheses as affecting every element of experienee.

It is not easy to exaggerate the significance of hypotheses. Their coming is the dawn of order and the fixing of the firmament—a feat of creation. No least fact within the domain of the new conception remains unaffected, either in its rank and value, or in its use and meaning. It becomes an item in a new world and one of the foci of its universal laws. It derives its being, its force and function from the new principle, and it supports it in turn. For the scheme of which a hypothesis is the principle is a system in equipoise, like the planetary system. It is not a building resting on a foundation. There is no truth that has independent, separate, axiomatic validity, any

more than there can be a moral principle that has not the moral universe at its back. Every part of a system of knowledge, in so far as it is true, sustains and is sustained by every other: and the seat of its life is everywhere, and most in evidence where it is most threatened. The defence and the safety of the whole belongs to every part, and, on the other hand, the whole is exposed to the peril that menaces any part. In truth, the relation of whole and part is more intense than that of any living organism; for facts of mind interpenetrate more intimately than physical facts and events. The hypothesis or the principle, and its applications, have one destiny. If they acquire meaning, or if they lose it, they do so together. And the significance of their inter-relation is always the same. His world comes to pieces in the plain man's hand when a familiar hypothesis proves false, just as a mathematician's would collapse if $2+2$ were shown to be not 4, but 5. In a word, the power of hypotheses is as real in the thinking of the plain man as in that of Darwin.

Moreover, hypotheses in the process of their application acquire meaning and security. A hypothesis that has been true from the first becomes, in a sense, more true as knowledge grows. The central hypothesis, if valid, is ratified more and more in new instances, "gains under new applications," as we say, and gains especially when its application was unexpected, and it seems to explain facts that appeared to be remote and unconnected with its province. As its domain extends, every item within its authority gains fresh meaning and use. The hypothesis of Evolution, first effectively applied by Darwin to plants and animals, not only

The hypothesis of Evolution and how it preserves the past.

created the science of Biology, but threw its rays into other fields. At first it was supposed to "animalize" man and despiritualize the world; but in the hands of modern Idealism that conception has been found to yield a final refutation of all theories that account for results by origins, and which try to explain the last in terms of the first, thereby reducing the higher to the level of the low. Evolution suggests a solution of the ultimate dualism of mind and its objects, and contains the promise of boundless help to religious faith. Existences that seemed to perish, lives that seemed to fail and utterly pass away, become in its light stages in an unbroken history. For evolution is not only a conception that opens out into the future a boundless vista: it also redeems the past. Instead of the wide waste of lost causes that human history presented, each little life reaching at best its little ends and then, so far as its earthly career went, perishing forever, we find that its meaning and substance are carried forward into the very structure of the present. The past does not perish; its passing away is superficial appearance. In matters of mind and character, above all others, what *was* persists. The thoughts and deeds become propensities, beliefs, purposes, principles of action, habits and capacities.

Its effect on religious faith.

There is hardly any science, or any region of man's vital interests, in which the significance of the conception of evolution has not become evident. And, for my part, the value and power of religion must receive measureless expansion when its fundamental truths are regarded and dealt with in the same way: not as authoritative dogmata, not as revelations from without or from beyond the facts themselves, not as

fixed and unalterable; but as the best explanation we can find, as the essential truth and innermost value of the facts of man's every-day life in this every-day world.

Now, the hypothesis on which religion rests is comprehensive and daring beyond all others. And the more developed the religion the more stupendous its daring. In all the Universe, for religious faith, I repeat once more, there can be no fact ultimately out of hand: there can be no legitimate purposes which are not reconciled, and no interests which, in the last resort, are not within the grasp of law, and modes of working of what is Perfect. And the reconciliation is not of mere aspects, nor of shallow appearances. On the contrary, where the religious hypothesis has gripped the soul, and become a belief on which a man dares to live, the contradictions of pain, suffering, yea, the suffering of the innocent, and sin itself, are somehow held to be overcome. We have but to follow out their history to find that, real as they are, their destiny is to serve. The Perfect is found everywhere in power. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." [1]

The religious hypothesis the most insecure as well as the most daring of all.

But, surely, it will be said, the religious hypothesis is, according to such a doctrine, the most insecure as well as the most daring of all constructive conceptions; whereas religious faith is absolute trust, a giving utterly and finally away not only of this or that private interest but of the very self. No hypothesis, as a hypothesis,

[1] Ps. cxxxix. 8, 9, 10.

can ever be finally proved: human knowledge is never complete. And yet, the hypothesis must be ready to answer every call. It is at the mercy of every fact or event that seems to refuse to fit into the system which the hypothesis informs.

What shall we say to these objections? Both of them are, so far as I can see, valid: but within their own region, they can be urged in the same way against all hypotheses, even those of Mathematics. No hypothesis is completely worked out; and every hypothesis breaks down when faced with one genuinely contradictory instance. But, on the other hand, we do not reject a hypothesis on the ground that we have not been able to apply it to a particular case, nor do we represent it as what surpasses human comprehension. And this is the measure which is usually meted to the religious hypothesis. We think that natural laws are constant and that all physical events have causes, even though we cannot account for the changes of the weather or measure the forces that toss the tree-tops. "Not proven" is not mis-interpreted and regarded as "dis-proved." But if we cannot trace the goodness of God in an untoward incident or calamity, especially if the calamity has fallen upon ourselves, we are prone to deny his existence, or his power or his goodness. The apparent exception to a natural law, as the history of science has frequently shown, often turns into the most striking proof of the validity of the hypothesis. The apparent exception in religion is at once assumed to disprove its validity.

Now, in all these matters the religious and the scientific hypotheses are in character the same. There are no differences except those which spring

from the comprehensiveness and the finality of the religious hypothesis. The scientific hypothesis applies only to an aspect or a department of what is real, and is always dependent on conceptions which have not been proved. Hence its validity can be directly challenged, and it can be either ratified or rejected by the facts of its own limited field. But a fundamental religious hypothesis is challenged and imperilled from every quarter; and for the same reason, if it is valid, it is not beyond the reach of doubt till it is verified in every quarter. If God is, and if he is perfect in love and power, then the whole realm of things natural and spiritual, when it is interpreted in the fulness of its meaning, will be found to illustrate and establish these truths. If not, then, so far as I can see, no reasonable account of the apparent order of the universe can be offered. To call it the work of chance, as the sceptic used to do, is to make a larger and more impossible demand than any religion makes.

> "I say the acknowledgment of God in Christ
> Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
> All questions in the earth and out of it," [1]

says Browning. In the whole Universe there was for him

> "No detail but, in place allotted it, was prime
> And perfect." [2]

On the other hand, one instance of the failure of the hypothesis to render the true and ultimate meaning of any fact, one event ultimately irreconcilable with the hypothesis would destroy it.

[1] *A Death in the Desert.* [2] Browning, *Fifine at the Fair.*

> "Of absolute and irretrievable
> And all-subduing black—black's soul of black,
> Beyond white's power to disintensify
> Of that I saw no sample: Such may wreck
> My life and ruin my philosophy." [1]

The religious hypothesis must re-explain and justify the present world.

Nor is it enough that wrongs and ills should be rectified in the end, and that there should be some inexhaustible recompense. The whole of the confused and, so far as we can see, cruel history of the struggle of beast with beast and man with man and both with nature, must, somehow, prove to be at every step the fulfilment of a perfect will, which to the Christian means a Will which is all Love. Nature itself, on this view, must be interpreted in a way that directly contradicts the tenets of both the theology and the science of the end of the last century. Nature was an obstacle to the spiritual life according to the former; and for the latter, as represented by Huxley, it was the scene of struggle for existence, and either directly antagonistic or entirely alien to the moral life of man. Now it is seen that its purpose and meaning must reach beyond that of a sublime cosmos. Seen in the context of that which is spiritual, and in the light of religion, nature must be found to have a spiritual significance in and through its product, man.

And if we turn to man himself, there we must find, if this hypothesis be true, evidence of one, and only one process—the process of producing the highest, namely, moral character. So far, we have been prone to be satisfied with looking for the power of religion only in the life of the saints and mystics, as they stood the strain of imprisonment, torture, death and the con-

[1] *A Bean-Stripe.*

tempt of men. But the validity and inexpressible value of religious faith will seem almost more convincing if we witness its power in inconspicuous and unrecorded lives. How can we overlook the splendour of the religious hypothesis, if we observe how the consciousness of God's presence and irradiating love accompanies the mother as she goes about her domestic duties, or sits at the bed of her sick child; or as it attends, as the silent background of his life, the labourer in the field, the craftsman in his workshop, the man of business behind his counter or in his office, making their lives clean and human and beautiful and the obvious service of the Best. There could be no more signal proof of the power and truth of religion than its capacity to penetrate and convert the economic spirit of these times.

The religious man when he looks around seems to me to be entitled to say that while the religious hypothesis, like all others, is never finally proved, it is always and everywhere in the act of being proved. It is the one thing that is being done throughout creation. It is the experiment—the Grand Perhaps of the Universe, on which both nature and spirit are engaged. The consciousness of the omnipresence of the unutterable goodness of the Divine Being is being gradually deepened. There is no incident in man's life, no outer circumstance in his world, but at the magic touch of religious faith will be heard by the religious spirit to testify to the unlimited goodness of God.

I admit at once that the fulness of religious trust does not prove the truth of the religious hypothesis. Men have trusted their very souls to errors and delusions. But, on the other hand, if there are

The Universe as the Spiritual Laboratory and the experimental test of the "Grand Perhaps."

certain forms of the religious faith, certain hypotheses, which deepen the meaning of natural facts, which amplify and extend the suggestiveness of the natural sciences, and so far from traversing their findings, accept and invite them; and if in the world of human conduct they dignify human character, add reach and sanity to man's aims, construct and consolidate human society, elevate and secure the life of man and make for peace and mutual helpfulness amongst the nations—if, in one word, a form of religious faith, or hypothesis, *works* in these ways, then, indeed, is the proof of its validity strong; stronger than the proof of any other hypothesis, because wider and deeper. The truth or falsity of the religious hypothesis is manifestly the paramount issue for man; and, one might expect, would overcome the indifference which is characteristic both of the shallow belief and of the shallow scepticism of our time.

It is on this account that we are entitled, in all earnestness as well as with respect and yearning love for their cause, to urge the analogy of the method and spirit of the natural sciences upon our religious teachers. After all, it is this method that Philip used in order to convince Nathanael. When the latter doubted if they had found him of whom Moses in the Law and Prophets wrote, in Jesus of Nazareth, son of Joseph, he asked Philip, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" The answer was—"Come and see." The same answer ought to be offered by the Protestant Church to every enquirer in every age. The Church as teacher must learn to represent its beliefs not as dogmas but as truths which it challenges the disbelieving world to put to the test, and to the hardest

tests it can find even amongst the worst intricacies of the pathetic tragedies of human life. It will thus find that reason will serve religion as soon as religion allows reason to be free. Till then there must be conflict, and loss on both sides.

LECTURE VII

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND RELIGIOUS THEORY

I HAVE been trying to make plain the function of hypotheses, not only in science, but in the ordinary affairs of the everyday life of plain men.

The misunderstanding of the nature of hypotheses.

Two considerations combine to induce me to dwell a little longer on this topic, even at the cost of some repetition. The first is the fact that the nature of hypotheses and the part they play are very often misunderstood. Their use is supposed to be confined to the natural sciences, and, so far from being recognized in other fields as fundamental principles which give systematic coherence to the facts, they are there supposed to be irresponsible guesses and nothing more. The second consideration arises from the greatness of the change that would follow were the Protestant Churches and their leaders to assume the attitude of the sciences and treat the articles of the creeds not as dogmas but as the most probable explanation, the most sane account which they can form of the relation of man to the Universe and of the final meaning of his life. The hypothesis of a God whose wisdom and power and goodness are perfect, would then be tried and tested, both theoretically and practically, and, I believe, become thereby ever the

more convincing. The creed would be not merely a record of an old belief to be accepted on authority, but a challenge to the sceptic and the irreligious. The Church, instead of being a place where the deliverances of ancient religious authorities are expounded, and illustrated by reference to the contents of one book and the history of one nation—as if no other books were inspired and all nations save one were God-abandoned—the Church would be the place where the validity of spiritual convictions are discussed on their merits, and the application of spiritual principles extended; where enquiring youths would repair when life brings them sorrow, disappointment or failure, and the injustice of man makes them doubt whether there be a God, or if there be, whether he is good and has power, and stands as the help of man. Recourse to their certified spiritual guides, knowing that full and sympathetic justice will be done to all their difficulties, ought to be as natural to them as their recourse to the physical laboratory or the workshop of the mechanician when an engine breaks down.

The significance of the change that would come were the Churches to adopt the attitude of natural science.

But the Church has a long way to travel before it creates a faith and a trust such as we accord to the natural sciences; and mankind, on its part, is far from meting the same measure to the faith or life-hypotheses of the religious man as it willingly accords to the man of science. Let me exemplify this charge.

The Church has to win the confidence of men.

Not all the physicists in the world could account for and measure all the forces spent as the rumbling gravel-grinding cart is dragged past one's window. Not all the physicists in the world can indicate precisely and measure exactly the forces that go to change the colour and shape of a cloud from that of a camel to an

Difference of measure meted to religious faith and a scientific hypothesis.

island lake. Nor could they measure and indicate the paths of the forces that twirl the falling leaf round and round as it falls to the earth. And the chemist would be quite at a loss to give an exhaustive account of the changes which take place as that fallen leaf gradually rots and turns into soil. But no one for a moment doubts either the physicist or the chemist when they aver the presence and operation in these changes of unerring laws. And yet they have never proved the presence and operation of such laws, except under the simplified and artificial conditions of their laboratories. We distinguish readily between what is *not* proved and what is *dis*-proved when we are dealing with natural phenomena, but in matters of religion we take no such care. A single disaster, loss or sorrow, especially if it be our own, makes us doubt the existence or the goodness or the power of God.

Facts to be understood and valued must be looked at in their context and followed out into their consequences.

We do not place a personal bereavement or pain in its context, nor wait for final issues. No more do we lift our eyes so as to apprehend the vastness and worth of the scene of which it is an item. It is not for us at such times to exclaim, like Lorenzo,

> "Look! how the floor of heaven
> Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
> There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins."

The evidence of the cosmic order, the marvel of the beauty of colour and sound and their spendthrift plentifulness, above all, the stable splendour of the world of right and wrong where spiritual forces play, the guidance that must have led mankind from the crude depths of a cruel and cunning animal life to the

love of the good for its own sake: all this in the presence of a personal calamity is overlooked or forgotten, and we are asked to yield ourselves to a faith that is unrivalled in its stupidity, namely, to attribute the order of the Universe and all that is implied therein to *Chance!*

We must learn to mete the same measure, I repeat, to the religious as we do to the scientific spirit; but our religious leaders and the churches must win our trust by adopting the same frank and adventurous methods as have gained the confidence of mankind for the natural sciences.

But magnify the significance of hypotheses as we may, it will be held that religious faith is *more* than a hypothesis. The theoretical comprehension of a religious truth is not a religious life. However close the connexion between the true and the good, we cannot simply identify them; and however intimate the relation between knowing and doing, between having an idea and carrying it out, still they are not the same. Even if we admit the Socratic doctrine that it is impossible to know the good and not do it; even if we insist that ideas have hands and feet, that experience ripens into practice, that convictions naturally turn into character, and that ideas are simply volitions arrested in mid-flight, still the distinction remains. Truth, at the best, is but the recognition of that which is. It produces nothing. It changes nothing. Reason, the faculty of knowing, observes and lets the world remain as it finds it. According to Hume [1] it cannot even furnish motives, and it has no

Knowing and doing.

[1] Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*, ed. of Green and Grote, vol. ii. p. 193.

preferences of any kind. And even those philosophers who, like Kant, consider that Reason has a practical as well as a theoretical function, and that its activities are a condition of morality as well as of knowledge, distinguish between these two spheres of its operations.

The theoretic and the practical attitude distinguished by their purpose.

That these views contain truth is certain, but that they are the truth is another matter. It is possible to assume a purely theoretical attitude towards religion; and no one can for a moment fail to distinguish between it and the practical attitude. We may seek to know the history, and to understand religious phenomena without having any further interest in them. We may treat religious beliefs and forms of worship simply as objects of curiosity, and value them with as little purpose of making use of them as the antiquarian has of making use of an old vase.

All the same it is an error to consider that the activities of reason are sometimes purely theoretical and sometimes purely practical, or that theory and practice fall into different and exclusive provinces. They are much more closely connected. In the first place, man never acts at all as *man*, *i.e.*, as a rational being, except as a being who knows. His knowledge, or what stands for knowledge, guides him even when he is not aware of it; it even guides his habits. Directly or indirectly in all human conduct, theory guides practice. Even the simplest and least introspective of men carries out purposes; and purposes are ideas. And if man is a machine, as the Determinists used to tell us, he is a machine that thinks first and acts afterwards.

But practice involves theory.

In the second place, just as practice implies the

theoretic activity of the intellect, so, on the other hand, the theoretic use of the intelligence implies the operation of the powers deemed practical. There is purpose, volition, effort, and a resulting change involved in every theoretic enterprise, simple or complex. In fact, the difference between theory and practice lies not in the powers or activities that enter into them, but in the result that is desired. The *purpose* of the theoretic investigator is different from that of the reformer or inventor or manufacturer. His mind, will, desires, feelings, his *self* is engaged in producing a different result and carrying out a different end. To attribute theory to the mere intelligence and practice to other "faculties" is, once more, to repeat the insistent error of the psychologist.

And even the theorist has a practical purpose.

Not less misleading is it to maintain that in matters of theory we deal with facts and not with values, and that in matters of practice we deal with values rather than with facts. The investigator engages in laborious research with no other purpose than that of discovering a truth, but he may set high value on attaining it. The solution of an intellectual difficulty, the discovery of the true theory, or true history of a fact or event *is* the practical result that he desires, and he may deem his life well spent in seeking it. In short, his enquiry bears every mark of a practical activity. He is, in his own way, seeking what has value, and is pursuing the good in the form in which it appeals to him. Not only does it engage all his powers, but it forms his life, fashions his character; and it is only the crudest ignorance that forgets these reactions upon character. And it remains crude ignorance even although otherwise respectable people will persist in distinguishing

the thinker and the moralist, and those who are engaged in the arts of life, from the practical man.

But the results of the theoretic life of man are never all subjective—even if the solutions he offers are erroneous, he has probably helped to true knowledge; and if he discovers a new truth and adds to human knowledge, he has brought into the world new latent energy of the most masterful kind. For it is seldom, if ever, that truth is powerless. Knowing for the sake of knowing, art for art's sake, the doing of the right because it is right, all alike employ the whole man; all alike are practical, and, like their objects—the true, the beautiful, and the good—these activities imply one another. All human life is at once theoretical and practical. It is the fundamental characteristic of rational beings that they act from purposes; and purposes are at once thoughts and volitions, and are charged with value as well as meaning. The true and the good are inseparable. Each has its own place and function, and either or neither may be the higher, for each includes the other.

Truth is always practical.

But you may ask, if theory and practice are so closely related, how would you distinguish between the theory of religion and religion itself? For the distinction is undeniable. I answer as already hinted: their purposes differ. In the first case knowledge is the end or purpose sought: in the second case religion itself as a way of life is the aim and object of desire. Above all, religion is a mere means in the first case: it is an end in the second.

The uses of a thing reveal its nature.

It has been maintained that the nature of things is revealed by the purposes to which they can be put, that is by their worth to man. But this depends

upon how far the nature of man as a rational being is a key to the nature of the world in which and by which he lives, and of which, according to natural science, he is a product. Hence the final appeal as to the nature of a thing is not to its worth, estimated in terms of its use, not to its relation to man, but to its relation to the system of reality to which both it and man belong. All the same it is becoming more and more clear that, in interpreting the natural world, its most complex and, it is believed, its highest and most comprehensive and marvellous product, namely, an animal that thinks and distinguishes between right and wrong, cannot be left out of account, as has been done by science in the past. Nay more, man's meaning, which is ultimately spiritual, may best convey the final meaning of his world. In any case, the purposes to which man has put the forces of the physical world—purposes which are themselves his interpretation of what he wants and of the means of satisfying his wants—have been his chief instruments of discovering their meaning. What electricity is, is best revealed by what it does; and it does most when it is handled by the man of science. Every purpose which a thing satisfies, every use to which it is put, brings out some new reaction on its part, and exposes a new feature.

The uses of religion reveal something of its nature even when it is treated as means.

It is so also with religion. All the uses to which religion is put exhibit something of its character. And the uses have been and still are many. Men have punctually performed religious rites, worshipped their God, obeyed his behests, acted in accordance with what they considered his will, for the most different reasons. It has been their means of escaping torture after death, or of securing happiness hereafter, or of attaining

social esteem, or power, or even of prospering in their business. All these uses reveal something of the nature and value of religion: but the revelation is incomplete so long as religion is used as a means to something else. It shows something of its character in every context or reaction, but its full or true or real nature is shown only when it is in itself an end. However effective religion may be as means to a priest's power, or as a weapon for political rule, or for turning aside the flames of hell, they do not show what it is intrinsically. On the contrary, the most conscientious use of religion for purposes beyond itself we would hesitate to regard as true religion, or even as religion at all. True religion is an end in and for itself, and never mere means. It is of itself an object of desire, and any consequences it may bring, borrow from it all their value, but in themselves are not regarded. Though heaven and earth pass away, though there be no future life, devotion to the Best, the religious life, retains its value. Its value is in itself. It is a form of the good, indeed the completest form of the good that is absolute. "Let me but be reconciled with my God," says the repentant sinner. "Let me be my Father's," says the saint, "reserving nothing, devoted, lost and found in His services for ever more; what else can be?"

The full and true nature of Religion revealed only when it is itself an End.

This devotedness, or devoutness, is the characteristic feature of true religion. It is such an intense living for an object that it is a living in the object and through the object. Religion is thus essentially a way of life. It is practical through and through. An inactive religion is an impossibility and sham. It does not exist at all until it is, as we say, "applied." It is

energy, spiritual energy, for which to exist at all is to be active.

A man's religion on this view is that man's way of living. It is the object aimed at more or less consistently amidst the endless variety of life's detailed interests. It is what ultimately decides his method of handling his circumstances. It determines the result which he wishes to extract from his dealing with the world and his fellow-men. It occupies his thoughts—when they are free—awakes and sways and satisfies his emotions, informs and inspires his will, and produces or incarnates itself in his character. A man's religion is his most real self.

No religion can be inactive. It is always a way of living.

We have said that all human life is practical, even that which we call theoretical. It is always purposive, always aims at ends conceived as good. All the objects for which man strives are regarded by him as kinds of good—the truth which the theorist seeks, the beauty which the artist would produce, the material wealth which the economic man would make or gain. And it follows, so far as I can see, that any one of such objects, if it is the dominant object of desire, may be a man's God, and that the pursuit of it is his religion. The moment an object becomes the source and standard of all values for him, and is nearer and dearer to him than his separate self, so that life without it is just failure, it becomes his religion.

Religion the source and standard of all values.

Two characteristics of religion thus become plain. In the first place, as I have already tried to insist, it is the pursuit not merely of a good, but of the Supreme Good, the Best, the Perfect (as I believe), and to that alone we give the name "God." In the second place, it is the loss, or at least the total immersion of

the self, in this pursuit. It is not merely a *way* of life, but it is the active principle, the life itself. It is that which breaks out into behaviour. It follows from the first of these two characteristics of religion that incomplete forms of good are only conditionally good; and that they must receive their highest value from that which endows *all* things with worth. Hence truth, beauty, happiness (I am not sure but that I can say "moral goodness"), are but elements within the Best; and they attain their highest only when the spirit of religion expresses itself through them. I do not mean that the theme of every poem, or the object of every artist, should be a religious one; but I do mean that he is not at his best unless he can stand by his poem, or his picture, or his business, and say "This is the best way in *my* power of serving the Best." And from this point of view very humble lives, and very simple acts, attain a marvellous dignity and beauty. "I have served the most High, for I have wiped the tears of the sorrowing." The divine life can throb in very humble hearts.

Religion is thus not only practical in its essence, it *is* practice; it is experience, it is life. But that is as much as to say that whatever more it may or may not be, religion must be moral; for morality is man's habitual way of evaluating objects and of seeking them. The relation of religion to the moral ideal is more direct and perhaps more intimate than to the intellectual or aesthetic ideal. "A man who is 'religious' and does not act morally, is an impostor," says Mr. Bradley, "or his religion is a false one. This does not hold good elsewhere. A philosopher may be a good philosopher, and yet, taking

Religion implies moral behaviour.

him as a whole, may be immoral; and the same thing is true of an artist, or even of a theologian. They may all be good, and yet not good men; but no one who knows what true religion is, would call a man who on the whole was immoral, a religious man. For religion is not the mere knowing or contemplating of any object, however high. It is not mere philosophy nor art, because it is not mere seeing, no mere theoretic activity.... Religion is essentially a doing, and a doing which is moral. It implies a realizing, and a realizing of the good self."[1]

Yet morality is not religion.

Does the converse also hold good? "Are we to say then that morality is religion? Most certainly not," continues Mr. Bradley, and, so far as I know, everyone will agree with him. If, on the one hand, all men are agreed that religion and morality cannot be separated; neither, on the other hand, can they be simply identified. What, then, is the relation between them? This is a question of cardinal importance which we must consider with some care.

Problem of the relation of morality and religion.

If we turn to the history of either religion or morality, we shall see without much difficulty that no simple or single definition of their relation will hold. Though (as I believe to be the case) there exists a relation which is fundamental and constitutive of both, its manifestations of itself have differed at different stages of man's development—like all other human relations, industrial, moral, or political. Interested primarily as I am, not in the history of past religions, but in the religious consciousness as an existing fact to-day, I shall only refer very briefly to the various ways in

[1] Bradley's *Ethical Studies*, pp. 280-1.

which religion and morality have been inter-related in earlier forms of civilization.

At the lower levels of human life it is not easy to discern the presence of either morality or religion. Not only is there no distinction between the secular and the sacred or between the natural and spiritual—distinctions still blurred even in our own day, and shifting and unreliable—but no constant Best has emerged as an object to be either realized or reverenced. There is nothing but a changing and momentary "Better." For life itself has, at this stage, little effective continuity. In the cruder forms of religion desires, aims, have hardly to supplant each other; each of them is in itself so evanescent and so much at the beck of outward circumstance. Passions rule, but there is no ruling passion, far less is there a purposed future that controls the present, or a past that is reflected upon and its meaning preserved. Such continuity as there is, is subconscious, as we say, and relatively ineffective. And religion shows the same characters. It is a sentiment rather than a ruling purpose, and it lacks all constancy. At this stage there are many gods, and each passes out in turn and is forgotten as if he had never been. Religion is not even polytheistic as yet. Polytheism comes only when the pious savage recalls and reflects on the succession of his deities. At the earlier stage when the worshipper sought the help or tried to avert the wrath of his god, that god was all in all to him for the moment. Each god in turn was the only god. In some sense and for the moment he was the Best. But that Best may have no qualities that we would call moral. He may be simply the strongest, or

The cruder forms of religion.

even the most cruel. Man, it may be said, creates his gods as his wants dictate; and the things he wants most are often very strange. There is but one tendency at war with these measureless aberrations; it is man's tendency to turn to that which seems to have supreme value as supplying his wants. Let him but understand his true wants, learn the needs of his soul, and he will find that only a God who has spiritual attributes can satisfy him.

Emergence out of the stage at which there is no constant loyalty to any cause, no recognized law, natural, moral, or religious, but only a succession of moods and passions, hungry hunts and days of gorging, and little foresight, or restraint of the present for the sake of the future; when there are few peaceful human relations, domestic or other, and society, our greatest leader out of ourselves and into communion with others, makes but few and meagre calls—emergence out of this stage is very slow. Change probably comes under the pressure of some overwhelming danger. To meet it, closer connexions between individuals, and between tribes are needed, and greater fidelity to their undertakings becomes customary. The social spirit of mutual regard and service is fostered; life, individual and social, gains depth and its purposes acquire constancy. The dim conception of a fixed law of right behaviour, and of some good that is supreme, appears and gradually assumes the control of conduct.

The ascent towards a consistent experience.

Religion and morality are present, and, in some way, active even in the lowest forms of human life. Man is never without a religion of some kind. Man's impulse to live, which he shares with other animals,

The animal's impulse to live takes in man the form of the pursuit of the best; and the pursuit of the best is religion.

and which is a constituent of his nature, takes the form of believing in and seeking a best, or of that which approves itself as the best for the time being to such an understanding of his needs as he possesses. But if religion and morality are constitutive elements of man's very being; if they are developed forms of original impulses arising from the dominant need to live; if at bottom they are necessities like the necessity of physical sustenance, then irreligion and immorality are violations of the self, forms of self-mutilation. On the other hand, both morality and religion have, in man's history, illustrated by their strange and often repellent forms the complexity of his being, and the difficulty of attaining the knowledge best worth having, namely, knowledge of the self, of its true needs, and of that by which they can be fulfilled.

But intimate as the relations of religion and morality are, they cannot be directly identified, as I shall try to show in the next lecture.

LECTURE VIII

MORALITY AND RELIGION

(*a*) THEIR ANTAGONISM

We must now take up one of the most difficult and important of our problems, namely, the inter-relation of morality and religion. And first, as to some things which are obvious. Morality is plainly concerned in the ordinary affairs of everyday life. It is in a sense the whole of life. At every turn there is some more or less urgent want; there is something to be done; some call to be obeyed, or disobeyed or neglected. Approval or disapproval follows. We pass a moral judgment upon the deed and call it good or bad. In doing so we recognize that a universal law has been sustained or broken. A moral law has been either respected or violated. The agent has acted either consistently or inconsistently with a moral world, which is at once eternal in its laws and a-building by means of the deeds of man.

Moreover, the things to be done, duties, as they come to be called, are always inalienable. Mine is mine, and yours is yours, and theirs is theirs. There is a certain individuality, a personal privacy, and apartness, and single-handedness about duties. The will to act and the resulting deed, whether right or wrong,

The privacy of duties.

are the individual's own, however much he may co-operate with others in the doing of them, however closely his environment may press upon him, and however deeply the social life into which he was born has penetrated into him and become the sustenance and tissue of his soul. His acts are not only his own, but exclusively his own; for no influence has entered into him without thereby becoming an element in his individuality.

But religion, not less obviously, seems to break down the barriers of individuality. The primary interest of the religious man lies in some good. He lives for it, as we have seen; and the supreme value of the object of his devotion, or his God, lifts the exercise of religious functions above the level of what is secular or even merely moral. It does so even when it penetrates what would otherwise be commonplace. The spirit of religion may, and often does, attend a mother on the hearth, as she moves among the bairns, radiating love's services all day long.

Nevertheless, on that same hearth, at the beginning and close of the day, there are definite religious rites. There is family worship, and an hour that is sacred. Then the soul ascends for a moment out of the reach of ordinary cares, and its eyes look away to where the horizon of the present life dips out of sight. Primitive religions naturally become ceremonious. Primitive communities naturally gather together for praise and prayer and sacrifice: and the rites on the great religious occasions are accompanied by all the circumstances that can make them impressive. They are conducted by men gifted with the powers that impress, dedicated men, who are held to be in mystical com-

The growing aloofness of religion.

munion with unseen powers. A priesthood grows, and religion becomes a thing apart—sacred—not to be touched by ordinary hands or approached in ordinary moods. Awe, which is a feeling that fluctuates between fear and reverence, is the primitive worshipper's mood; and the strangeness of something that lies beyond—beyond all things that can be seen or heard, beyond the utmost limits of even possible knowledge—is the most insistent characteristic of his God. In short, Herbert Spencer's conception of religion as awe of the unknown describes not inaccurately the primitive man's blind groping for the Best.

The mutual indifference of religion and morality.

Thus, while the lives of men gain to some degree that consistency which results from more constant conceptions of what has worth and should be first sought, religion and morality come to occupy different territories. Religion henceforth will have nothing to do with the ordinary ways of life: these are all "secular." And morality does not concern itself with religion, which is sacred and aloof, and a matter of rites and ceremonies. This separateness of their interests permits for a time a relation of mutual indifference between them. Each goes its own way. The moral man need not be religious, except now and then, on sacred days; nor does the religious man, at this stage, need to be moral. He may even have a "morality" of his own, and the atrocities of the crude priesthood may be but symbols of its sacredness.

Each lays claim to the whole of life.

Such indifference, however, cannot last. All things that grow, human life amongst them, must maintain their unity as well as branch into differences. Man must be consistent with himself, if he is to escape war

against himself. Hence, as mankind develops, both religion and morality claim, more and more completely, to have dominion over the whole of life. As the moral consciousness gathers strength, the ill deeds done in the name of religion, its barbarous and cruel rites and sacrifices, lose their sacred lustre. They are condemned. Even the gods, when a Plato arrives, must respect the moral laws.

On the other hand, religion also widens its domain, claims more and more authority over the minutiae of daily life. If it is external and formal, as at this stage it generally is, then it sees more and more to the mint and annis and cummin, and insists on abstention from common things. "It garr'd Cuddie Headrigg to refuse to eat the plum porridge at Yule-tide Eve." And, naturally, poor Cuddie could not see how it was "ony matter for God or man, whether a ploughman had supp'd on minched pies or sowens."

Morality at this stage is ousted into an inferior position as compared with religion. It has little spiritual and no lasting value. Indeed, it is despised as having less than none; for it comes to be regarded as purely mundane, and all mundane things, all that are natural, are held to be the enemy of that which is spiritual. The ordinary occupations which man follows in order to supply his physical wants are tolerated in the laity; but those who have given themselves completely to God must reduce their physical needs to the lowest limits, renounce the world, engage neither in industry nor in commerce, nor follow the arts either of peace or war. They are pilgrims on their way home through a barren wilderness. Everything pertaining to the world and the

orality
ust take a
cond place.

flesh is corrupt. Even the domestic ties and the other social relations, which in truth furnish the opportunities of the good life and are the nurseries of all the virtues, lie outside of the limits of the sacred life. In short, the world and the flesh are ranked with the devil.

The slightest acquaintance with the history of the Christian Church makes this antagonism familiar, and the echoes of it still survive in the memory of many of us. On the whole, at present, morality is strengthening its claims; sometimes at the expense of religion. It is so far recognized as vital to religion that we will not call an immoral man religious, though perhaps we would allow more lapses to the religious devotee than a moral rigorist could approve in himself. On the other hand, religion is *not* now deemed necessary to the moral life. Many men, like Matthew Arnold, consider that religion can only add to morality a certain emotional intensity, whose value is doubtful.

Sometimes even the moral attitude is held to be the nobler of the two. It means that a man faces his own duty frankly in his own strength, and trusts to its intrinsic value. Consequences do not count where what is right is done for its own sole sake. The steadfast moral universe is felt by the good man to be at his back, so long as he is in his duty. He stands for the Empire of the Good, as the lonely soldier on the night-watch stands for his country. He has a right to its support: and its support is certain. An attitude which appreciates the unconditional authority and sufficiency of morality has the further advantage that it seems to relieve us from the difficult and possibly insoluble problems of religion. We need not ask,

The dignity of the moral attitude.

except as a matter of speculative curiosity, whether God exists or not; whether it is his love or his power that is defective, or whether the evil and pain and disorder of this tragic world of ours are but appearances. Nor, lastly, are we committed to the task of finding some way of reconciling the reality of these evils with the reality of an unlimited love clothed with infinite power, which is the Christian's God. Our part, as moral beings, remains the same. We strive to do what is right whatever solution is refused or offered, and we put our *trust* in it.

Nobody can deny the dignity and strength of this Stoic attitude. On the other hand, the value of a religion which is real, of a genuine devotion to the Perfect, the Spiritually Perfect, remains unimpaired and unquestionable. " If we are honest with ourselves " (says Mr. T. H. Green in his great sermon on " Faith ") " we shall admit that something best called faith, a prevailing conviction of our presence to God and his to us, of his graciousmind towards us, working in and with and through us, of our duty to our fellow-men as our brethren in him, has been the source of whatever has been best in us and in our deeds. If we have enough experience and sympathy to interpret fairly the life of the world around us, we shall admit that faith of this sort is the salt of the earth. Through it, below the surface of circumstance and custom, humanity is being renewed day by day, and unless our heart is sealed by selfishness and sophistry, though we may not consciously share in the process, there will be men and times that make us reverentially feel its reality. Who can hear an unargumentative and unrhetorical Christian minister appeal to his people to cleanse their

Green's view of the value of religion.

hearts and to help each other as sons of God in Christ, without feeling that he touches the deepest and strongest spring of noble conduct in mankind?"[1]

Is it quite certain that the splendid ethical recklessness which stands by its own deeds, accepting the condemnation of the eternal moral laws if the actions are wrong and, if they are right, finding ample reward in the mere doing of them—is it quite certain that this proud Stoicism is not itself a true religion? Or does not religion demand, as its first condition, humility, self-distrust, self-condemnation and utter rejection of all claims to merit, and a yielding up of the very soul to him who can forgive and cleanse and heal? What is the relation between morality and religion? Do they, at their best, pass into each other; or, as we have hinted, is there a difference between them that, while leaving them both necessary to man, still holds them apart, complementary perhaps in practice but, like other things necessary to man, not reducible to sameness, nor reconcilable by any logic that would bring such a monotonous consummation?

Before raising the next question, it may be well to summarize the results we have so far reached in regard to the relation of morality and religion.

We saw that at the lowest stages of man's life the conception of a binding and universal rule of conduct had not emerged. Not only was there no acknowledged rule of life, or moral law, there were no consistent ways of behaviour. Man, like other animals, merely sought to supply his own physical wants, and of these, usually, only the most urgent and imperative. The dictators of his conduct were hunger and thirst and

[1] The Works of T. H. Green, vol. iii. pp. 258-9.

the sexual impulses. He was marked, amongst other animals, mainly by the extent of his greed, as a creature of wilder passions and of more incalculable capriciousness. His religious history showed the same features as his ordinary or secular conduct. So little continuity was there in his experience, and personality, that even polytheism had not been attained. Each God ruled for a moment, and then passed away and was forgotten.

The emergence of morality and religion and their growing opposition.

But there was an operative law beneath all this chaos of particularism. It led man, from moment to moment, to seek the Best he knew, even as it makes the preservation of life the paramount and persistent end of the animal. At length man became more or less aware of this law. He tried to apprehend and to define this Best. He sought it with a certain persistency. It became the ideal of his practical life, and also something nobler than his ordinary purposes and interests, a supreme mystical reality. Thus morality and religion emerged from the chaos of fitful caprice, and man's interests fell into two quite definite and mutually exclusive domains. One was secular, and in it the demands and conditions of morality were supreme; the other was sacred, and within it religion tolerated no rivalry or intrusion. With the growth of civilization, and the consequent enrichment of man's spiritual inheritance, the demands of both morality and religion were enlarged, and their rights became more and more sovereign in character. The opposition between them necessarily deepened, and it became ever more difficult at once to grant their demands and rights in all their fulness and also to reconcile them.

At present there is confusion on every side as to

the relation of morality and religion; and the confusion of the ordinary moral and religious spirit of our time is amply echoed by our philosophers. We come up against it on every hand: sometimes in one guise, sometimes in another. Idealism, that is the Idealism which is frank and fearless, and would fain be a Realism if it can, alone tries to accord to both religion and morality their full rights; but the result is a constant oscillation from the primacy of one to that of the other. At one moment the Absolute is not the God of religion, and the God of religion is not absolute. Yet the Absolute alone, it is asserted, is ultimately and unconditionally real; and it lends to all finite things such dubious existence as they have; for it contains them, though transfigured in such a way that they cannot be called either true, or good, or beautiful. Truth, beauty and goodness vanish in the Absolute, to reappear on occasion something after the manner of the Cheshire cat. Except as in the Absolute, and therefore transmuted, finite things are not real, and being transmuted in the Absolute they become unrecognizable. On the other hand, the finite objects that we do know are just appearances—real appearances, but only appearances. The Absolute is not itself *quite* unknowable. We find that it is static, cannot change, swallows and transmutes finite things. But we know nothing specially to its credit, since truth, goodness, beauty disappear in it. And its very reality is of a dubious kind: for it contains, so far as we know, nothing but transmuted appearances. All it can "take up," "include," "sublate," "transform," are phenomena, finite appearances, and the kind of reality which they possess is very obscure at best.

Idealism alone at present tries to do justice to both morality and religion.

Ambiguities both of the Absolute and of finite things.

Barrenness of the critics and alternative solutions.

From these difficulties which beset the reflexions of the teachers to whom I owe most I have learnt one thing clearly, namely, that we can deny, or do without, neither the finite nor the infinite, and above all, that we cannot separate them. From the merely negative criticisms that have been advanced, and from the one-sided theories which, as a rule, have betrayed the interests of religion and shown no need of any Absolute, or of any unity within the differences of finite things, I am afraid I have learnt less. And as to the forms of Idealism which are still tainted with Berkeleian subjectivity, they seem to me to be quite barren. It is only in such doctrines as those of Mr. Bradley and Mr. Bosanquet that a genuine recognition of the apparently inconsistent rights of the finite and the infinite, and, as a consequence, of morality and religion, makes itself felt. And it is a great step towards the solution of a difficulty to lay it quite bare. Nevertheless, the solution has not been found. It is only suggested in the vacillation from side to side. The principle on which an uncompromising, realistic Idealism rests, has still to be justified. The dualism of nature and spirit has not been overcome, nor that of the secular and sacred, nor indeed of the finite and infinite in any form. But it has become suspect. A sense of the continuity of what is real is abroad; and that continuity is no longer merely materialistic or physical. The affirmation of gaps between the physical and biological and the conscious, or between the conscious and the self-conscious, is less confident, even while we confess our inability to overleap these gaps. Nature is one, we say, and man is merely her child. We do not hesitate to trace his history backwards and downwards

The present-day consciousness of the continuity of the real.

a long way. But, so far, it has not been shown that nature produces him as consequently as she produces apple trees, and by means of him, in the same consequent fashion, builds up the marvels of the social and spiritual world. The affirmation of continuity between nature and spirit is hesitating.[1] All the same, if we cannot say that the conviction is growing, we can say that the hypothesis is becoming more and more probable, that some principle of unity not merely underlies but so acts and functions, as to express itself in all things, and, as I have said, we are not any longer tempted to offer a materialistic account of that principle. I believe we are on the way to an Idealism which is at the same time a Spiritual Realism, and which, with the aid of the sciences, shall demonstrate the working in all things of a principle which operates as a natural force at a certain level, and reveals its fuller character in the spiritual enterprises of mankind. The "Stern Law-giver" for Wordsworth wore "The Godhead's most benignant grace" as well as "preserved the stars from wrong." "The awful power" could be called upon to perform "humble functions." The conception is familiar to the religious consciousness at its best: it is, I believe, the destiny of a sound Idealism and of science to make it good.

Its character the great problem.

Meantime, somehow or other, it has to be shown that all our halting dualisms, even that of nature and spirit or of matter and mind, rend asunder the seamless garment of the real. That, as a matter of fact, no one ever has known, and that no one ever can know, nature and spirit except as elements of a unity is a significant but neglected truth. Spirit functions as an

[1] See my Inaugural Lecture, in Glasgow, November 1894.

active principle, functions; and spirit, like everything else, *is* what it does. It is revealed in the natural cosmos, and revealed and realized more fully in the moral and religious life. Nature and spirit imply each other, as subject and object; they exist in virtue of each other, and neither their difference nor their unity can be compromised. The world which we think existed before man or mind, was a world, in its make and structure, relative to mind. It became a known world as soon as mind appeared and performed its part. Spirit *is* not except as an active principle: nature *is* not except as its expression. The Absolute is not static, and the Universe is not dead. Such is "the faith" of a realistic Idealism.

LECTURE IX

MORALITY AND RELIGION

(*b*) THEIR RECONCILIATION

We now return to our immediate problem—namely, that of the inter-relation of morality and religion. At present, especially in our theoretical reflexions, the opposition of the two is much in evidence. In our practical life, unless I am unjust to my neighbours, their antagonism is not so pronounced, and its solution is not felt to be so urgent. Nevertheless the "religious" man is all too apt to confine his religion to the Sabbath day and its observances; and he is not usually expected to be more generous to his employees, or more genial on his hearth, or more honest in his business, than others. And on the other hand, the pre-eminently practical or "moral" man often fails to discern the need or the uses of religion. Religion and morality grow, like rather sickly plants, side by side, giving one another no help.

The practical severance of morality and religion.

The first of the theoretic difficulties of reconciling morality with religion arises from the responsibility of the moral agent for all those of his actions which we would call morally right or wrong. His responsibility, in turn, seems to imply his freedom of choice; his act is traceable to his personality, issues

The theoretical antagonism of morality and religion.

thence, and thence only, whatever the palliating or contributory forces may have been. He must be the unambiguous author of the deed. In estimating his merit or guilt we no doubt take into consideration his history, his temperament, his character and his circumstances. But his responsibility, be it great or small, remains. He is still considered to have conceived and willed the act, and to have done these things of himself and by himself. The language of the repentant moral consciousness always is, "I *alone* did it." It never seeks to share the guilt with others, nor to attribute its deed to circumstances. It takes them wholly upon itself. In short, moral responsibility seems to imply a kind of isolation. A man's neighbours, his world, can only look on. The father or mother, teacher or friend, may urge and tempt and threaten the boy, using every art of persuasion; but in the end they must be content to await the issue. The teacher may explain, illustrate and exemplify, but he cannot *make* the child see. The act of apprehending and comprehending must be the child's own. And the same truth holds of our volitions and actions. They also are in the end, whether good or bad, our own. They are the results of our choice: they issue from our personality, and they express its freedom and character.

The responsibility of the moral agent and its implications.

I am not ignorant of the fact that great writers, in both ancient and modern times, have maintained that a man's deed may be approved as moral, or condemned as immoral, although he is not free. The consequence, so far as I am able to judge, is the denial of the specifically *moral* features of the actions, and, indeed, the extrusion of morality in favour of, at best, a calculating

The Utilitarian denial of freedom, a non-moral doctrine.

prudence. Their doctrine deprives morality of its unconditional character, and therefore destroys it. No good is sovereign; no duty imperative. The best that can be said of anything under such conditions is that it is useful, which means that it derives its worth from something else. Utilitarianism cannot even be a hedonism without inconsistency, for it cannot have any end which does not turn into means in its hands. Nothing justifies *itself* for a theory of utility. The theory admits nothing that is final or absolute; it commits the agent to the pursuit of an ever-receding and indefinite end.

Utilitarian determinism.

A non-moral theory of mere utilities may go well with the denial of freedom. But the denial of freedom usually arises from another cause than lack of interest in the ethical qualities of man and his actions. Freedom is taken to imply the complete detachment of the agent, or of his will, from both antecedents and environment; and the possibility of such detachment is denied. His responsibility is taken to imply that the self, or the will, is in no sense continuous with the world in which he lives. On the assumption that he is free, he must be quite separate from it. He must exclude it absolutely. There is no bridge over the chasm between the self, or the willing part of the self, and the not-self. The problem of freedom is held to be the problem of natural cause, and causality means the transmutation of energy from one form to another, according to fixed quantitative laws which physical science defines. No other kind of connexion is conceived in this controversy. Both the necessitarians and the libertarians assume that, if there is real continuity between the will or the per-

sonality and the antecedents or environment, freedom is impossible, and both alike assume that any continuity must take the form of natural cause. Hence, either the causal connexion or freedom must be rejected. The former reject the idea of freedom; the latter the idea of the continuity of what exists, that is, of the unity of the principle of reality. Mutual out-sidedness and exclusiveness is the last word on this theory—even as regards the relation of the finite and infinite; and, as we shall see, religion ought to be impossible to those who maintain such a doctrine.

Both Libertarianism and Necessitarianism make morality impossible.

But we must avoid following further the fortunes of the controversy of the libertarians and necessitarians; and, with your permission, I shall merely make a few dogmatic assertions—the truth of which you can easily test for yourselves—and pass on. In the first place, neither of these schools saves morality. The libertarian makes morality impossible by subjecting man to the worst of all necessities, namely, that of pure chance, for the self is absolutely irresponsible, or the will is lawless. There is no law within or without that can be either kept or broken by the agent. The necessitarian does not, strictly speaking, pretend to save morality. The actions of man are for him purely natural events. Here we have law but no freedom, that is, no power either to accept or to reject what is proffered. The necessity of choice cannot arise in men any more than in gooseberry bushes. Each bears fruit according to its kind and condition. Thus we find that the libertarian gives freedom without law, which in truth is caprice and chance; the necessitarian gives us law and denies freedom. But morality requires both. Its laws, indeed, are unconditional,

but they all spring from "the perfect law of freedom."

Hence the problem of morality rightly presented differs from that of both of these schools. Each of these schools bears witness to only one-half of the truth, and denies the other. But the moral convictions of man, the moral world, as we say, can be established only on the basis of both necessary law and freedom, and of both reconciled within the moral agent. That is to say, we cannot maintain that man, or man's character and actions, have any moral qualities, are either right or wrong, unless he is *at once* essentially related to and continuous with the world and subject to law, and also, in so far as he does right or wrong, "free"—his will or rather his personality genuinely sovereign, and his authorship of his actions unambiguous.

The problem of moral theory.

This problem takes many forms. It is one of the ways in which the difficulty appears of maintaining and reconciling differences with unity. To effect that reconciliation means a refusal to regard independence as implying isolation, or difference as equivalent to opposition, or to admit that the relation of mutual exclusion is ultimate, or that mere negation can be a final fact. The ultimate relation, even between opposites, must be positive.

There is one consideration which makes it much easier to maintain than to reject the conviction that one and the same principle reveals itself in all things, and that it takes the whole of the differences, as related in one system, to set forth the nature of that principle. To come to the particular case which we are considering, there is one fact that makes it difficult to

doubt that man is positively related as a part of, or element in, the world in which he lives. That fact is the utter emptiness, meaninglessness, of his "self" if it is deprived of that which it has borrowed from the world, whether natural or social; and its helplessness if it endeavours to do anything—to project or carry out any purpose—except with its concurrent help.

Kant, in one of the best-known passages of all his works, makes man as a physical being a part, and a most insignificant part, of a vast natural system that extends to worlds beyond worlds and times beyond times. Man borrows from it the matter of which he is made, and after a short time must give it back again. But Kant lifts man *as a moral being* clean out of the natural system. His dualism is quite frank. The moral and the natural worlds, that of the responsible will and that of the desires, are quite separate. So alien are these that the subjection of the desires can never be complete; no action can be morally perfect; the pursuit of the moral end is along an asymptotic path which never reaches its goal.

Kant's dualism.

Had Kant been consistent he would have denied the possibility even of a conflict between the spiritual and natural, or between duty and inclination. For even a conflict implies that man lives in both worlds, and that morality consists in the application of the ideal to the actual, in the attempted conversion of "what is" into "what ought to be."

The truth is that man is no more isolated as a moral being than he is physically. His antecedents and environment enter into the tissue of his soul, if we may so speak, as they do into that of his physical frame. No doubt he claims a distinct individuality, a per-

Man even as a rational and moral being a part of the world.

sonality which is his own in the fullest and even in the most exclusive sense; and his individuality has indefeasible rights. But if we isolate this individuality, or rather, if we despoil it of all that it has received from its social world, how much of it will remain? We can ask the uncompromising individualist with his exclusive Ego: "Left to yourself, and apart from your community, what language would you speak? Every word you now use, or have ever heard, is that of your country and neighbours. You have probably never invented one. Deprived of this single endowment of your social world, you would stand mute and helpless amongst your fellows, understanding and understood of no one. Would you be an intelligent being? Granted your language, what of the things which language conveys? Whose songs were sung around your cradle, and whose fables delighted your dawning mind? From the time when your outlook on your little world was widened through hearing that 'Jack and Jill went up the hill' until, possibly like Lear,

'A poor, infirm, weak and despis'd old man,'

you

'Bide the pelting of the pitiless storm'

let loose by man's wickedness, and are ready to cry with him to the 'All shaking thunder' to

'Smite flat the thick rotundity of the world,'

it is your country's thoughts that have gone with you every step of the way. You are a maker of some kind, if you are a worker, and if your individuality has any use or power. Who has provided you with your material, and taught you skilful ways of dealing with

Man's social indebtedness.

it, and who buys your product and makes some recompense for your toil? You have eaten your morning meal at your country's table, instead of gathering berries or seeking the flesh of wild animals in the woods; you have walked to your work along your country's roads, and will return at evening to a home, your 'castle,' whose safety and privacy come from your country's care. If you are married and have children, and you find an ample return for all your toil in the constancy of their loyalty and the sweet service of their love, under whose charge and through whose fostering has the happiness of your hearth been made possible? It has been for countless centuries in the making. If you examine the material out of which it has been spun, you will find therein the trace of the wisdom and the toil and the suffering and the endurance of good men in whom and through whom, generation after generation, traditions were formed and customs were established, whose mystic virtues have sufficed to change the instincts, desires, and passions of primitive man, crude and gross and often lawless beyond those of brute beasts, into one of the fairest possessions the heart of man can desire."[1]

It is amply evident that if we are to give a true account of a man's rational nature, or personality, we cannot overlook or even limit his indebtedness to his social world, or loosen the bonds of his relations to it. *Its* truths and errors, *its* merits and defects, *its* limitations and achievements are, to a greater or less extent, *his* inheritance. Whether that inheritance be rich or poor, it is all that intervenes between him and helpless idiocy: his indebtedness to his world as a moral

[1] *The Principles of Citizenship*, pp. 94-5.

being is as deep, and his connexion as intimate and constitutive, as is his physical connexion with it.

Moral philosophers slow to admit man's connexion, as a moral agent, with the world.

But moral philosophers, and especially the more Stoical, whether ancient or modern, have been somewhat slow and reluctant to recognize this side of man's history. The connexion, if positive and vital, is assumed to threaten his individuality, freedom and moral attainments. The dualism of Kant, for instance, is only moderated by T. H. Green. It is true that Green finds the spiritual and natural to be related positively, but he has left such a priority to the former as to make it possible to understand him to establish, not a single system revealing in every part and operation the presence and activity of the principle, but the natural *plus* the spiritual, *plus* a relation between them. The externality and contingency of the relation are not overcome. They may, or may not, be brought together. They are not seen by him to be *aspects*, or *elements* of a single real.

Caird, whose Idealism was more pronounced, insists in his persistent way on "the unity behind the difference of subject and object." But I think he never explained the phrase or illustrated its truth with a concrete example. And I doubt whether he would maintain in a decisive way that there is nothing in the mind or soul of man, any more than in his bodily frame—no element or particle of his spiritual structure —that is not the *same* as that which exists in his world. He would scarcely admit, I think, that the world participates and makes possible the free agents' choice, and is active in and as his will. He does not plainly state that man does nothing, attempts nothing, conceives nothing, in which his long ante-

cedents and limitless environment do not participate more or less directly. A certain isolation is always maintained for man as subject. But I do not think that the world presents us with a single example of a genuinely isolated fact: certainly not of that empty phantom, an isolated personality.

The plant and its world, its dependence.

Nevertheless, we find (again as matters of fact, whether we can explain them or not) a certain independence of existence and action, a certain freshness of use of antecedents, a certain mastery over environment, on the part of lower kinds of beings than man, which at least symbolize or point the way towards freedom. Let me illustrate what I mean. Long ago, geologists tell us, central masses of vapour threw out nebulae, the nebulae formed systems, one of which is the solar system; the solar system cooled, condensed, contracted into planets, amongst them the earth; the earth in turn cooled as to its outer surface on which we live, seasons succeeded one another, soil was formed, plants grew, and amongst them Tennyson's "little flower in the crannied wall." I believe our scientific teachers will tell us that all the vast changes we have mentioned were preparations, without which the little flower was not possible, and that to understand its full history and structure we must recognize that they have all, in their fashion, entered into it. In a word, omit any one of these antecedents and the little flower is impossible.

Its independence and recoil.

But, on the other hand, the little flower, which seems to be nothing except the momentary resting-place of forces that are eternally on their way, can live not one instant longer than it can keep these forces at bay. It stands *opposed* to the big world. Nothing from that world is allowed within unless it is first transmuted by

the little plant into sustenance. The outer world of the little flower is mastered and made to serve so long as the plant is living. Its world becomes *its* food, drink, air, light or warmth. Selection takes place *on the part of the plant.* The plant takes up what it requires and rejects the rest. That which it takes up it assimilates, changes, incorporates with itself. In a word, the plant re-acts in its own unique fashion, and makes use of its little world for its own purposes. Its connexion with that world is not severed. It is utilized. It is the powers which it has borrowed from its world that the plant employs in its recoil upon the world. There is a certain aloofness on the part of the plant and a kind of individuality; but it is the aloofness of mastery and temporary sovereignty. There is no break.

The life of the plant, in this way, revealing itself in what it does, gives us the first hint of the nature of an independent individuality. Every one of the main characteristics is adumbrated. There is, in the first place, that appropriation of what is without, that negation of otherness, which we do not find explicit in the physical world, where mutual exclusion rules. In the next place, there is the actual reconciliation of community and privacy. There is no doubt that the activities turned by the plant upon its world are those of the world; nevertheless, they are peculiarly its own private possession. Lastly, there is a hint of freedom, of a tendency and way of action which—whatever their history—spring up anew, as if newly originated and focussed in the life of the plant.

The plant is prophetic of more.

But all these truths are merely foreshadowed in the plant. The biologist, following the guidance of the

world of life in plants and animals, can show us, stage by stage, the growing strength of these propensities. The powers of the living creature multiply; its world becomes wider; it appropriates and assimilates more elements; its participation in what is common becomes fuller, and its uses of it are more various and effective. Above all, the intimacy of the living thing and its world becomes more close; for sensation appears, and there follow fuller and clearer forms of consciousness which annul the foreignness of the object. At the same time the privacy and the subjectivity, and consequent independence of the living thing, also develop. Both of these apparently incompatible but really mutually implicative tendencies culminate in a rational animal we call man, and reveal their fullest nature when man is at his best. The little man is the self-enclosed man. It is the great and good man in whom a wide world lives again. In him its purposes gain definiteness and direction; and it is he who has a great individuality. There is accord within and without between the best man and the best possibilities of his time. And when tendencies within and without are at one, and the law of things is the law of life, natural or spiritual as the case may be, then there is freedom.

The coincidence of inner and outer law is freedom.

Freedom is fullest when ideal and real are in full accord. For there are degrees of freedom. Freedom is not only power to conceive, but also to carry out purposes. It is an active power, not frustrated by the environment, but able to employ it. From this point of view we may affirm that mankind is on its way to freedom. As man's knowledge of things, of their nature and capacities for service grows; still more especially,

as its conception of the relative value of utilities becomes more just, and, as a consequence, its enterprises become ever more directly spiritual in ultimate intention, the law of the Whole becomes, more and more, not only an inner desire but an inner necessity, though a necessity freely chosen. Duty is then veritably categorical and the good sovereign. That which is without *serves*. Thus, after all, it is the good and the wise, the best servants of mankind, who "have the world at their feet."

But it is time that we should turn back upon the main issue. That which I have been trying to show is a subordinate truth, and only indirectly relevant to the main issue. I have insisted that the problem of Idealism, which for me is the philosophy of the future, involves an unstinted recognition of both the unity and continuity of the moral being with the world, *and* his independence or freedom. I have indicated that, as a matter of fact, freedom does not imply severance from the world; that severance means helplessness; and that man is free not from his world, but by means of his world. His world is the partner of his spiritual enterprises, and he achieves in the degree in which he liberates the truest meaning and highest possibilities of the universe. At first sight morality, which cannot compromise freedom in any way or degree, seems to isolate man; at first sight religion, which cannot compromise the intimacy of man's relation to the object of his worship, seems to make what is Divine and Infinite overflow and overpower his finitude, so that he no longer counts. He is one with, lost in, the object of his worship, the God whom he serves and loves. This we believe to be a one-sided, and

therefore a false reading of both morality and religion. Man is free but not isolated; he loses himself in his God, but only because in that act he has found himself. At the heart of morality there is a positive relation to the universe and its divine principle; at the heart of religion there is a limitless exaltation of the value of the finite personality and a deepening of the effective powers of individuality.

But we have to prove these truths, and prove them after doing full justice to the difficulties.

The first of these difficulties, as we have seen in part, arises from the fact that as a moral being, doing what is morally right or wrong, the agent must be alone responsible,—the sole author of his own deeds. Moral responsibility cannot be shared. Every participator in a common act is responsible for the whole of it. The moral actions of a man express his own individuality. To deny this solitary and complete responsibility of the moral agent is to destroy morality.

But may the moral world not be a delusion, the creation of man's self-importance? May not the actions of man have no more significance from the point of view of a higher being than the busy toil of an ant-heap has for man? I do not think this is so. But once grant the reality of the moral world—once acknowledge the nature of the demands which we call duties—once grant that a man can and does now seek, now betray, a good that is absolute, and there can no longer be any doubt as to the nature and extent of his responsibilities, or of the binding and categorical nature of duty. Love turns its obligatoriness into a yearning desire. We may say with the wonderful

author of the 119th Psalm "Thy law is my delight."[1]

But the change only makes the authority of the law more full by converting it into a law of freedom. The duty becomes the greatest of all privileges and delights, as well as an obligation. The truth is that a man *is* what he does. (This holds of all objects, and, as we may see hereafter, it is a most important truth, carrying vast consequences.) He is not only *manifested* or *expressed* in his actions. His series of deeds *are* his living personality reacting upon its environment, and attaining thereby either fresh characteristics or a fuller development of its present features. Moral action is not a mere matter of the will, or of a self other than, and lurking somewhere behind, its activities; it is the individual in process of lifting "what is" to the level of "what ought to be." Take away the personality and there are no actions; take away the actions, and there is left only the promise and possibilities of a personality. A man is not at all except as at least capable of certain ways of behaviour. These ways are his character, and his character is his concrete self.

Morality implies personal and full responsibility.

What the history of his self may be, or the range of his personality; how much and what of the past of the world and of its present social and other forces operate within him as elements of his living self; how far he can reach his hand and help or harm the world, these things do not concern us at present. What I maintain is that his moral responsibility and his personal action are coextensive, or that his good and bad deeds are his alone. He is the heir of a very

Man is what he does, however wide or narrow his range, and must be judged thereby.

[1] See Ps. cxix. 40, 45, 47, 92, 97, 163, 174.

ancient and a very crude ancestry—reaching back to the dwellers in caves and the tree-tops; a very mixed and most powerful accumulation of social influences, good and bad, of traditions true and false, play around him no less constantly than the forces of the physical world. He is tossed by these forces, it would seem, like a bit of sea-weed on the ocean wave. All the same, those actions which we call right or wrong are the actions in which he expresses his *rational* nature, his veritable manhood, and are as much the outcome of his personality as if he stood alone in an empty universe. There can be no denying the fact that morality isolates. The repentant sinner never lessens or shares his blame. "I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."[1] The man upon whom the light of the moral world has broken makes no excuses.

The solitariness of the moral agent not affected by his history.

In these days it is somewhat customary to melt down the individuality of man into antecedents and environment; and, because the unity of man with his world is assumed to be inconsistent with his freedom, this melting down of man is at the expense of his responsibility as a moral being. For these reasons the focal intensity, the privacy, the solitariness, the exclusiveness of the self can bear some emphasis; and I make no apology in closing this lecture for referring once more to our biologists. They tell us that all the universe has been at work preparing for the

> "golden daffodils,
> Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
> Fluttering and dancing in the breeze."

[1] See Ps. li. 3 and 4.

They are engaged in exhibiting the affinity of the daffodils to the life that went before and came after them. The biological world is one wondrous whole. Nevertheless, every one of these dancing deities has to maintain itself against, as well as by means of, the world. Without their response, without the spontaneous reaction of their apparently independent single and separate lives, all the universe could not maintain the daffodils. There are things that every daffodil, in order to be a daffodil, must do for itself and in its own way.

How much more evident all this becomes when we deal with man, even when he is very rudimentary. Until the mind of the child works, not all his teachers can show him that two and two make four. Life, and living mind above all, remakes all its content. Memory, for instance, is no passive substance upon which you can make an impression. Understanding (or experience) is not a mere receptacle into which truths can be poured. Every mind must create its possessions.

Moral action, whether right or wrong, always involves free assent.

This privacy of man's activities is perhaps even more evident when we observe his ethical conduct. Moral personality cannot be overcome by force. Personality ends, just as natural life perishes, when mere force enters. But personality is never overcome unless it surrenders. If there be no traitor within to hold parley with the enemy without, the self is safe from all the assaults of temptation. On the other hand, it is not less within our power to withstand the onsets of the benevolent and helpful powers of the world. We have seen youths callous to all the pleadings of their parents; we have seen parents regardless of the misery their intemperance brings; and, possibly, we have

ourselves turned a deaf ear to the nature of things, when it warns us of the consequences of our deeds. But the environment cannot dictate. No one can enslave a man except the man himself. He is limited, not by his surroundings, but by his own pettiness—his ignorance, his meanness, his selfishness. It is only in relation to the moral agent that the environment acquires any power for either good or evil. It takes its character from him. The environment which to one man is the means of his degeneration into duplicity or selfishness is for another the opportunity for an honest and generous life. However much we insist upon morality as the application of principles to circumstances, and upon the intimacy of their relation, we must not obscure the fact that it is from the side of the agent that the moral qualities spring.

On the other hand, if nature in itself has no ethical character, we must not forget that nature *in itself* is an abstract fiction, a mere aspect of what is real. And in the second place, the fact that nature in itself is neither moral nor immoral, and that it is the material on which the bad and good will alike operate, does not justify us in assuming that it lends itself to the uses of the wicked will with the same entirety and finality as it does to those of the good will. The nature of things taken in its full compass is rational.

There is no doubt that man, on occasion, re-interprets the world in which he lives, and that he does it in a most fundamental way. There is order where once there was chaos, the rule of righteousness instead of blind destiny; hope where there was naught but

despair and heart-break; beauty and kindness instead of ugliness and heartlessness. Paracelsus saw no good in man till, in his own heart, love had

> "been made wise
> To trace love's faint beginnings in mankind,
> To know even hate is but a mask of love's;
> To see a good in evil, and a hope
> In ill-success; to sympathize, be proud
> Of their half-reasons, faint aspirings, dim
> Struggles for truth."

The world is made new. It becomes the scene of the operation of universal Love: God's own workshop.

But at this point morality seems to merge into religion, and what we have to do with at present is their contradiction.

LECTURE X

MORALITY A PROCESS THAT ALWAYS ATTAINS

The two conditions of plant life.

WITHOUT pretending to deal in an intimate way with the problem of the first emergence or the nature of life, nor to contribute to the discussion of any of the problems upon which biologists are divided and which are capable of being decided on biological evidence, I have ventured to indicate two facts which are, I believe, unanimously admitted and regarded as fundamental. The first is that the lowest living plant is the result of long anterior conditions which somehow are focussed and active in it; and the second is that in reacting upon its environment it employs these borrowed powers and these only, and employs them in its own way. It really *is* these conditions united and active. The daffodil in virtue of that which it has borrowed from its world and made a part of its living structure *acts* as a daffodil. Every daffodil for and by itself turns round upon the universe what the universe has lent to it, and thereby produces its own unique result.

Rational life presents the same features. But it borrows more extensively, and its reaction upon its world by means of its world is far more potent. In a word, the dependence of man as a rational being upon his antecedents is fuller and more varied than that of

any other of nature's products; but his independence and the uniqueness of his reaction are also more significant and full. In him, in fact, independence becomes freedom. What he requires from, or seeks for, in his world is that which he believes will satisfy or fulfil or realize himself; and his interpretation of his self, its nature, its needs and what will fulfil them is his own interpretation. Hence he defines his own ideals, and acts in obedience to ends he himself has set up. No one *can* do these things instead of him, forming his conceptions or willing their realization instead of him. If his interpretation of the nature and needs of the self, and therefore of the good, is wrong, it is his own; if it is right, it is his own. No one can recognize a man's duty instead of him; nor neglect it except himself. This means that the immanence of the activity of the universe becomes in man an activity that is free. And it carries with it the conditions necessary for actions which have a moral character and can be called in the fulness of the meaning of the word, right or wrong. The power that is operative reveals itself as a "power working for righteousness" in the form of individual wills. And moral right or wrong is right or wrong in a final and ultimate sense. Morality undoubtedly demands this final undivided or individual responsibility. However true it may be that we ought and can bear one another's burdens, we cannot commit one another's right or wrong actions. Mine are mine and my neighbour's are my neighbour's to the end of time, and whatever takes place. We may be more than willing to bear the burden of the consequences of the ill-doing of others, and we do not hesitate to share

Both of these conditions are more fully present in rational life,

And are vital to morality.

the good things our helpful social environment provides, but the privacy of the actual volitions and deeds stands wholly unimpaired. The responsibility and the guilt of the bad act cling to the doer only, and the sense of them often seems more imperishable than any of its other consequences. The "stain" will not wash. Let others be ever so generous in the way of forgiving and forgetting our wrong acts, there may be amongst them some deeds whose meanness and selfishness are such that we can never forgive ourselves for doing them. We cannot annihilate nor utterly repudiate the past self. And if, as a Welsh hymn suggests, the songs in Zion are the sweeter for the forgiven sins of the saints, they are also tear-stained. Even forgiven sins are not forgotten by those who committed them; nor are they occasions of unmingled joy.

The conditions that are vital to morality seem to be swept aside by religion.

But all these conditions, which seem to be vital to the moral consciousness, are simply swept aside by the religious consciousness. Religion in all its highest forms appears to break down the barriers of the separate and individually responsible personalities. Nay, religion seems utterly to repudiate and destroy such individuality. For it identifies the worshipper with his God, and the worshipper joyously loses himself in the object of his devotion and love.

"Faith is not merely a history or a science. To have faith is nought else than for a man to make his will one with God's, and take up God's word and might in his will, so that these twain, God's will and man's will, turn to one being and substance."[1]

"Faith then," continues Mr. Bradley, "is the

[1] Jacob Böhme quoted by Mr. F. H. Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, p. 292.

recognition of my true self in the religious object, and the identification of myself with that both by judgment and will; the determination to negate the self opposed to the object by making the whole self one with what it really is. It is, in a word, of the heart. It is the belief that only the ideal is real, and the will to realize therefore nothing but the ideal, the theoretical and practical assertion that only as ideal is the self real.

Justification by faith.

"Justification by faith means that, having thus identified myself with the object, I feel myself in that identification to be already one with it, and to enjoy the bliss of being, all falsehood overcome, what I truly am. By my claim to be one with the ideal, which comprehends me too, and by assertion of the non-reality of all that is opposed to it, the evil in the world and the evil incarnate in me through past bad acts, all this falls into the unreal: I being one with the ideal, this is not mine, and so imputation of offences goes with the change of self, and applies not now to my true self, but to the unreal, which I repudiate and hand over to destruction." [1]

Religion identifies man with the object of his worship: it deals with a new self.

It is in that it identifies man with his ideal, or that man is reconciled to be made one with his God, that religion reveals its nature. The separate, independent solitary self, facing the responsibilities of its own errors, has been left behind. Its place is taken by a self that is flooded, inundated, with its consciousness of God. The old self was exclusive. Henceforth the individual goes forth in the strength of his God. The new self has no exclusive ends; however private they are, they are not selfish. It has no will that is merely

[1] *Ethical Studies*, pp. 292-3.

its own. It is only God's will. Existence, purpose, value—all that secures either reality or worth—come from elsewhere; from the ideal object of devotion. "For to me to live is Christ." [1] "Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." [2] "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." [3] Such are the expressions of one of the greatest exponents of the religious consciousness that the world has known, and the religious experience of mankind is their reaffirmation. Nor do I think that it is possible to modify them. There is not, as a matter of fact, any limit to the identification of the worshipper and his God in a true religion. From that point of view not a shred or shadow of the old self remains. The present self and its ends, the world in which it lives and its values—everything is new and the past is not any more.

Morality maintains the past and the continuity of the self.

But it must not be forgotten that there is another point of view—that of morality; and the moral consciousness cannot and must not utterly part with the past, or treat it as if it had never been. The identification with the ideal must not be by the annihilation of the self. If the separateness of the self is destroyed as morality advances, its responsibilities must be preserved. Repentant man, who turns or rather returns to his God, may, like the prodigal son, leave nothing but husks behind him. He is parting only with that which is worthless. Nevertheless, the son that returns has been in a far country and shared the food of pigs. However true it is that the religious consciousness somehow, through man's union with God, blots out man's sins without making God share in their guilt, the sins were committed. The world is

[1] Phil. i. 21. [2] Rom. xiv. 8. [3] Gal. ii. 20.

not the same as if the sins had never been, nor is the agent who committed them. From the moral point of view, in fact, the wrong actions remain irremediable, indelible stains that nothing can lift away as if they had never been. They are sources of bitter sorrow to him who has committed them, as well as of deep joy and thankfulness and wonder once they have been forgiven. They count "as if" they had never been; but the "as if" remains.

Solutions of the conflict of morality and religion. (1) By turning religion into a mere mystery.

Possibly the most usual way of dealing with the difficulty arising from this apparently direct contradiction of religion and morality is that of treating this identification of man with his ideal, which is the central fact of religion, simply as a mystery. "This overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the absolute is the great mystic achievement," says William James.[1] The need of explaining it disappears when it is called "mystic," and all rational judgment is suspended. Moreover this quality as a mystery is somehow supposed to add to its convincingness and worth. It is meant, as a rule, that it intoxicates the soul with the sense of the nearness of God and precludes all its rational operations. But philosophy has no right to avail itself of the methods of mysticism.

When oneness with God is not left merely mystical, it is often interpreted in terms of feeling. And the love which religion implies is taken to be mere emotion, a form of sentimental self-indulgence.[2] But love as a sentiment is antagonistic to independence; the oneness with its object which such love

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 419.

[2] *Vide* some of our popular hymns, *e.g.* "Safe in the arms of Jesus.'

(2) By making religious love a mere sentimental emotion.

secures is at the expense of individuality; for it merges the individual in it for the time being, instead of leaving him strengthened and enriched. If this were the only love that united God and man in religion, then the reconciliation of religion with morality would be finally impossible.

(3) By uniting the will of man with the will of God, and making religion a spirit of service.

But there is a higher and truer love than that which is sentimental, and a saner than that which is mystical. It is that which unites wills and leaves them standing. It is a spirit of service. It is the love of the mother for the child—*the* most marvellous and beautiful in our world—making his good her *whole* concern day and night. It is the love of man for woman and of woman for man which makes the happy domestic hearth, the best symbol of the kingdom of heaven. It is the love of the citizen for good causes and of the patriot for his country. It not only allows but it invites the free and full expression of separate personalities. And it is full of practical enterprise, ever sending the saviours of mankind into the wilderness in search of lost sheep.

Moreover, the sense of oneness with God, or of dependence upon him, which is essential to religion, degenerates into passivity if it be not thus the source of spiritual energy.

I shall try to show that religion when it thus implies a love which strengthens individuality and fills it with the spirit of service is reconcilable with morality. For the present my aim has been to reject the methods of mysticism and sentimental love because they make that reconciliation seem easy, while in truth they make it impossible.

There are ways of misrepresenting morality which

have the same results as these ways of misrepresenting religion. They also, in like manner, seem easy, but are delusive. Amongst these ways of making room for religion at the expense of morality perhaps the most common is that which represents morality as the scene of constant and inevitable failure on the part of mankind. Every act that man performs is held to fall short of what "ought to be." We must pursue, but we cannot attain; approach, though we can never reach; for the complete identification of the actual and the ideal were the end of all effort, and therefore of morality. And inasmuch as morality is on this view nothing but the scene of constant and inevitable failure, and as the ideal which alone is truly real is never reached, we have only to sweep it and all it concerns out of sight. We must turn against it as against that which has neither true reality (for the good deeds are not done) nor value. The moral world, on this view, is the world of mere appearances, and need not count for the religious consciousness. Only that counts which is done in the spirit and service of religion: for that alone is, in the last resort, ideal and therefore real.

If morality were mere failure, it could be swept aside for the sake of religion.

But not even for the sake of the religious consciousness can we repudiate the world of endeavour, or deny the reality and the value of the moral act. And, for my part, I cannot admit that all man's moral actions are failures. Some of them, I believe, are perfect; and not even the poorest of them is a *mere* failure, attaining and amounting to nothing. The religious devotees who call moral actions "trash" and affirm that we are all as an unclean thing, and all our religiousness as "filthy rags" are, I believe, proceeding on a wrong supposition in passing their judgment.

But morality may be a process and never mere failure.

It is quite true that no moral act exhausts the moral situation. It does not fulfil the whole of the moral law. Some aspect of the good remains unrealized. The situation in morality has its strict analogue in man's knowledge. We know no single fact absolutely through and through, or with absolute certainty. Every fact as part of the universe has infinite suggestiveness, and we never exhaust its meaning. But it by no means follows that we know nothing of the fact, or that our knowledge is simply a delusion and an error. It is sound so far as it goes, and in virtue of "the more" which it implies. So it is in morality. The moral law does not at any time demand realization in all the fulness of its possible applications. These are infinite. What is required is the application of the moral law to the particular circumstances so as to elicit from them their highest meaning and value. Morality, on one side, is a system of eternal principles, and neither place nor time nor circumstance can lower or limit its demands. This was the aspect that Kant accentuated, and which is usually most in evidence. But morality is also the application of eternal principles to the demands of the moment. Merely as a system of principles, morality loses its vital significance and sinks into theoretic opinion. But morality implies volition and "the carrying out" of principles, as we say. It brings with it purposes which reinterpret natural circumstance and lift it into a spiritual fact. The principle must await the call of circumstance, and is, in that sense, though in that sense only, at its beck. The right act, amongst other good qualities, has that of being timely—the precise act required. Hence follow the endless forms which the good act may

The moral demand is always particular as well as universal: it requires the application of eternal laws to temporal facts.

take: for the variety of the demands of the circumstances of human life is itself endless. Hence, also, the moral task is never done, nor the moral enterprise shut down as concluded.

In fact, morality is a process. In order to be at all, it must be in operation. Let no one will what is right any more, and "the moral world" simply ceases to exist. It is continued volition, the uninterrupted willing of what is good which keeps it in being. All spiritual facts imply a similar condition: that is to say, they exist only so long as they are being produced. The spiritual world is a constant creation. Knowledge, for instance, no less than morality, exists only so long as the process of knowing is carried on.

Hence morality is a process, like knowing.

There never was and never will be "a world of ideas" in the sense of a system of mental entities, other than, though somehow true of, the world of facts and events, and, as Lotze thought, needlessly duplicating it. I doubt if there ever was a more persistent or widespread error, which gives philosophers more trouble, than this reification of ideas. Ideas are not like, nor are they symbolic of, nor do they correspond or in any way point to objects. They don't exist. There are minds which in relation to objects carry on a process called knowing, and there are objects which guide and control and inspire their operations. But there is no third world of entities, as men who speak of the world of ideas seem to think. Neither is there a moral world, consisting in an analogous way, of unchanging categorical laws, or of a system of static imperatives, or, of accomplished right or wrong actions. The world of ideas is a world in which rational beings carry on the processes of the

There exists no static world of either ideas or deeds.

intelligence; it is these processes. And in a similar way the moral world is the process of the active volitions of rational beings seeking to convert what is to what ought to be, or to realize their ideals. The forces of the natural world are not in more constant operation than are those of the world of spirit, the world of knowing and willing; nor are they more constitutive in character. In other words, as the natural world is the scene of unremitting active energy, which, however it may change its form, is never spent and lost; so the spiritual world is the scene of spiritual energy, whose forms are never exhausted however they may change.

Both ideas and volitions are ways in which spirit operates. Stop the operation, and they cease to exist. The worlds of knowledge and morality as static entities philosophy has yet to banish, first from its own precincts and then from the common consciousness. So far it has been much occupied in the attempt to establish some relation between the world of ideas on the one side and the world of real facts on the other, or to bring them together in some fashion or another. And it has been similarly occupied in the region of conduct. Philosophy must endeavour to do with one, all-inclusive, real world, and to make that real world active even in our knowing and willing, yea, even in our illusions and wrong-doing. Its ghostly rivals must disappear. They are nothing but its process operating in the imperfect thinking and willing of mankind. Nothing exists except that which is in process, and everything that exists *is* what it does.

There is only one all-inclusive real world, and it operates in our willing and knowing.

The condemnation of the moral world, in which piety and philosophy have joined, on the ground that it is not the scene of moral achievement, is thus alto-

gether false and irrelevant. Morality does not pretend to be an accomplished and finished achievement, or the final reaching of a fixed goal, or the identification of a static actual with a static ideal. The critics occupy a wrong point of view, from which issue impossible, because irrational, demands. That which is in process, or, in other words, that which *is* process, or active energy, is at its goal all the time that it is operative. For it to be is to be active. That which is permanent, and supposed to be static, is that which expresses itself in, carries on, and exists as carrying on, the process of constant change. "The same yesterday, to-day and forever": "Not the same for two successive instants"—both of these are true of physical forces, as every physicist knows. The rate and nature of the change is the constant element, and the change is perpetually taking place. Grasping the law of this process he believes that he is comprehending the real fact. And I am convinced that philosophers must assume an analogous attitude, if any answer to their questions is to be reached as to the nature either of morality or of reality in general.

It follows that the condemnation of morality as a failure proceeds on a wrong assumption.

From this point of view the process must be regarded as *at* the goal all the time. That is to say, if the process is going on, nothing more can be reasonably required; for the process is the operation of the ideal. And the ideal, so far from being something more or less distant, unreal, awaiting to be reached and actualized, is present already as the ultimate reality which manifests itself in the facts and events. It follows that no moral effort fails. Fulfilment of the whole law is, indeed, not attained —an end which is not moral—on the other hand

Morality as process a never-failing success.

the whole process is a process of attaining. But the final end is never aimed at except as, and in so far as, it is embodied in some particular. Morality is not the pursuit of an abstract universal good, but of the good as particularized in this or that duty. Every good deed, that is to say, every rational exercise of the will, is commendable so long as it goes on. When effort ceases, nothing remains to be praised or approved. The attainment, as I have already said, must be a stepping stone and not a stopping place.

I doubt if any act is morally good except in so far as it affects the character of the doer, makes the man a better man, and facilitates similar conduct by others. Its excellence consists in the addition it has made to the moral forces of the world. Just as the process of attaining knowledge develops the powers of the enquirer, and also makes the same discovery by others easier for them, so it is in morality. Newton when he wrote his *Principia* made the way to certain mathematical truths easier for others. It takes Japan but a few years to acquire some at least of the elements of the civilization which it has cost western countries centuries to achieve. The civilization of the past is the starting point of the present, even although life always begins at the beginning. There is not one lost good. Morality is a continuous development of mankind's will to good. It is a growing process: the highest ideal breaking out into a succession of different manifestations as mankind moves from stage to stage.

Moral development is the growth of the world's will to good—or added moral force.

It is the common characteristic of all the theories which we are now considering that they separate the two aspects of spiritual life, and substantiate these aspects in their isolation. If the ideal

is regarded as real, the attitude of the spirit is religious and super-moral. If the ideal is considered to await attainment, the attitude is moral and apt to be irreligious or merely secular. And inasmuch as it is assumed that the ideal must be either real or unreal, there is no way of avoiding the option between the religious and the moral life. How both can be possible remains unexplained and a mystery incapable of explanation from this point of view.

Hitherto theories have split up the process and divided its aspects between morality and religion.

This attitude is constantly rebuked by facts. It is more than evident that a religion which does not issue in a moral life is in some way unsatisfactory; and it is not difficult to show that morality is an uninspired strain and hopeless effort if its "not-yet" is to be continued forever, and the postponement of the ideal is endless. The truth is that such thinkers are not dealing with facts, but with abstract aspects of them. There never was a living, that is, a real religion, which did not break out into some kind of behaviour, and manifest itself, were it even in mere ceremonialism. A living religion cannot make its permanent dwelling-place in the air. Religion, in the end, is a way of life, and life is perpetual intercourse with temporary circumstance. Nor was there ever living morality not inspired by an ideal, or a moral life not in pursuit of what was held to be an absolute and final good.

The facts which are spiritual are always concrete and are both eternal and temporal.

Morality, as ordinarily understood, is called *Moralität* by Hegel. He distinguishes it from what he calls *Sittlichkeit*, and the distinction, taken in its fundamental sense, turns upon the external and mutually exclusive character of the relations in the first case, and their interpenetration, mutual saturation

The separation of the ideal and the real, and of religion and morality.

in the second. From the standpoint of *Moralität*, which Hegel condemns, you have on the one side the ideal, the eternal, the real, the final good, the universal, perfect unconditional law, approachable but never attainable; and, on the other side you have the imperfect, purely secular, ephemeral, phenomenal, conditional good, a series of particular deeds every one of them tainted by desire, constituting a scene of failure. Not only are the elements of the moral life thus separated and thereby made unreal, but morality itself is separated from religion, as the secular from the sacred, so that the latter can be attained only by utterly rejecting the former. And the separation ruins both morality and religion. The former is robbed of everything which could inspire moral effort, and its very life is extinguished; while the latter becomes, at best, a ceremonial affair, remote from all the concerns of practical life and inspiring none of them with deeper meaning or greater spiritual worth.

The assumption that reality depends on separateness.

At the root of these errors there lies an assumption which is false, and which has never been examined—and a most common assumption it is amongst philosophers as well as amongst plain men. It is the assumption that the reality of an object depends on its standing off, distinct and separate. This is, at best, only a half truth. It is less true than its direct opposite—namely, that the amount and fulness of the reality of an object depends upon its not being separate or exclusive, but comprehensive. Degrees of reality, if we are to admit them, are stages in comprehensiveness.

Whereas the most real is the least exclusive.

The more real an object is, the less loose it sits from the universe; the more are the ways of its interdependence upon other facts.

Nowhere is this truth more plainly exemplified than in human life and its spiritual enterprises. Man grows as his knowledge widens, and as his interests extend; that is, he grows in the degree in which he goes out into and takes possession of his world. The universe of the little man is small, and it is very powerless and niggardly. It helps him very little, and it leaves him very poor and impotent. The universe of the great man is itself great: it is the instrument of his purposes as well as the content of his intelligence; and its bountifulness knows no limit. He is a greater *self* through the comprehensiveness of his knowledge and practical purposes. It is the morally great man who takes upon himself the burdens of the world. The perfect man, we are told, lived and died not only for his neighbours or his nation or his age, but for the lasting good of all mankind. On the other hand, a man is imperfect, undeveloped, small, in the degree in which he shuts himself inside himself and treats his personality as exclusive.

Illustrated in knowledge and morality.

The assumption that real individuality depends upon separateness, after the manner of all assumptions which are at once fundamental and false, distorts the facts and converts them into pure puzzles. The theories which I have tried to criticize do not deal with facts, but with fancies or unrealities. Spiritual facts present the elements which these theories not only distinguish but separate, as already reconciled. No fuller recognition is needed or possible except that which at the same time enhances the significance of each of the aspects. On this view, if I may refer back, the ideal is not over there while here you have nothing but error and failure; the eternal is not beyond while

Real facts reconcile opposites.

time is always a transient now and here—the final good is not hung out of reach in a superhuman region, while what is within reach of man and done by him is valueless. You have not universals on one side and mere particulars on the other; nor are the sacred and secular, the phenomenal and real, the unconditional and conditional, separate facts. If you take up a spiritual fact—be it a moral act or a religious personality—you will find both of these opposite characters existing, and not only existing, but sustaining each other. There is no error where there is no ideal. I have never seen a cow which I would blame for not knowing mathematics. The "eternal," as I should like to be able to prove later on, is that which puts forth an endless series of successive "nows"; the final good is the final cause of every present transient good; and there never was a universal which did not lie at the heart of the particular, or a particular which was not the expression and realization of the universal.

Our part is to discover, not to form relations.

In a word, we are not called upon *to form* connexions between objects, but only to find them, and we find them whenever we discover qualities. For qualities are relations. The true starting-point of every effort to know, however advanced or elementary and crude, is thus the assumption of system; that is to say, of a whole in which all the parts are related and derive their characters from their relations. A system does not consist of "points plus relations." We would not describe any living thing in any such way. An organism is not a collection of characterless atoms, plus a no less alien and characterless set of relations; and spirit is hyper-organic, the unity is more intense, and the differences more numerous and decisive. The

reality of the parts comes from their inter-relations, and at the same time the whole is real only because the parts or elements are real. It manifests itself and functions in every one of them; while, at the same time, they are its actualization and their functions are its nature in operation.

The true datum of knowledge is neither a manifold nor a mere continuum.

We are told usually that knowledge begins with either the bare manifold of sensation, as Kant said, or with its equally abstract opposite, namely, the bare unity of an undifferentiated continuum. I admit that our knowledge, as first acquired and possessed, does not extend beyond these most abstract and empty conditions; but I would fain insist that the datum proffered to us as an object of knowledge, that which offers itself to our minds and is our co-worker in our purposes and activities, is infinitely more. We are offered in these respects nothing less than the whole rich universe all to ourselves as Carlyle would say. The possibilities of the world are at our feet. But that which we can make of this datum, at the best, is relatively very little, though it is always growing. The world is infinitely richer in its meaning and uses than it was to our savage ancestors. And these meanings and uses are growing continually, as mankind moves on along the way of knowledge and right conduct. But what is offered to us, the datum, the object of our knowledge and means of our actions, always consists of these rudimentary elements, which we can seize and possess, together with an inexhaustible *plus*. Every simple object we come upon points us beyond itself. Its explanation is always elsewhere. We are referred to its cause, or effects, or to the conditions under which it exists and operates, and we never exhaust its implications. In a word, every

object declares itself to be a part or element in a system, and we are referred to the system for its final reality and truth—the system, that is, which is so far actualized in man's experience.

In one sense man's mind, in the operation of knowing, is receptive: it must not create; it must only discover. It must merely enter more and more fully into the meaning which is present in the reality from the first. But the term receptive is most misleading. It suggests most readily the view of Locke and his successors, not that facts are given us to know, but ready-made ideas; that things—facts and events—copy and repeat themselves in the form of ideas upon passive minds. Kant discovered the activity of mind, as bringing with it a complex apparatus for making a world of knowledge out of the raw material of the manifold of mere sensation. Things, or at least things which can be known to us, must agree with the conditions imposed by mind, and, in fact, he argued, be what mind makes them. The world in which we live is, when thus viewed, mind-made: but, unfortunately, it is also, in consequence, only phenomenal. The real world is beyond our reach.

The operation of mind in knowledge supposed to result in a world of phenomena.

There is no hint in all this of the part played by the real world in the production of the world of appearances. Having presented us with its manifold or its characterless continuum, it passes out of sight, and we hear nothing more of it. Kant never realized how impotent the human mind would be were it given nothing but a manifold. But, on the view which I would maintain, the datum of knowledge, the system of reality which is proffered to us and in relation to which alone we act, participates in the

But the operations of mind are the activities of the real world by means of mind. The datum of knowledge is the system of reality, as a whole.

activities of mind. It incites and guides at every step, and grants all the content. It will be my business to show that even the activities of mind itself are in the last resort simply the world's working through the medium of its highest product. Reality, I must try to show, declares and attains its highest and best only in the medium of mind. There and there only it acquires and reveals its ultimate or spiritual character. Then and then only the system of things acquires meaning, and becomes the means of the making of spiritual products. The datum of knowing (and willing) is the system of reality; and it is never withdrawn so as to leave man's soul to work *in vacuo*.

Man's mind is potentially adequate to its great datum.

On the other hand, man, as a rational being, is adequate to his datum: for he is potentially not less comprehensive. If the world in the fulness and variety of its wealth is meant to be comprehended by reason and to serve rational purposes, the individual spirit, on its part, is meant to comprehend the world and enter into possession of its worth. If the world is real in the truest and fullest sense only in the degree in which it reveals itself in a rational medium, man, on his part, is real in the truest and fullest sense only in the degree in which he comprehends its meaning, its aesthetic perfection, and its spiritual worth. That which the philosopher has to observe, estimate and comprehend is *the process* in which the possibilities of the self are being realized. To do so he must follow the example of *the fact* he is observing: and the fact somehow reconciles opposites. As a *process*, or as a *possibility actualizing itself*, it both exists already, so that all that takes place is its operations, and also it has to be brought into existence, for it is only a possi-

Mind is the process of the self-realization of spirit: it is what ought to be proving that it is the deepest real.

bility. Applying this to morality, and borrowing the language of morality, we may say that what verily is, what is at work now and here in the purposes of mankind, is what ought to be. What ought to be is thus the deeper reality. That which takes place is its working: and it is what it does. What ought to be, the good, is the living energy of the world of man. We should find it everywhere, even as the physical sciences find physical energy in the world we call physical. And what ought to be has two characters, which I cannot afford quite to pass over: (1) it must take the form of individual character, (2) it must be cumulative and not merely repetitive. It must carry the past within itself as it moves, in a way to which physical energy furnishes no parallel. In one word, to comprehend the real as the rational in process, we must apply the idea of evolution to the actual doings of men and women; and this we cannot do unless we abandon the rigid contrasts of static, exclusive units, related at best only externally and contingently, as is ordinarily assumed, both by ordinary and by philosophic moral opinion.

Forms of the contrast between the individualistic view of the world, and the view of the universe as a single system of elements in relations that are constitutive.

These contrasts come before us in many different guises, although they all spring from the same radical error of assuming that "particulars are the only *realia*"; *i.e.*, that the universe consists of objects which exist in isolated independence, together with external connexions into which they enter at one moment, and come out at another without any alteration of character. At one time it is the contrast between human selves as mutually exclusive, and human selves which are essentially members of one another. At another time it is the contrast between the attained ideal of

religion and the ever-erring failure of the actual of morality: the former is supposed to affirm that the ideal is real, and the only real, the latter that the real is most un-ideal and imperfect. At still another time we have the two aspects of process fixed in their opposition—a continuity that never changes, and the changes that have no continuity; the contrast between the merely static and the merely changing or absolutely contingent. Then we have, still operative, the contrast of the one and the many, or of the universal and the particular. And, above all, we have the contrast between the one and the many as separate, and the one and the many as united in a system. The datum of knowledge on this view is either a manifold of sensation or an undifferentiated continuum standing over against a universe conceived as a rational system. Reality on the one view depends on separateness: reality on the other view depends upon participation and comprehensiveness. The good or bad life on the one view is the expression of my particular, finite, unitary, exclusive self: on the other view it is the expression of my world working in me, the world which being mine constitutes my individuality.

My main contention is that, from the point of view which accepts these contrasts, neither morality, nor religion, nor their relation to each other, can be explained.

LECTURE XI

THE WORLD OF THE INDIVIDUALIST

THE main conclusions of our last lecture may be illustrated by a reference to Mr. Bosanquet's chapter on "The World of Claims and Counter-claims" in his great work on *The Value and Destiny of the Individual.*

The world of claims and counter-claims is a world of independent human units.

That his world of claims and counter-claims is the same as that which we described in our last lecture needs no proof. It is "the moral world" of ordinary and philosophic opinion, the world which religious men condemn as worthless because what is done therein does not issue from love of God, because all actions done in it are imperfect and sin-stained. Its fundamental characteristics, as we have already seen, are the unitary isolation and independence of its constituents, and in consequence the external and contingent character of their relations to one another. The duty that is commanded and the claim that calls for satisfaction are, both alike, the personal, private affairs of the individual; and both the command and the claim issue from a source that is alien. The claims come from men who are "nothing to us," or from the God of Theism who made the world long ago and has since stood aloof from it. Now the life

of finite man, as thus conceived, "is essentially and inherently one of hazard and hardship," says Mr. Bosanquet. "It is bound to the hazard of attempting to live by the command of a superior, which is outside and above it—an attempt which in the nature of the case must prove a continual failure.... It is bound to the hardship of constantly making demands for respect and assistance from God, nature, and fellow-men, which are recognised, as it appears, most capriciously and imperfectly."[1] "We find ourselves always failing in our "duty" (the source of moral pessimism) and not getting our "rights" (pessimistic sense of injustice)."[2] That man is spiritually unworthy, and that God is unjust seem to be plain and inevitable conclusions forced upon us by our experience of the world and our observation of the doings and sufferings of our fellow-men. And the religious consciousness, so far from refuting or repudiating such impious conclusions, adopts them greedily and then proceeds to nullify their significance. It finds in man's failure to do his duty by his isolated strength an incentive to unite himself to his God in religious devotion; and it concludes from the unequal and apparently unjust destinies of men in this world that God will be just and make reparation in another world and a future life.

The facts of this world give rise to pessimism: man is a failure and God is unjust.

The argument is hardly worth refuting. We do not trust our fellow-men to do justice when they are out of our sight on the ground that so long as they were in our sight they did the opposite. We make the conduct which we have observed our clue to the conduct which we expect. It is not a safe clue, but

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, pp. 131, 132. [2] *Ibid.* xxv.

it is the best we can have; for character is assumed to have a certain consistency and constancy. Similarly if the demands we make on God are just, and if they remain unfulfilled by him so far as our observation reaches, then there is no escape from the pessimistic and atheistic conclusion—unless our observation is incomplete or otherwise untrustworthy.

But our demands for individualistic justice are wrong.

But this is precisely the problem which we must now ask. *Are* our demands just? That they are not fulfilled in this life seems all too obvious. "Our 'individual' fortunes," says Mr. Bosanquet, "betray no approximation to any single standard of individualistic justice, to any claim for apportionment of external advantages either by equality *qua* human beings or by any other standard.... The spiritual world, as a world of true membership, affords no encouragement to ideas of justice turning on apportionment of advantages to units by any rule whatever." [1] And the good man insists on no such apportionment. He does not desire to be without any share in the joys and the sorrows of others. We could not approve of a world in which everybody was indifferent to everyone else. Nay, even as "members of one another," it is no mechanical justice that is demanded or given. "We do not give the 'best' man the most comfort, the easiest task, or even, so far as the conduct of the enterprise is concerned, the highest reward. We give him the greatest responsibility, the severest toil and hazard, the most continuous and exacting toil and self-sacrifice." [2] The universe "shatters and despises" the claim of individualistic justice. Nor does it seem to matter on

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, pp. 152, 153. [2] *Ibid.* p. 154.

behalf of what kind of individual the claim is made. Even "the great world of spiritual membership, to which really and in the end we belong, takes no account at all of any such finite claims."[1] The scheme of things is not based upon justice to the individual. Unless I misunderstand Mr. Bosanquet, this means that not even when we recognize the individual's true nature, as a member of a spiritual system which comprises him and his fellows, and which lives in and qualifies them all, can we make claims on his behalf or condemn God as unjust if his fortune is not proportionate to his merit. We have not to ask whether or not God has been just in his dealings with A, B, or C, however suffused they may be by their relations to their fellows and the world, but whether the universe *as a whole* is justly ruled. "The proportion of fortune to merit is not really an idea which has a strong hold on healthy minds."[2]

We cannot demand except on the whole, and for the whole.

But justice on the whole and to the whole, which is not justice to any constituent of that whole, seems to me unsatisfactory from every point of view. There is no whole except that which exists in the related parts, and no justice can be done to either the parts or the whole except by way of the opposite of each. Such empty and disembodied universals as Mr. Bosanquet seems to refer to do not and cannot exist. Least of all can they exist if it be true that the rational individual is a self-conscious focus of the universe; or if the whole is a rational whole; or if the universe throbs in his thinking and willing.

I am the more reluctant to understand Mr. Bosanquet in this way, because his vision of the

[1] *Ibid.* p. 152. [2] *Ibid.* p. 156.

difference between the individualistic world of claims and counter-claims and "the world to which really and in the end we belong" is so clear. Nor would I do so were it not that Mr. Bosanquet has on other occasions also left the claim of finite existence, and of men and women as they stand and go in this world of space and time amid trifling as well as serious issues, in an analogous position. They are appearances, we are told. But what *is* an "appearance"? Is it real, or is it a mental figment?—real like one of Shakespeare's heroines or a unicorn; real in one sense and not real in another sense, *both* senses remaining undefined; real to-day and unreal to-morrow when the Absolute will swallow it—these things I have never been able to understand. Indeed, I am not convinced that Mr. Bosanquet's individuals ought to be intelligible, for according to him they are "contradictions." Predication concerning them is quite unsafe; for they fall "within the great ultimate contradiction of the finite-infinite nature."[1] That is Mr. Bosanquet's last word concerning man. He is finite and he is infinite, and being both, he is neither finite nor infinite; for apparently finite and infinite contradict each other. But if they contradict each other, they must supplant each other; and they must owe their existence to that negative function.

Mr. Bosanquet's ambiguous treatment of the finite individual.

His ultimate word of man is that he is a contradiction.

Now, I do not deny the dual nature of man; but I refuse to regard opposites which are supplementary and positive aspects of the same reality as being contradictory; contradiction, as a last word, is a confession of failure. If the theory that ends in a contradiction rests on it as its final hypothesis, is it not

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 170.

thereby proved false? I should like to ask what other test of falsehood is possible? It seems to me that "the great ultimate contradiction of the finite-infinite nature" is, in truth, a challenge to the intelligence to effect the reconciliation which the fact itself presents. And the possibility is suggested that here, as elsewhere, the opposites which seemed to contradict and therefore supplant each other, really supplement and fulfil each other. Surely the infinite that stands merely opposed to the finite must be another finite. The true infinite must be that which reveals and realizes itself in the finite. On the other hand, the finite in which, and by which, the infinite is thus revealed and realized has its own reality in the infinite, and exists in virtue of it. But such a process is impossible where the opposites are merely contradictory, as Mr. Bosanquet assumes. The possibility that the finite is the infinite in endless process of self-realization has, I think, not been realized by Mr. Bosanquet. He assumes that what is complete, perfect, must be static; and that the Absolute has this static perfection. Separated from that Absolute, the finite disappears, but the complementary and consequent truth that the infinite cannot be separated from the finite does not seem to have held for him. Hence to him the Absolute is not immanent. It is not the reality that is revealing itself in all the variety and changes of finite things, but an otiose substance behind the processes.

The contradiction of finite and infinite questioned.

I am in thorough agreement with Mr. Bosanquet's description of "the world of claims and counter-claims," which is the moral world as ordinarily conceived and the world of the individualist. It is an

" appearance," in the sense that it is a misrepresentation of the actual social world in which all of us alike live and move and have our being. In other words, the world of the ordinary moralist and religious man, in which every separate man, as separate, does his own right and wrong deeds, the world out of which God is shut, or which he governs as an autocrat, and in which moral obligations are declarations of his will, has the cardinal aspect of not being real. It is as much the creation of imagination as Prospero's island. It would be a world in which individual men and women are separate and distinct and exclusive, and clink against one another like seaside pebbles. No one could owe any man anything. A man would fulfil his whole duty provided he let his neighbour alone. But such is not the world in which we live. It is a fiction of the individualist. Social solitariness is impossible. Men are born of social antecedents; and they also form and enter into social relations. They come to stand to each other as master and servant, teacher and pupil, seller and buyer, landlord and tenant, man and wife, parent and child, and so on. The relations vary as to their permanence and importance, but according to these thinkers all alike leave the personalities, conceived as the true selves of the individuals, untouched. It cannot be otherwise; for it is taken for granted that all relations are external and contingent—pure creations of more or less capricious and entirely separate wills.

The " moral world " in the sense of external rights and duties is a pure figment.

Of course it cannot be denied that men do form and enter into transient relations; and that many relations (that all open-eyed agreements) are the creation of the wills of the individuals who enter into the compact.

Man is born of and into relations to his fellows.

The blunder lies in assuming that all relations come about in this way; and that they make no difference but leave the selves unaffected. But the root error is that of overlooking the fundamental affinities which unite men from the first and make later agreements possible. Men no more come out of their particularity in order to form society than the leaves of a tree come together and fix themselves upon its branches. Society is in a sense prior to the individual. He is not only born into it, but born of it.

I do not think it is necessary to dwell much on this truth. Recent thought has detected the fanciful and unreal character of the individualistic social schemes. As a matter of experience we have never met a Melchisedec. All the men and women we have ever known, or expect to know, had a father and mother and very long ancestry; and they bore physical and mental traces of their descent in their very make and structure. The world into which they were born is one complex system of interrelated human beings, every one of whom is structurally affected in mind, body and soul by that system, and finds in the mutual obligations between himself and his fellows the conditions of living the life of a rational being. We know now that wise men never did run wild in woods, and that a life according to nature, in Rousseau's sense, is as impossible to us as the return into the form of molluscs. Man, in short, as Aristotle taught long ago, is "a social animal."

The social nature of man is now admitted, but the results of doing so are not seen.

But while this is now acknowledged, the consequences are not realized. That is to say, the universality and inevitability of the social relations within which a man *must* live, if he is to become and to live

the life of a rational being, are not seen to be inconsistent with their contingency and externality. The self that I am is still supposed to be in itself secluded, and not in any relations positive or negative to my fellows or to the world. My self is a separate thing. I can peep at those relations from the privacy where I dwell, and I can throw them off when I please, or put them on and still remain the same self. There can be no relation more obligatory and binding than that which I call my duty to my neighbour or his duty to me. If any claim or counter-claim is valid, it is that of duty. Nevertheless, on this view, even our duties are merely external obligations. They are imposed by another being whom we usually regard as "higher." We have no part in making them binding, and consequently our obedience to the command is not free, nor our conduct moral.

The economic world is proximately individualistic.

But I shall return to this aspect of the matter. In the meantime I wish to indicate that we have in the economic world something that approaches this individualist's conception of society. There the units are supposed to be indifferent to each other, and no one is under obligations to any one else or can make claims upon him, or in any way participate in his destiny except economically. Nothing counts in this social state of things except material values, and one man's money, so far as "business" is concerned, is as good as another's. Justice in such a world would consist in equality, and equality would mean equal possession of material wealth. That is to say, the standard by which desert would be measured and claims acknowledged would have no ethical significance of any kind. The human and spiritual contents of personality have

all been spilled out of the economic man. They are not required and do not count. The workman in a large factory or yard is not personally known by his employer nor is he of any personal interest to him. The employer drops his name and calls him by a number. And similarly, on the other side, the employer to the workman is a capitalist, more or less just, and nothing else—a money-bag kept rather closely shut.

Its spiritual poverty.

But materialistic as we have become in these times, not even in Glasgow and its neighbourhood has society taken an exclusively economic character. Most men have other interests as well. When the workman goes home to his mother or his wife and children, or when he joins his fellow-workmen in pursuit of political ends or the purposes of his union, in every exchange of kindliness and consideration and personal regard, the crudeness of the economic world is left behind. Relations that are ethical are found to exist in every human society, even the lowest, and these at the same time sweeten and exalt individual life and secure social unity.

But no human society—not even the economic—can come to be or exist except in virtue of ethical relations.

Above all, it must be observed that these more or less artificial and superficial economic relations, indeed, economic society itself, could not come into being except for the action, prolonged through many centuries, of relations that are either consciously or unconsciously moral. After all, economic relations imply a mutual trust amongst men, and a stability of will and purpose which are beyond their reach so long as they are uncivilized.

Our conclusion, then, as to the purely fictitious character of the individualistic world agrees with

Mr. Bosanquet's. No such society ever did nor can exist.

If the world of claims is a fiction, why pass judgment on it, or on God's treatment of it?

Why, then, I must ask, pass judgment on such a figment and call it either just or unjust, good or bad, in any sense? It is not worthy even of condemnation. It would seem to me that to make claims on behalf of a detected fiction, the pure creation of incorrect thinking, is absurd. And such a fiction the individual member of this society is. To call God unjust because there exists no constant proportion between the deserts and the destiny of the social atoms of an individualistic, and therefore impossible, community is absurd. Having discovered and exposed the error, the philosophers ought to let it lie. It is not a matter that can concern anyone whose interest is wholly in the real and the true. If he finds it "the general fact that when we regard each other as finite units in a world of externality, we tend to frame schemes of apportionment according to which, by some rule or other, each separate unitary being has some claim to a separate unitary allotment of happiness or opportunity or reward—of something which should be added to him, it seems to us, by God or man, or nature or fortune,"[1] he surely can have nothing to do with such schemes, known to be pure fiction, a thing in the clouds. Such schemes ought to interest no one. If no such beings as the individualist conceives are to be found, how can they be treated either justly or unjustly? There is no ground for pessimism in their unheeded claims. Nor, it seems to me, can the existence of such beings be desired. Verily, the world of claims would be a hard world—it would be a world

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, pp. 145-6.

where no mother cared for her child, or child for its mother, and no one shared another's joys or sorrows—a world without sympathy and without love—deprived of all the deeper spiritual supports both of morality and religion.

It is not man's doom to live in such a world. The world in which he does live is an incomparably better one; at the lowest it has spiritual possibilities and human features.

Such a world can have no moral character.

I have said that the individualist's world can have no moral character of any kind. In the first place, as already indicated, the claims and counter-claims are external in character. Even a divine commandment, in so far as it is external, can have no moral value. It does not obtain free obedience. So long as the claim is not imposed, or re-imposed, by the agent upon himself, his acknowledgment of it has no ethical value. In the next place, it would seem to me that, except personal fear or gain, that is, except some directly self-regarding motive be in operation, neither claims nor counter-claims could be recognized. "Why should I be moral?" or rather "How can I be moral?" unless moral imperatives appear to me to be the demands of what is *Best*. The moral good must have objective value. Duty becomes a moral obligation only when it ceases to matter who has made the demand, provided the agent endorses it: the demand itself must be just.

It would thus seem to me that a world of individualistic claims and counter-claims lacks all that can make the claims and counter-claims binding, or even operative at all. The constituents of such a world, as Mr. Bosanquet suggests, would hold

one another at arm's length; or they would seek solitude. And most certainly no progressive or spiritual impulse would be present. That impulse comes when the fulfilment of duty is recognized in both its aspects; when it seems to be at the same moment the realization of what is objectively best and the attainment of one's own true good. For man is not doing what is wrong in seeking his own well-being. His error springs from conceiving and seeking a personal well-being which is not at the same time a universal objective good. Every action has its own personal and even subjective and private aspect: willing what is right or wrong is always a lonely matter. But the exclusive features of it are in the background. They form no part of the motive and, in fact, do not count. For the good man is good just because he has given his self away, dedicated it, and *saved* it by the dedication. It is, after the act, a better "self" than it ever was before. Its life is more full and it moves on a higher level.

It is only "the good" that can supply social impulse to progress—really only the Best.

Now, this means to me, in one word, the reconciliation of morality and religion, for morality becomes the active operation of the Best, that is, the religious life. But this also means a victory over the contradiction of the finite and infinite aspects of man's nature. It not only affirms the immanence of God in the volitions of men, but shows the grounds of its possibility. The ultimate ethical force which the individual *individuates*, that is, turns into elements of his own personality, is God's. Just in the same way the physical force which man exerts and spends is that of his world.

Hence morality and religion, the finite and infinite, are reconciled.

Mr. Bosanquet ought therefore to have nothing to do with a world of exclusive wills, or with an Abso-

lute which stands over against the finite and in contradiction to it. It is "beyond," "impossible," and so on, and should be left to Herbert Spencer. The infinite that we *do* know and have a right to call just or unjust, is the power which manifests itself in the events of the world, natural and spiritual, in which we live. That infinite is a process which never rests. Like all else it is what it does; and to know what it is we must consider its works. If man will but lift his eyes he will find that the Universe is the daily and constant revelation of this ultimate reality, and that the reality which it reveals is spiritual.

Aloofness of Mr. Bosanquet's Absolute—like Spencer's.

My contention, then, is that Mr. Bosanquet's Absolute is no less a fiction than the world of claims and counter-claims, whose existence he rejects. In it the finite is either lost, or transmuted beyond recognition. The process of constant change, which on such a view the finite appears to be, is lawless and chaotic enough to satisfy the wildest Pragmatism. But we have no reliable evidence of uncaused happenings. Every event points back to conditions out of which it has arisen, and if we observe it, we shall find it gives rise to, or rather takes the form of still other conditions. This means that what is changing is something that is also constant. The detachment of events is only one aspect of them; or more truly, this one aspect, closely observed, will prove to be the reality itself in process. But Mr. Bosanquet keeps these two characters asunder. The events of our life stand for Mr. Bosanquet "in a temporal series" *over against* the fixity of what is eternal; and "the ultimate triumph," that is, of the good, can take place only "in the Absolute." "The

No evidence of it is possible, nor is there any example of purely finite facts.

Hence the relation of finite and infinite is negative for Mr. Bosanquet.

total expression of it within the temporal series is inconceivable."[1] And yet it would appear that the things of time express the Absolute. "One thing seems to me certain," he says. "The expression of the Absolute cannot be wholly reserved for the future. The past must have had its share. What else can it have been than such an expression? And something is certainly dropped as we proceed, by the nature of finiteness, though it is open to any one to argue that what is added must be of greater value."[2] From this it would appear that Mr. Bosanquet's Absolute contains something that the finite cannot hold; and, on the other hand, there seems to be something in finite facts which has to be left behind as "not capable of Salvation." They are "dropped," and never recovered. The infinite is not the whole, and the Absolute is not all-inclusive. Mr. Bosanquet's doctrine on this matter is somewhat ambiguous, but his last pronouncement and final one seems to affirm the essential separateness of the finite and infinite, or the relative and absolute. And yet they are not so separate as to be incapable of clashing. "The finite-infinite creature" is "always in a condition of self-transcendence.... He is always endeavouring to pass beyond himself in achievement.... He is always a fragmentary being, inspired by an infinite whole, which he is for ever striving to express in terms of his limited range of externality. In this, *ex hypothesi*, he can never succeed. But this effort of his is not wasted or futile. It is a factor of the self-maintenance of the Universe; it constitutes ... an element in the Absolute."[3]

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 326.
[2] *Ibid.* p, 313.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 304.

What more do you require, the reader may ask, in the way of bringing the infinite and finite together in the nature of man? I reply that for "self-transcendence" I would write "self-realization" or "self-attainment." Instead of saying that man is always endeavouring to "pass *beyond* himself," I would say that he is endeavouring to reach or become himself. I cannot admit that man is a fore-doomed failure: that were too cruel an invention for any Creator. Instead of affirming that in his ethical actions he is always failing, I would say that he is always succeeding —even when he "learns through evil, that good is best." And I would add that the gain of the Universe consists in the increased value of the individual selves which are evolved; and would refuse to regard man, the self-conscious and therefore infinite individual, as a mere element, even in the Absolute. What reaches over its other is more than an "element." All through Mr. Bosanquet's argument the supposition runs that man's real nature is finite. He has to pass "beyond" himself in order to achieve the infinite—an obvious impossibility. The consequence is that, if and when man does pass beyond himself (and he is lifted above himself by his religion), man's self disappears. Mr. Bosanquet speaks of the absorption of the self by will and conviction in the perfection which inspires it and belongs to it";[1] as if in becoming real the self ceased to be, or at least to be *itself*.

Man for Mr. Bosanquet is in truth finite, and his infinitude only a troubling aspiration.

At this point the difference of view becomes clear and significant. Man has not to go beyond himself in order to reach the infinite. Nor does he need to be

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 306. *Vide* also Mr. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*.

transmuted in order to become an item in the Absolute. He *is* the infinite in process. A mere finite could not aspire or in any way seek to go beyond itself, any more than a cow can be moral. Man can seek to become only that which he potentially is: and what a man is potentially he is most truly—only we must permit what is potential to reveal itself in the process of becoming. To be a rational self means to be self-determined, and what is self-determined is at once both infinite and absolute. Nothing is alien to it. It is in its nature all-inclusive. This fundamental characteristic belongs to the narrowest and most ignorant and least virtuous self we can conceive, so long as it is held to be sane and rational, capable of doing either what is right or what is wrong and therefore free. It is in him to "acquire," and what he is capable of becoming is that which he most truly is.

Man is the infinite in process, for he is self-conscious.

When I read man's history, therefore, what I find is not a finite creature trying to transcend himself and necessarily failing, but a potency that is infinite in its nature, operating as a spiritual being at a certain stage of its actuality, and in response to certain circumstances. If either side of the human self had to be called unreal, or deceptive, I should call it his finite, fixed, exclusive side. But the conception of the finite as the self-revealing and self-realizing process of what is in its nature absolute and infinite, averts the need of fixed and static entities, and avoids the difficulties which spring therefrom.

Hence, to me, every step in spiritual well-doing is at once the actual attainment of the Best, the realization, as demanded and made possible by the circumstances of the moment, of a good that is moral and therefore

The double result of moral progress.

Absolute, and also it is the building up of the individual as an individual. He means more, and is more, and has more worth, after the deed, than before. "The Absolute is all-inclusive by transmutation," says Mr. Bosanquet, "and is thus no mere aggregate,"[1] but the transmutation is supposed to be confined to its finite content. The Absolute cannot change. What is perfect must remain fixed in order to be real—a pure assumption if the conflict of good and evil is admitted. Such a view which rules out real perfection, rules out the whole content and inspiration of progress. It suggests to Mr. Bosanquet an ever-receding goal, which verily is not inspiring. That it could be a succession of achievements has not appeared probable to him. "There is no Interpreter's House or Palace Beautiful" on the way, for Mr. Bosanquet's Pilgrim, where he can be refitted and refreshed and sent forth singing. Mr. Bosanquet, in a word, "objects to the conception of change in the ultimate real."[2] The Absolute stands aloof, after all, from the world of finite happenings, of which, by the by, *this* world is crammed full. It does not express itself in the changes. It is not that which does emit the changes; it is not a perfection which never rests or ceases to throw out its rays. It is a dead Absolute, like the static substance of Spinoza. The living turmoil is all elsewhere. The relation between finite and infinite, the relative and the absolute, God and the world, is in the end negative, exclusive, contradictory. The moral world is the world in which every man tries to go beyond himself, and, of course, fails. Failure attends the efforts of him who has, no less than of him who has not, identified his will with

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 307. [2] *Ibid.* p. 308.

that of God, ratified, adopted, loved his commands and found in his service perfect freedom; for he has had to leave his *self* out and become something or somebody else. As a moral being in this world he does not do justice, and he does not receive justice, in any full sense. There is no such actual achievement anywhere. On all hands, at the best, there is only a striving after "a beyond." Man is doomed to carry with his consciousness of "I ought" and "I would" the conviction of "I cannot." As a moral being he must not expect to perform an act which can satisfy his sense of what is right. If, being religious, he is satisfied, it is because his self has been transcended. Religion is God's presence and action in him, and, be it noted, not a man's own action also; for these two are exclusive.

The contradiction is ultimate for Mr. Bosanquet and pessimism the legitimate result.

Contradiction is thus, for Mr. Bosanquet, the ultimate word regarding this world of time and tears. It is a contradiction between two things, each of which is fixed. It is therefore not soluble. It can only be removed by treating either the one or the other of the opposites as unreal. And this is what he does. In *this* life it is the infinite or absolute or perfect which is unreal. In the *next* it is the finite that has to disappear or, what comes to the same thing, to be transmuted. *This* world, the world in which we live and which we help to make, the moral world, is the sphere of the unavailing effort to reach a solution, and the scene of a double failure. It is a world in which man is condemned to failure, and in which God is not called upon to be just, except "on the whole." The next world is the scene of such transmutation that nothing is any longer recognizable.

So far as I can see, such fixed opposites as Mr. Bosanquet employs are not capable of yielding any satisfying result.

I reserve for our next lecture the defence of a less despairing view.

LECTURE XII

THE WORLD OF THE IDEALIST

THE substance of the view, which I would demonstrate by irrefragable proof if I could, is suggested by Wordsworth in the opening words of the Ninth Book of *The Excursion*.

Idealism in modern poetry and philosophy.

> "To every Form of being is assigned,
> An *active* Principle :—howe'er removed
> From sense and observation, it subsists
> In all things, in all natures; in the stars
> Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,
> In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone
> That paves the brooks, the stationary rocks,
> The moving waters, and the invisible air.
> Unfolded still the more, more visible,
> The more we know; and yet is reverenced least,
> And least respected in the human Mind,
> Its most apparent home."

I have quoted Wordsworth because we accept optimistic utterances from the poets more readily than from philosophers; and we are less ready to charge them with taking a shallow view of life and treating evil too lightly. Moreover, if I have not misapprehended the whole mission of modern Idealism, I should say that it is to give a reasoned and definite expression to this poetic faith and to justify it in the face of the

facts of life—justify it, that is to say, to the understanding of men who will neither reduce the reality of these facts by calling them appearances nor proceed by a method which selects convenient and favourable facts and passes all others by. Idealism received its inspiration from Wordsworth and Coleridge and their fellow-poets, no less than it received its specific problem from Kant. Kant introduced what he called the Copernican change by giving the necessities of spirit logical priority over those of sense and natural facts. But the change which he introduced carries far more consequences than he foresaw, or, indeed, than have even yet been realized, whether in the theories or in the practice of mankind. It implies not only that religion and morality, and all the rights and privileges of a nature that is rational, can be placed beyond the reach of the engines of scepticism, safe from all attack, but have to be reinterpreted and to take a wider meaning. In the last resort, for Kant, the interests of man are moral; the truth is to be known for the sake of the good; the knowable universe exists in order to furnish a fit frame for the moral life; and the ultimate necessity for the existence of God lies in the demand for the realization of a complete good. But the moral life for Kant is ultimately intensely individualistic. Every man is set to seek his own perfection. The pursuit is solitary. He stands alone, with no strength save his own, under the thunder of the categorical imperative. And his strength is sufficient. "He can, because he ought," although he is never complete victor over his own desires, and requires infinite time. If, in one sense, he may be held to be an ephemeral pheno-

Kant's Copernican change—his affirmation of the priority of practical reason.

menon amongst phenomena, in another the whole natural scheme is a thing lighter than vanity in the presence of his spirit. And if he has intercourse with his fellows in society, it is that of a king with kings.[1]

The Idealistic re-affirmation of the kinship of man and his world and the spiritualization of the latter.

But all this Kantian teaching had to be changed in being adopted. The individual had to suffer at least temporary dethronement. Psychology was to cease to play the rôle of metaphysics; man had to be derived and to appear as mediated by the natural scheme. Morality had to be both naturalized and socialized: it must cease to be either an exception or an antagonist to the scheme of things, and lose its defiant character. Moral goodness, which is the *becoming* morally good, must itself be a process of the real. The movement must be seen as the very best thing that could take place, and as that in which the world of the real reveals its true character and reaches its full fruition. Hence, religion too must attain a new character. It must derive its value not from the failure of morality, but from its success: it must be recognized as that which inspires morality, being the sense of infinite companionship—"If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Now this change, though it involves the whole outlook of philosophy, morality and religion, comes in the last resort to one thing only: man, as an individual, instead of being the centre around which the Universe revolves, is now caught up in its career. But the Universe itself is spiritual, relative to mind and, therefore, to man in every item. It verily is a Copernican change, a new spiritual astronomy destined

[1] Kant's doctrine in this matter was inconsistent.

to make many beliefs obsolete, and to be received reluctantly. Man is man, on this view, in virtue of his kinship with the world; not because his self is private, but for the very opposite reason.

But it is difficult for man to give up, or even to postpone, his self in any department. He seems to stand naturally at the centre of things: East and West, and North and South seem inevitably to begin where he is, and the zenith is always immediately above his head. The difficulty is especially great if the promise that he will receive his self back enriched is uncertain and given in indefinite language. And that the promise has, thus far, not been free from these defects is hard to deny; for the votaries of this way of thinking are not seldom given to accentuate the negative side of the process of morality, and to make much of its contradictions, and pains, and perils; while the Absolute, in which is the ultimate truth and reality of things, is apt to be an empty maw, where finite things are transmuted. This is the substance of our criticism of Mr. Bosanquet. He over-accentuates the merely negative side of morality and emphasizes its hazards and hardships. Man's self is "a finite being which is infinite without realizing it, and so . . . is always beyond itself." "It is this double being which necessitates the atmosphere of hazard and hardship which surrounds the finite self when it tries to take itself as such."[1] If it could "take itself" as more than finite, if it could realize its infinitude by completely identifying itself with the perfect, thinking no imperfect thoughts, seeking no imperfect good, doing no deed in an imperfect way, then all would be well. But to

Apparent contradiction of human nature.

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 132.

do this the finite being would be obliged to pass beyond itself, that is, I presume, it would have to leave its self behind and become something or somebody else—which is plainly impossible.

This, I think, is not merely contradiction but confusion. In the face of it one is disposed to ask some plain questions, and to make some plain statements. Presumably man's life would have as little "hazard" or "hardship" as the animal's, if he had no moral aspirations, that is to say, if the aim of his being were not the attainment of the perfect, which means the doing of what is morally right. Expunge his higher nature and there would remain, not a being acquainted with hazards and hardships, but a contented animal chewing its cud. Presumably, on the other hand, "hazard and hardship" would not fitly characterize a life which actually attained the perfect.

It is no longer necessary to discuss the first of these two alternatives. However close the kinship between men and animals, we are not disposed to overlook the fact that, somehow or another, the process of evolution culminates in converting man's natural needs into spiritual ideals freely sought. The second alternative remains, I think, even for Mr. Bosanquet himself, provided he keeps running the hazards and facing the hardships. He has detected the *unreality* of the "world of claims and counter-claims." Bad as our world is, in many ways, it is not so hopelessly bad as that—not even the economic part of it.

The contradiction is not real: for morality is religion in practice.

What world is real, then? Or how are we to characterize truly what we falsely viewed as a world of claims and counter-claims? Evidently as a world in which morality is re-interpreted in the light of

religion; and in which man is recognized as having claims and fulfilling them (or as a being with rights and duties) because he is already in the service of the Best. His rights are conclusive and his claims are sound only because the good actually is at their back; and his duties are binding for the same reason. But this is nothing more nor less than to attribute both the demands that men make upon one another and upon their God, and the mutual service they render each other in this world of space and time, to the activity of what is Perfect. The world of human intercourse, of mutual help and hindrance, the ordinary social or moral world, we thus trace first to the volitions of men. It is their continued volitions that keep it in existence. Let man cease to *will*, and the moral world, as known to us, disappears. And if we take up the volitions of men, we shall find (not seldom under deep obscuration) that nothing could call them into being except a vision of a good end—nay, of the best—or what he conceives to be the Best, though it may not by any means be regarded by him as morally best. That vision incites the will, receives the assent of the head and heart, and becomes the object of a choice which is free. If we want further to trace his right or wrong interpretations of what is best, we shall have a long road to travel. We must bring in all that went to the making of his disposition, all his past history. But we should not have to go beyond his personality, for all these things are gathered into him, and the choice in the end is his own. But his world has co-operated. If you are asked who did this deed, you must answer in the same way as you would answer a question regarding

physical movement. Whose forces are employed when I walk? Are they mine and not the physical world's, or the world's and not mine? We can deny the part therein neither of the individual nor of the physical world.

An action is both mine and my world's.

Why should we judge spiritual facts otherwise, and conclude that an action must cease to be mine, if I am to regard it as inspired by my religious attitude and the result of "God's working in me"? The reason is that spiritual deeds are, as already observed, more obviously private, individual; and that we overlook the fact that they are the result of the individuation of common elements. The spiritual as compared with the natural universe is a closer unity, for the members enter into each other's life and fate; and yet the unity is made up of more independent elements. The intensely individual character of moral responsibility cannot be compromised. Man does what is right or what is wrong as if he were the sole living being in the Universe. His action is the result of his own interpretation of his self and its needs, and of that which can satisfy. His antecedents and his environment are not forces operating upon him. They are elements of his concrete self. His individuality has absorbed, incorporated them, and they are active only because they are elements in his personality and are therefore participant in his volitions. The difference that separated the self and the not-self is overcome through the inclusion or absorption of the latter in the former. It is the nature of the rational self to negate the strangeness of the not-self and to deprive it of its alien character. All that is spiritual must be individual. Human life, on this view, is a process in

A man's world is the positive content of his personality.

which what appears at first glance to be finite and exclusive, is found to be infinite. That which actually works as rational life is that which has no fixed limits. It is engaged in overpassing them; that is to say, in showing that they are not limits. Man is the infinite in the process of demonstrating his infinitude.

His self is the Perfect realizing itself anew.

Hence, so far from transcending himself through the activities of his life, he is becoming himself. The human world is, to me, a moral world in the making. In the last resort nothing, or nothing of consequence, takes place except that men here are slowly learning goodness. This is the same thing as to say that what is operative everywhere in, and through and as, the wills of men is the infinite goodness of God—human history is "God's working," as we say. The process is *both* moral and religious, *both* human and divine, *both* finite and infinite. So intimately are these related, so truly are they inseparable aspects of one whole, that the moment we do separate them each becomes an abstract nonentity and unintelligible. The aspirations of the finite, the moral movement of the world, becomes impossible. Not even the effort can take place. There were for man nothing but pure stagnancy if the ideals of reason did not translate his natural desires. And, on the other hand, the infinite or absolute would be distant, "beyond," out of touch with finitude. The finite could not reach it without "going beyond itself"—a feat it cannot perform. These are the conclusions to which Mr. Bosanquet is driven, and so long as the distinction between the finite and infinite is regarded as the opposition of contradictory facts, they are not avoidable.

Hence the finite and infinite in man are not contradictory but complementary to each other.

What he regards as contradictory I would represent as complementary. The opposites, if we so call them, maintain and exist and act in virtue of each other. The infinite reveals and realizes itself in the finite; and the finite is real and not an appearance. It is a final and ultimate real, retaining its individuality through all changes, because and in so far as it is the operation of the whole. The whole, on its part, is the infinite articulated and, in man, individuated. But can this view be proved? Does not such a faith carry with it consequences which are obviously inadmissible? The advantages of reconciling the sacred and the secular, religion and morality, the claims of the spiritual and of the natural self, and of finding in what is perfect the impulse that moves the universe on its course would be to establish a priceless confidence, and bring that Peace of which the greatest optimist the world ever saw is said to have spoken. But even that optimism is too dearly bought if bought at the expense of either denying imperfection and reducing evil into a temporary appearance, or, on the other hand, of making God participate in the evil doings of men and responsible for the inequalities under which they live and the injustice they suffer.

Can this optimistic faith be justified?

The answer which, as we saw, has been offered is that we are not concerned with the destiny of the individual, but with the character of the scheme of things as a whole. We rejected this answer in a summary fashion. The parts we thought must inevitably share the character of the whole, and, in justice, ought also to share its destiny. And this is true above all of a system which is spiritual, and

Only on the whole: in the sense, that we cannot fully know the individual.

which is focussed more or less fully in every individual member of it.

But there is another sense in which we are not called upon to justify God's dealing with the individual, or to maintain a religious faith except in view of the scheme as a whole. We are not called upon to perform a task which exceeds our capacities; and it does exceed the capacity of man, who is only in process of realizing his infinitude, finally to prove or disprove anything concerning the individual. That can be done only when knowledge is complete; and complete knowledge of the individual, that is, of the concrete individual who alone is real, implies complete knowledge of his relations to the universe which give him the elements of his personality. To pass judgment on a man's action we must know the man; indeed, know everything in him or about him which either palliated or aggravated his act—his circumstances, his history, his parentage, his disposition, his tastes, instincts, and all the advantages and disabilities under which he lives. But such exhaustive knowledge is evidently beyond our power to attain. Our statements must therefore be general and applicable only on the whole; for the consequences of an omission of any item were to render our verdict insecure and possibly unjust.

Evidently, under such circumstances we should not pass any judgment on our fellows. But that is not practicable, and in this, as in other matters, we must do the best we can. To live together, we must form estimates of one another. Social life implies different degrees of mutual reliance. As a rule, we pass moral judgments; but not always, by any means. Indeed,

nothing is more vague or uncertain than the standard of values which men employ, and no vital matter has received less consideration. In our ordinary life of more or less useful mutual service, which human society is, the problems we have practically to solve are problems of priority. That is to say, in order to play our part as members of the social system, we must judge, not so much between the decisive opposites, good and evil, as between the good and the better, or between the bad and the worse. Plain opposites do not often present themselves. The questions we decide are questions of degree, and of what is, or is not, opportune.

Practical necessity of passing judgment on individuals.

But the religious attitude is different. There our judgments must be comprehensive and final, and our approval or disapproval is in nowise limited. It applies to the whole man, and it is a pronouncement upon his spiritual, *i.e.* his true and ultimate, worth or worthlessness. All judgments inspired by the religious point of view have this comprehensive and final character. *All* is right or *all* is wrong. If "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world." If there be no God, or if he lacks either power or goodness, then nothing is right. The religious man's experience of the world may be limited, his observation of man's life may have been external and superficial, but if his enquiry concerns the existence and character of God, and is made in the interest and from the point of view of religion, the conclusion at which he arrives is an affirmation or a denial of the validity of a faith, which is all-inclusive and final. But his judgments, whether valid or not, are insecure. Their truth has not been demonstrated. He has drawn a conclusion

These judgments, if religious, are universal; hence not demonstrably right or wrong.

which is universal in its character from premisses which are particular and incomplete.

From this point of view I am in entire agreement with Mr. Bosanquet that we cannot justify a scheme that equalizes, on any principles, the destiny and the deserts of individuals. There can be no doubt as to the evidence which is offered by the world in which we live. Taken as simply "given," or at its face value, it favours scepticism. The circumstances of the life of good individuals do not furnish grounds for believing that a loving God has them in his special care. What such observation presents to our view is a world apparently left to itself. And if we observe the ways of men from the purely secular point of view, and without admitting the truth of the presuppositions of a religious faith, the best we can see is a moral struggle. And, from this point of view, the moral struggle is not merely full of hazards and hardships, but tragical to the last degree; for it is the hopeless struggle of finite beings to "transcend themselves." And what worse can there be than the *necessary* failure of the pursuit of the best? Whether the world is not better "left to itself," and whether the moral struggle is the attempt of men to transcend or to reach themselves, are further questions. These we postpone for the moment. But one thing must be clearly recognized: if we cannot approve, neither can we condemn, the actual world from mere observation of the particulars of the lives of individuals. If the religious conclusion is insecure, the opposite is in nowise better founded. We can, in fact, convict scepticism of the omission of a ruling factor. It overlooks the fact that external

External aspect of the world favours scepticism; but it is a scepticism that omits and is untrustworthy.

circumstances owe the value that they have to the use which is made of them. Their value is not intrinsic, as is the value of moral facts. Whether a man's poverty, or ill-health, or misfortunes are his loss or gain, we cannot know except by relating them to his life and its aims. And what is true of individual men is true of the whole scheme. It, too, must be set in its spiritual context if we would find its final value. Should it happen that the present world, abandoned to itself as it seems to be, and full of inequalities—wealth, health, the respect of men, and every form of prosperity, and their opposites, distributed without any reference to the deserts of men—should it happen that it furnishes to mankind as a whole the best opportunity for learning goodness, then the sceptical condemnation of it, and the denial of the existence and perfection of God are wrong. But they are wrong only if a still further condition is fulfilled. They are wrong if the process of learning to do what is right, or, in the language of religion, if "the service of God" has itself a worth which is neither conditional nor limited.

We cannot draw either religious or sceptical conclusions from observation of the world and man's history.

It would appear, then, that we are as little entitled to justify or condemn the scheme of things as a whole as we are to justify or condemn its details. Neither side to this controversy has a right to draw universal inferences from particular data, and the affirmation or denial of the existence of God is such a universal. This was suggested by Kant, so far as he denies our right to conclude anything but a finite Creator from a finite world. But we can go further. The particulars of human experience, even if we could exhaust their meaning, would not furnish

grounds for theological deductions. In their logical applications the particulars are not premisses so much as *tests*. We do not draw from our observation of the world, or of the ways and destiny of men, our conception of either the being or the character of God: we try to discover whether facts do or do not justify our religious belief or unbelief. In short, we employ the same method as the scientific man does in his enquiries. He does not go to the facts he wishes to understand with an open-mouth and an empty-mind, nor wait in the laboratory on anything that may happen. He is endeavouring to discover whether facts corroborate, that is, exemplify, some presupposition or hypothesis which he brings with him. Strictly speaking, inference from particulars can yield, not explanatory principles, but generalizations. Newton might, though most unsafely, have inferred from the fall of one apple that other apples would also fall under similar circumstances. But the idea which explained the fall, the conception of the active principle which produced the fall, he had to bring with him. We may call this power of anticipating the meaning of facts imagination or intuition, and make it seem miraculous and inexplicable. My view, as I have already indicated, is that our intuitions and hypothetical preconceptions have their origin, like other ideas, in our experience. In any case we employ them in all our enquiries. And in so far as our conception of the being and of the character of God—the religious or sceptical attitude, in which we approach the world and the doings of men in order to observe them—in so far as this is not merely traditional, we owe it not so much to external

Particular facts furnish, not premisses, but tests of our conceptions.

Our religious beliefs or disbeliefs spring from reflexion on our spiritual and inner experience.

observation as to reflexion upon our own inner experience—upon our nature, our needs, our yearnings, our disappointments and satisfaction. We discover our need of God when we come to our selves. The evidence must be spiritual if our conclusion is the acceptance or rejection of a religious faith. In this controversy, or enquiry, *only* spiritual values can count. If the scheme of things is such as to maintain these, then all is well; if not, then all is wrong.

Does the scheme of things, then, justify religious faith, even when we judge of it only as a whole, and make use of no standard of measurement except that which is strictly spiritual? This is the question we have now to face. I would recall to your minds the limits within which our answer is offered: first, that, with Mr. Bosanquet, we judge only of the scheme as a whole (I am *not* saying *on* the whole); and, secondly, that the conclusion is made to rest and religious faith accepted or rejected on spiritual grounds.

That we cannot trace spiritual law in the particular does not disprove its presence.

As to the first of these two conditions, I think it has been made plain that we speak of the scheme as a whole, and not of its particulars, not because we admit that the benevolent will of God may not be operative in the latter, but because we cannot know them through and through, and, therefore, cannot draw from our observation of them any conclusion either religious or sceptical. My attitude in this differs radically from that of Mr. Bosanquet, who does not merely suspend judgment, but considers that the evidence of the divine benevolence is to be found only in the scheme as a whole.

The second point—the employment of purely spiritual standards in the matter of religious belief or

unbelief—needs some explanation. It means that in this enquiry we really ask and try to answer only one question. Do the *moral laws*—the laws which demand justice between man and man, and man and God, and not only justice but "love," and every other principle of spiritual excellence—do these hold in our world? Is the relation of deed and result, or antecedent and consequent, reliable, universal, necessary, as we consider it to be in the *natural* world? Or are there any instances in which the doing of a good action leaves the doer a worse man? Expressed in a more general way, has right-doing ever been known to inflict moral loss, or wrong-doing to bring moral gain? One such case would be as destructive of religious faith and as justly negate the existence, power and goodness of God, and the effective operation of his will, as one instance of the failure of natural law would be a conclusive negation of that law. But two conditions must be fulfilled before the sceptic could draw his negative conclusion. He must not only have failed to trace the operation of the spiritual law, but he must have succeeded in tracing its failure. The first case would only justify suspension of judgment: scepticism, in order to deny, must prove the second. The second condition must be the exclusion of all considerations which are not directly moral or spiritual. It is not for a moment to be denied that as things are, and have been in the past, and will be till that distant future comes when social life attains a high degree of perfection, men, by doing what is right, have brought and will bring tragic misfortune upon themselves and upon those who depend on them. This, indeed, is the most frequent theme of tragedy.

The purely spiritual criterion of judgment.

The reflective scrupulousness of Hamlet, the intensity of Othello's love for Desdemona, the headlong trustfulness of Lear—in short, the apparent failure of some form of good is at the heart of every great tragedy. If it be true that, in the long run, natural well-being follows moral good conduct, it is not true so far as the history of mankind has proceeded that "all these things are added" to those who "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Spiritual excellence and material prosperity—good health, wealth, social esteem and so on—seem to be related to each other by no law of any kind. If the demand for such a sequence be right, then the sceptic's case is, so far, to all appearance, in process of being proved by man's experience.

No evident connexion between right action and external well-being.

But on the assumption that spiritual excellence is *supreme* excellence, that moral or spiritual good is the only final and absolute good—good in its own right and good whatever else occurs—and that all material things derive their value, positive or negative, from this final good, according as they contribute to it or hinder it—on that assumption the demand that "good men should have a good time," and that pain, suffering, loss, sorrow, should be concentrated on bad men, would be irrelevant and even wrong. The religious spirit has no difficulties over this question. It finds no insuperable obstacle to counting "all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus." It says with Paul, I "do count them but dung that I may win Christ." And there are considerations which go far to show that its conviction is valid.

Assumption that spiritual good is supreme and the source of all other values.

In the first place, there are very many undeniable

instances of the conversion by the spiritual-minded man of all manner of apparently unfavourable circumstances into means of further religious progress. External circumstances of all kinds have been made into opportunities for learning goodness; and there are hardly any limits to the power of character over circumstance. The praise of God has arisen, at times, from strange conditions—given a love of the Highest that fills the soul, it will find fuel in everything and break into the brighter flame for pain, poverty, and other natural ills.

On the other hand, the secondary and derivative and conditional character of natural goods is in constant process of being demonstrated. The most miserable men, the blankest failures, the lives which become most weary of themselves, the men whose career has all along its course had low value and ends in defeat, are, I believe, as a rule, "the men of pleasure."

From both sides the same conclusion is pressed upon us, if we are at all fair-minded. The experience of the former, and especially their "peace" of soul and happiness, indicate that they have been making the *right use* of the external circumstances of life. That of the second is a frank confession that the circumstances have been *misused*. And, for my part, I have never heard the verdict of either withdrawn. And the right use of a thing always implies a right understanding of its nature. Those who make the best use of the changes and chances of the present life must thus have rightly interpreted their purpose; those who have made a wrong, foolish, disappointing use have wrongly interpreted them. I do not see how this conclusion can be avoided; nor the value

If this assumption is true then the world is a training place in virtue.

of the testimony, coming as it does from both sides, be denied. It seems that the natural world is the instrument of a spiritual end.

A moral good that is not supreme is an absurdity.

In the next place, the very existence of moral good must imply its supremacy. It cannot be *means* to anything above or beyond itself. To use what is moral as means is to destroy its moral character. To be good in order to "get on," either here or hereafter, is not a precept that the moral consciousness can enforce. The final value of spiritual excellence is so obvious that I need not dwell upon it. What remains is this—that in this world of ours, confused as it often seems, lawless and abandoned, there is in operation a force making for ends whose value is unconditional. We may say that its victory has not arrived as yet, but I do not think that we can deny that it is in process. The history of the world in the past may possibly be regarded as giving ambiguous evidence of the presence of the Best. One is not always able to be certain that "the world is becoming better." Nevertheless, it seems to me that the intrinsic nature of the moral process makes it in itself a triumph; or, in other words, that while both good and bad are real, and both a process, the former is a process of growth and of attainment, the latter a process of self-refutation and deletion.

The moral process is itself a triumph.

I may conclude the present lecture by summarizing our results.

Summary of results.

Firstly: The particular events and experiences of individual lives cannot furnish to us the grounds for concluding either the truth or falsity of religious faith. These furnish not premisses but tests.

Secondly: We approach the facts of life with a preconception, favourable or unfavourable, of the existence

and nature of God, which is the result, not so much of external observation, as of reflexion upon our own nature and needs.

Thirdly: Hence our religious faith or scepticism has the same ultimate use and character as a scientific hypothesis, and its validity must be tested in the same way.

Fourthly: The test must be spiritual, for the conception whose truth we wish to prove or disprove is spiritual.

Fifthly: No other test is final; no values other than spiritual values are unconditional.

Sixthly: Subjected to such a test, the world in which we live appears to have one supreme purpose; that is, to furnish mankind with the opportunity for learning goodness.

Lastly: The confessions of the religious spirit and of the pleasure-loving, corroborate each other in that the former has rightly interpreted and rightly used the natural circumstances of life while the latter has done the opposite.

The moral victory is in process, and the nature alike of moral good and of moral evil is such as to make it secure.

LECTURE XIII

THE STANDARD OF VALUE

If the old doctrine that nature is in antagonism to spirit, and that man's natural desires are sinful, is now seen to verge on blasphemy, the opposite doctrine which finds favour at present may well seem preposterous. We can tolerate and even enjoy the view that all men seek the best and, as Browning says, have

> "All with a touch of nobleness, despite
> Their error, upward tending all though weak—
> Like plants in mines which never saw the sun,
> But dream of him, and guess where he may be,
> And do their best to climb and get to him."

The religious faith.

That view is offered as a poetic vision. But as a sober doctrine, the result of the unprejudiced observation of the facts of human life, it will seem to many to be totally indefensible, even although no criterion is employed except that which is moral or spiritual. It will be admitted that the law which connects antecedent and consequent within the moral region may be as invariable as it is within the physical world. I believe it will be admitted also that the circumstances of life are rightly understood by those who build up a good character in dealing with them, and both mis-

understood and misused by those who turn them into opportunities for doing what is wrong. And if this is true, it must follow that the natural scheme is not impartial, but favours morality, and is, in truth, its instrument.

But both of these admissions, even when taken together, fall short of justifying a faith that can satisfy the religious spirit. For that faith affirms the omnipresence of the divine benevolence, which means that it is present at the heart of the most unsound lives as well as of the best. Its operation is in every individual life, however great its squalor. The difficulty of believing in the universality of Divine Love is very great to many. Not only the cases of individuals, but certain general features of modern life seem to make such a faith untenable. It is difficult to become familiar with the slums of our big cities without being convinced that there are many thousands who neither in themselves nor in their environment give evidence of any such divine operation, or have any stimulus to virtue of any kind. Children are born into the world bringing with them inherited diseases or physical and mental feebleness: they are the descendants of men and women who never made any pretence to either physical or character cleanliness, and they are brought up in a social environment in which moral judgment is hopelessly perverted. As they grow up, the vicious and criminal life seems as natural to them, and even as respectable, as his apprenticeship to a trade is to a working man's boy. And it is a life much more full of adventure —a constant game of wits between them and the police.

Difficulty of maintaining it in face of the facts of slum life.

Is it not better to say at once that for such persons the opportunities of a good life do not exist? If a benevolent power is operative elsewhere in the world, is it not plain that it has overlooked the claims of such persons as these? What can justify the world as a school of virtue in their case? The readiest answer and the answer most frequently given is—"Nothing justifies it. It had been better had they never been born." What answer can we make? What answer must we make if we are not to give up that trust in the Love and Power of God which, we admit, cannot be limited without virtually being denied?

The believer's defence of his faith.

(1) I would fain make precisely the same answer as a scientific man makes when he fails to trace, in particular instances, the operation of the universal and necessary laws of which he speaks. As we have already seen, the physicist does not profess to give an account of the magnitude and direction of all the forces operative in the ordinary physical changes, such as those which occur amongst the clouds or falling forest leaves. It is in his laboratory, after excluding all manner of irrelevances and thereby setting up an artificial case, that he actually traces the operation of the material law. His affirmation of the working of the law in other cases, and the world's acceptance of his affirmation, are matters of trust or faith. Judgment is not suspended though the evidence has not been given. It is confidently affirmative of the law, although the law has not been actually traced. And no one demurs. The scientist knows that to fail to trace the law is one thing and to deny its existence is another. "Not proven is not disproved."

He can make the same claim in dealing with these facts as the scientific man does in dealing with physical facts.

So far as I can see, the religious man can justly

make a strictly analogous claim in the case of the slum child. Nay, if I rightly judge, he must make it; for, as we have seen, the full knowledge of the particular is not possible, least of all the knowledge of all that has gone to the making and upbringing of such an infinitely complex phenomenon as a slum child. And the sceptic ought to accede to the claim, and recognize that his only logical right in the case is the right to suspend judgment. Instead of doing so, he usually rushes to his conclusion, and denies either the existence of God or his benevolent interest in human affairs.

(2) The negative conclusion from individual instances is generally as hasty and ill-informed as it is illogical. Is it quite certain, for instance, that the conception usually formed of these slum children is even proximately correct? Or are we not prone to demand from them the same kind of behaviour as from other more fortunate children? To do so were as unjust as it is natural. I can conceive skill in lying and deception, courage and resource in housebreaking, ingenuity in misleading and eluding the police, bringing social respect to their owner, and being regarded, in such a social environment, simply as virtues. Everything depends upon the criterion by reference to which approval is given or refused; and men employ the most various and inconstant and sometimes absurd criteria. As a rule, the standard of values is not considered at all by those who pass judgment and approve or condemn the action of either God or man. Like the friends of Job, we either mingle at random moral and natural considerations, or expect physical prosperity as a consequence of an antecedent that is moral.

Least of all does the unbeliever in his condemnation of God on the ground of the prosperity of the wicked or the calamities of the virtuous recognize that all non-ethical values are purely conditional. Indeed, this is much too rarely remembered by believers as well; and the controversy as to divine governance is carried on in a blind fashion. Unconscious assumptions are made, and some of the things taken for granted are not true; and, in consequence, evidence that is really irrelevant is admitted and taken as conclusive.

No absolute values except spiritual values.

Now, in this fundamental question of the validity of the religious faith it would seem to me that no values should be admitted as standards by which to judge the assumed divine dealings except values which are absolute. And, for my part, I know no values which are absolute except spiritual values. That is to say, everything that contributes to the spiritual progress of man I would call good, everything that tends to hinder it I would call bad. And evidently if moral values verily are absolute, as Plato and most other great teachers have maintained, then no price at which moral progress is secured can be too high. And if pain and suffering, poverty and need, and the contempt of men contribute to this end more than their opposites could, then they are better than good health and plenty and the honour of men. This means that, instead of making secular prosperity the standard of judgment, prosperity must itself be evaluated from the point of view of its spiritual effects. Prosperity before now has ruined men, and calamity has been the making of them.

If this be true, if spiritual values are alone final and absolute, if the purpose of man's life is to acquire these,

and the aim of its changing circumstances is to help him, then it is evident that what is highest, best, divine, is in power and operative in man's destiny, or, in the language of religion, that God is immanent in the world as its ultimate principle. And vice versa: if God is immanent, these spiritual values must be supreme. On the other hand, if this is not true, then the alternative must be either the rule of chaos and unreason—which in truth is the absence of all rule—or else the rule of a power to whom the difference between right and wrong is secondary—a power whose ends are finite and secular.

The religious equivalent of this moral estimate.

Now, the denial of the existence or working of a God who is perfect in moral qualities as in power, is equivalent, it seems to me, to the affirmation of some non-ethical force as that which has brought the universe into being, sustains it, and controls it. And the question now is—How does this secular hypothesis work? Supposing we apply the same tests to it, one by one, as have been applied to the believer's "faith" or counter-hypothesis?

The sceptic's implied secular hypothesis put to the test.

If the secularist is frank and faithful to the facts which he observes, he will admit at once that, in this world of ours, warring against its evils, there is to be found a great deal of that which we can only call moral goodness. There are just men, and unselfish men, and men courageous for what they deem right or true; and they cannot but be distinguished from the men who are selfish and cowardly and filthy. Now, the secularist must account for that goodness, or—if he likes—that *seeming* goodness; and give his own theory of the origin of these apparently moral phenomena. And his task does not seem to be an easy one. It is

He must acknowledge the difference between moral good and evil, and account for it.

not obvious, to say the least, that no moral struggle enters into the history of mankind, or that good men differ from bad men only in the success of their hypocrisy. A few decades ago, as I have already suggested, the secularist might attribute to nature the moral character and the benevolent purpose which he denies to God. But now it is seen that such a device merely clothes nature with divinity. The truth is that the secularist, as a rule, has nothing to offer. He has never faced the problem presented by the obvious significance attached by mankind to the difference between right and wrong, and the part which ethical conceptions have played in its history.

The order of the universe on this hypothesis.

The order and the beauty of nature are generally first felt to be a test of his scepticism. That these exist he neither dares nor desires to deny. The evidence of order is always multiplying and deepening; and the marvel of the universe grows every day in the hands of science. So subtle is the equilibration of nature's forces that the practical man hesitates in his dealings with her, even as his power over her forces grows. What he has called pests have proved to be his helpers, and he has become afraid to meddle with nature's harmonies. In fact, it has now become practically impossible to most reflective men to assign the order of the natural universe to an unintelligent cause. For a cause must manifestly be proportionate to the effects attributed to it.

The beauty of the universe.

The beauty of the natural world seems to carry one further even than its obvious order. Beauty comes as something gratuitously generous. It is a benevolent redundancy, having a value that is quite different from mere utility. The natural endowments usually

spoken of are those calculated to equip man, or beast, for "the struggle for existence." But beauty, presumably appealing to man only and not to animals, has value of another kind. Its purpose seems to be to enrich and not merely to preserve life, and its appeal is to reason. It is thus difficult to conceive of beauty as proceeding from an unintelligent source. We seem forced to conclude that, if not God, then surely some other kind of cause at once intelligent and benevolent has brought it about that the world shall be clothed in beauty, and thus fill humanity's cup till it runs over. It is difficult to sympathize with a naturalism to which the marvels of colour, form and musical sound give no pause. Their intrinsic value is at once unique and very great.

Scepticism finds more natural nutriment in the world of man than in the physical world. In that domain chaos and unreason may well seem to bear unquestioned rule. What, except unreason, could have placed the lives of many thousands of young men and the happiness of thousands of homes at the mercy of a petty, pompous, self-adoring individual who happened to have been born the eldest son of a crowned parentage? How often has this question not been asked, in some form, during the late war? And there was, as a rule, no answer except that of the unbeliever: "There is no God." "If God is, he does not care for man." "He is an evil being: for by permitting evil he is guilty of complicity." "If God is there, and is worthy of man's service and worship, then let him show himself."

The demand, as a rule, is for some special intervention, and the absence of evidence of a meddling

The demand for the special intervention of God, if he verily is and is good.

Providence has often been the source, not only of the scepticism of the unbeliever, but of the doubt of the faithful. I should like to show that the demand is, in truth, a demand for that which is not desirable.

Intermittent providential intervention implies God's heedlessness at ordinary times.

It is obvious that the demand for the intervention of the divine being in special circumstances implies his non-intervention in ordinary times. It is a demand that cannot be made by any one who believes either in the permanence of the relation of antecedent and consequent in the natural and moral world, or in the divine omnipresence, finding evidence of it on all hands in the world's ordinary course. The fulfilment of the demand would yield a far less satisfying religious experience than the consciousness of the nearness of God through his love, at all times and in every kind of circumstance. And it is that consciousness which sustains devout men. "Providential" interference implies a separateness which is intolerable to the spirit that knows the longing of devoted love and its constant need of God. No conception can meet the demands of such a spirit, once it understands itself, except the conception of Divine Immanence: the idea of the permanent indwelling of God in human history. The conception has its own difficulties, as we shall amply see; but it has become an article in the creed of the reflective religious spirit of modern times. And the issues which are raised by it are decisive. On the other hand it is not an implicit scepticism masquerading as religious faith, which the conception of divine occasional intervention always is.

It would be a poor substitute for divine immanence.

But, in the second place, the demand that God should "show Himself" by special providential inter-

ference is open to a still more grave objection. It is incompatible with the conception of man's life as an ethical enterprise, and of his world as furnishing the means and opportunity, and, in that sense, as man's working partner. The Deism of the eighteenth century denied both the permanent indwelling and the intermittent intervention of the Deity. It maintained that God, having called the world into being, stood aloof and apart. There are many objections to this view which I need not mention. But it was not altogether false. With all its errors Deism taught one permanent truth, or at least implied it: the truth that the moral life must be wholly entrusted to the moral agent; and that if man is here to learn goodness, or if the meaning of his life and the purpose of his world is, as we have assumed, ultimately ethical, then he must be left to carry out the ethical experiment in his own way. What use he shall make of his powers and his circumstances must be left to him. For, as we have seen, there is a sense in which morality is a most solitary enterprise.

The demand is not compatible with morality.

I do not in the least mean to imply the severance of morality from religion, or man from God, or that in the pursuit of his moral ends man is thrown upon his own resources. On the contrary, the religion that does not break out into the highest moral life, and the moral life that is not guided and inspired by a religious faith in that which is perfect, are both unsatisfactory. Moreover, man possesses no resources which are his own in any exclusive sense. He is a debtor to that which went before him and to that which works all round him for all that he is and all that he possesses. He is as much the product of the world as a fruit tree.

The loneliness of the moral enterprise of the individual compatible with religion.

God's infinite giving: man's freedom in the use of His gifts.

This is too obvious to be denied by anyone, so far as man's physical frame and physical powers are concerned. He appears on the scene as a very temporary focus in which those forces are found together as elements in a single life. And the analogy holds of his spiritual equipment. His faculties are gifts, and the opportunities of employing and realizing them are endowments. His reason, his very self, his disposition, proclivities, taste, and above all the fundamental necessity he is under to conceive and seek what, in some sense, he thinks good, appear in him rather than begin with him. His individuality is due to the intense unity of these forces. It means that he is conscious of and, in that sense, in possession and command of himself. As such a unity or individuality, man is in a very real sense something new, and has no history. His self is traceable to no antecedents, as its elements are. But these elements, on the other hand, are impotent and meaningless until they are united in a rational self-consciousness. We err in our account of man if we overlook his indebtedness, or in any manner weaken his affinity and continuity with the physical and spiritual world. To detach him from the Universe is to empty his personality and deprive it of its constitutive elements.

The transformation of the natural into the spiritual in man and the implications of "spirit."

On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that it is only as meeting, uniting and operating in him that these capacities are realized. Only as employed by a rational being do these capacities and tendencies, the impulses, desires, needs, etc., acquire any spiritual character at all. The instinct of self-preservation, characteristic of all life, is transmuted into a conscious purpose and acquires the character of a moral duty or

opportunity. The blind impulse becomes a conscious desire; the natural need becomes a rational purpose. It has acquired an ethical character. And as man learns to know the truth and to love and do what is right, he realizes for the first time the sleeping potencies of his personality and exhibits the characters of a rational being. A rational nature means much. In the first place it implies universality, or, shall I say, a potential omnipresence. If the rational subject, on the one hand, holds every object over against itself at arm's length, by the same act it overpowers all that is alien or foreign in its object, and turns its meaning and uses into possessions of its own—as personal increase of power. A man's world is his *objective* self.

In the second place, that which is in its nature universal, or at home everywhere, is virtually self-directing, and the world around it is but its instrument and means. The forces that move it must be its own. It is impossible for rational beings to act except in order to realize conceptions of which they themselves are the authors. They are the creators of their motives, and the motives are the forces of the self as it breaks out into deeds.

Now, in the presence of these facts, the intermittent interference of providence in the course of events reveals itself plainly as irrational. (*a*) Given a world which endows man with all that he is and has, a world which, on the other hand, reveals its full character only in man's spiritual activities; (*b*) let reason be established as intrinsically universal, or as a power that ever comes upon its own content in every object which it interprets; (*c*) make it, as we are doing,

the meaning of man's life and the purpose of the world to realize in knowledge and behaviour these rational and spiritual capacities, then the occasional benevolent intervention of a well-meaning but ordinarily uninterested Deity becomes not only absurd, but obstructive. Stability, rational connections between fact and fact, are unconditional characteristics of a religious scheme. Moreover, they are the only conditions under which a rational being would choose to act at all. A rational being would hardly exercise his rational powers within an environment of contingencies. No one can employ these powers except in virtue of his individuality; but his employment of them would be frustrated, if not arrested altogether, were the results of his action made uncertain by being flung amongst circumstances which are dependent upon an interfering benevolence that occasionally suspends the operation of law.

Occasional divine interference would arrest human effort.

The stable order of the world in which man lives is thus as vital a condition of his moral life as is his freedom. Freedom cannot exist in a world of contingencies. Man in his action must presume the rational stability of the universe; indeed, he always does so, consciously or unconsciously; and his presumption must be valid. There must be *no* providential interventions. God, as Browning said,

The stable outer order as much a condition of the moral life as freedom is.

> "Stands away, as it were a hand's breadth off"

in order

> "To give room for the newly made to live
> And look at him from a place apart."

Browning's view.

In speaking of man we must not sever man's very elements from him, and think of him as

> "Made perfect as a thing of course."

The spiritual life must be an object of choice amidst rational and stable circumstances, and the moral world must be called into and sustained in existence by the exercise of the human will. That man must be endowed for the moral enterprise, that other hands than his own must clasp on this spiritual armour is true. He by no means, as Browning thought,

> "Stands on his own stock
> Of love and power as a pin-point rock."

Man, in that case, would have a very scanty and insecure foothold. I conceive of him rather as the heir to an inheritance whose value is without limit. As I have tried to show, reason is by its very nature universal, and man as rational has the whole realm of the real as the potential object of his knowledge and means of his ends. Let him but attain himself, he will find "the world at his feet." But the process of attaining himself must be left to himself. The use of his powers must be in his own hands. His actions, good or bad, must be allowed to bring their own consequences, and the tree of his life must bear its own fruit. If the testimony of the religious consciousness be true, God has given himself to man, surely a most ample endowment, and man can need nothing more. If the testimony of the moral consciousness be true, man makes his own use of his endowments and may turn his gifts into losses. In this respect he is left to himself, that is, treated as a rational being capable of free choice. Nor is there anything incompatible in these dissimilar convictions. On the contrary, both alike are essential to the best life; and they are reconciled with one another in every

The better theory.

life which finds that the service of God is perfect freedom.

To accede to the demand for intervention would not settle the dispute.

The demand for providential intervention made by the sceptic as ground for believing in the existence and benevolence of the Deity, however excusable when man seems to be tried beyond his strength—as in the great war—is inconsistent with man's spiritual well-being and with divine benevolence and wisdom. I should like to point out further that the demand implies a wrong notion of man's knowledge of God. Even were the demand conceded, the doubt would not be allayed, nor its grounds removed. Supposing, for instance, that some change of circumstances took place, which at the same time favoured our wishes and seemed inexplicable—*e.g.* the German reverse at Mons, at the beginning of the war, as it appeared to those who sympathized with the allies—that favourable and inexplicable change would furnish nothing more than an opportunity for making an inference. One observer might infer providential interference and the special presence of a benevolent deity; his neighbour would infer some error of judgment or defective execution on the part of the Germans. The matter would still be in dispute.

We arrive at the idea of God in another way, and the proof of the truth is of another kind.

The demand rests on the assumption that God himself is an object of perception. The sceptic seems to expect to come upon him, and catch him in the act of interfering as he would catch a workman at his tools. But we arrive at the idea of God in quite another way, and we base our faith in his power and goodness on other grounds. The idea of God comes as a possible, or probable and convincing, explanation of the universe and of man's life and

destiny. If you like to call the idea a hypothetical conjecture, I cannot object. But I would remind you that every other conception that brings order into our experience has the same history and the same character. Kant called such conceptions regulative: without them experience would have no systematic coherence, and even perception would be blind. Hume, looking into himself, failed to come across his soul. His failure was inevitable. The soul is not an object of internal perception, but a name we give to the living unity of man's rational powers. We see the process of the operation of these powers, infer their existence, and call their unity a "soul." Now, as an "inference" or "hypothesis" it would seem, at first sight, that the evidence of God is insecure—much more insecure than if He were an object of perception, which, so to speak, we could knock up against. But it is not so. The surest truths are those whose denial would render all truth impossible; the safest conceptions are those without which the order of experience would be broken. We do not prove a thing by saying that it is an object of perception. On the contrary, our perceptions have themselves to be correlated and tested by reference to the system of knowledge as a whole, if they are to have meaning and to convince. Ancient scepticism has demonstrated once for all the untrustworthiness of sensible perception, and modern philosophy has shown that in and of itself, and apart from the correlating and systematizing principles of experience, it has no meaning.

Moreover, as I have tried to show, the particulars which are objects of perception are in truth not pre-

misses from which deductions may be made, but tests of fundamental explanations. And undoubtedly it is as such a fundamental explanation that the idea of God is offered. Man derives it mainly from his interpretation of his own nature and needs. God is man's refuge from himself. He is strength as against his own weakness; purity as against his own sinfulness; the fulness of plenty as against his own poverty; and, in a word, perfection as against his own imperfection. Having found his refuge and given himself to his God, and found in him the meaning and purpose of life, the religious spirit finds him everywhere. And so far as I know there is no better explanation of the nature of things than as the outcome of the Divine Will; and no better conception of God, or the Absolute, than as the inexhaustible source of the spiritual energy operative in the world and manifesting itself in man's moral and religious life. Nor, on the other hand, could Divine Love itself make a more generous gift to mankind than that of the spirit that strives towards virtues and seeks self-realization in the morality which is at the same time the service of God.

Conclusion as to the believer's God, and the value of morality.

It remains both to explain and to defend this conception of the Divine Being and his relation to finite existence. Meantime it may be observed that it is a hypothesis which has no worthy rival. Spiritualistic Idealism, in some one or other of its forms, holds the field. Connections within the natural scheme are growing apace in the hands of science: that nature as a whole is the expression of one single principle is deemed certain. But the sciences refrain from forming even conjectures as to the nature of that principle. The continuity of the natural and spiritual,

Neither the sciences nor sceptical philosophy offer any effective alternative theory.

and their interdependence, are recognized as so intimate that the ordinary dualistic view is no longer authoritative. Nevertheless no theory now occupies in the scientific mind the place once held by naturalistic materialism. Science leaves these matters to the philosopher. As to the sceptic, he is quite helpless, and offers no positive suggestion of any kind. The evil, natural and moral, which he has observed in the world, has raised his indignation, but not the spirit of persistent enquiry. He is, as a rule, liable to be impatient of explanations offered by others, and too ready to assume that to explain, and especially to justify this fundamental article of religious faith as to the being and nature of God, must be to reduce the reality of sin and to take the sting out of human wrong. And some forms of modern Idealism have, one must confess, gone far to justify this conclusion.

What defence, then, can be offered? How, in particular, are the difficulties as to natural and moral evil to be met? I have made two main assertions as to the relation between natural and spiritual good and evil: first, that "in the long run" right behaviour brings physical and material well-being, and wrong behaviour the opposite; second, that only in the light of their spiritual value can natural events be estimated. But one can imagine the sceptic replying, Why "in the long run"? Why is the relation between right conduct and material or physical prosperity not direct and immediate? If it is granted that the value of natural facts does not lie in themselves, and that we do not know whether a natural circumstance is to be called good or bad until we know its bearing upon human life, and, ultimately, upon human character,

But our own doctrine still needs defence.

First as to the relation between the natural and moral.

then it must be admitted that the "nature of things" is moral. Why, then, is nature's response to right and wrong action not direct? Why does the consequence arrive only "in the long run"? In one word, why is man not rapped over the fingers at once when he does wrong? Why are the consequences of right or wrong doing so long postponed? And, above all, why do they often fall upon some one else than the person who has done the right or the wrong deed? The results of actions do not appear, one often observes, till the third or fourth generation: they "take time" to ripen into their consequences. In the meanwhile the second and third generations escape.

The delayed natural consequences and the immediate moral consequences of right and wrong action tend to favour the moral life.

Reasons have already been shown for refraining from the attempt to explain "particular" instances, unless the concessions made to science are refused in matters of religion. The answer, if any, as in science, takes the form of a general hypothesis.

If the wrong act were followed by physical disaster and the right act by material prosperity as promptly as the roll of thunder follows the lightning what would result? As things are, it is the *moral* consequence of right or wrong action which is immediate, taking the form of either the improvement or the deterioration of the character. That ethical result, moreover, always falls to the agent himself, and affects others only indirectly and remotely. In both of these ways the difference is clear. And the contrast between these two conditions seems to me to favour the moralizing process in mankind, and to be the result of benevolent wisdom. The scheme of things, if its purpose is spiritual (as we assume), stops short of terrifying or bribing man into good behaviour; but

at the same time it invites reflexion and persuades. The freedom of man is respected, and, at the same time, the fact that he himself may escape the consequences of wrong-doing which fall upon others who are guiltless ought to be, and is, an appeal to his ethical spirit. We are not compelled. The imperative "don't" or "do this" is not an external forcing, as it would be on the secularist's scheme.

Pain an indicator of broken law, and a warning.

The answer to the sceptical objections seems, therefore, once more to depend upon the *moral* character and values of natural events. And the same moral considerations account for the existence, at all, of natural evil. For the sceptic might ask—"Why, after all, is there pain and suffering of body, soul, or both"? Could not the spiritual advance of mankind be secured by some less costly method? Physical pain, I believe, is nature's way of indicating that a law of physical well-being has been violated, and of saying "Don't do it again." To abolish pain so that, for instance, a child might look at his foot burning off in the flames and enjoy the sight, would be to deprive man of the most potent safeguard. Physical pain is a language so plain that everyone hears and understands.

Fidelity to the ethical standards of judgment imperative.

And as to the suffering of others from our deeds, it is the same kind of warning but on another plane; and except when the instincts of motherhood come into play, rebellion against its injustice is usual. Once more the educative character of the scheme of things, and its share in the ethical progress of man, reveal themselves. Everything that involves the well-being of men in one another favours morality.

One conclusion seems to me to be valid. The difficulties are met if, and in so far as, our estimate

of good and evil rests loyally on the moral nature and purpose of the world.

But this involves that events must not be valued at all as separate or in themselves. They must be regarded in their relation to the self-justifying process of the whole.

LECTURE XIV

THE PERFECT AS SPIRITUAL PROCESS

At the close of our last lecture we were considering the sceptical objections which are drawn from the existence of natural evil. We concluded primarily that natural events and facts cannot, as such, be called either good or bad. Their value is conditional and derivative. It depends on the contribution they make to the moral well-being of man. Secondly, as to the relation between moral behaviour and temporal and natural prosperity, we maintained (*a*) that as right conduct means the best use of natural circumstance, and as the best use involves a right understanding, there does exist a necessary connection; that is to say, natural well-being does follow right behaviour and disaster dogs the footsteps of the ill-doer. (*b*) To the objection that these results often appear only in "the long run," I answered that "*a thunder-clap*"—or immediate consequence—would obscure the moral issues, which are primary and should be recognized as such. The postponement and indirectness of the natural consequences, and their falling frequently not on the doer of the deed but on those connected with him, and, on the other hand, the immediacy and

Conclusions as to natural evil.

inevitability of the moral improvement or self-degradation, favours this recognition. (*c*) Finally, to the objection that it is wholly unjustifiable that one man should do the wrong thing and another suffer the consequence, or that one man should do the right thing and another reap the advantage, we replied by referring to the same principle, namely, that it favours morality. Everything favours morality which involves the life of all in the life of each, and the welfare of each in the well-being of all. To learn goodness men must be members of one another, and if they are members of one another they must share the same destiny.

Thus, it seems, strict fidelity to the view that the purpose of man's life and of the world is moral (or spiritual) progress, meets the difficulties of the existence of natural evil. And possibly the most effective and convincing way of proving this were to consider the consequences that would accrue if all natural evil were abolished, and if men did not suffer at all, whether from their own actions or from the actions of others. Devotion to pleasure in a beer and skittles environment does not seem likely to conduce to spiritual endeavour.

But the solution of the difficulty of natural evil, namely, that it is a means to a further good, and, in truth, has no intrinsic value or character of its own—that solution is wholly inapplicable to moral evil. Moral values are final. In this spiritual region, as I have already insisted, we are dealing with that which is in itself good or bad. What is morally right respects, and what is morally wrong violates, a principle that is absolute. A morally wrong action cannot, like a

Moral good and evil cannot be regarded as means, and they present graver difficulties.

natural misfortune, be made a stepping-stone or an instrument of well-being. In the spiritual sense the character of the act, as it stands, is final and irremediable. And the question we have to answer is: How, if God is verily perfect in power and goodness, the existence of moral evil can be accounted for. That moral evil of all kinds and degrees of enormity exists at all stages of human civilization cannot be denied. Must we not, therefore, limit the range and moderate the confidence of our religious faith? Must not the existence of God and his power and goodness be denied, or, what is virtually the same thing, must we not consider him incapable of coping with the evil of the world?

A static world leaves no room for either moral good or moral evil.

Once more our answer must depend upon the standard of values which we employ. We have stated that the standard must be moral or spiritual; but no explanation of the meaning of these terms has been given. On what grounds, or for what reason, is an action or an individual approved or disapproved morally? What is it that constitutes its good or its evil? What kind of a world would that be which were perfect in the changeless sense? Would it offer to anyone the opportunity of doing any good action? Would there be anything of which we could say that it "ought to be," and which invited the choice and decision of a good will? So far as I can see, the call of duty would not be heard in such a world. The good man could sit down with his hands in its lap, and, at best, idly contemplate the past. All action would, in fact, be wrong. It would take away from the changeless perfection which all alike have, as a matter of course. In one word, such a world would not be moral or

spiritual at all. The enterprise of morality would not exist.

The conception of static perfection in matters of the mind and spirit will not bear examination. The difficulties of attributing any other kind of perfection than that which is static to the deity are very great—possibly insuperable; but, that static categories can be applied to man, a finite being, the law of whose life is change and progress, it is not possible to maintain. Can they, in the last resort, be applied to any finite object? Is fixity, changelessness true of anything even in the natural sphere. That life when it appears increases the range and significance of change is obvious. Life is always renewing itself, and affirming itself in fresh ways as its circumstances alter. The objects of the inorganic world are relatively fixed. However true it may be that

Are static conceptions applicable to anything that is real?

> "An *active* principle . . .
> subsists
> In all things,"

that principle is less active in inanimate objects than in living beings. But even in the former there is no static fixity. Science teaches us that objects are the temporary meeting-places, or foci, of different kinds of physical energy. The weight, the colour, the softness or hardness—all the qualities of a stone are its responses to other objects, or its interaction with them. It is what it does. Its apparently static or fixed character is due to the fact that its activities are reiterative, or repetitive. We do not expect a stone to break into flower in spring, any more than we expect a plant not to change with the seasons, although we do expect it to reflect the rays of light according to constant

The answer of science as to physical facts.

laws. Conceptions of fixity, which are never strictly valid of any fact, become less and less applicable as we ascend the scale of being. They mislead, if strictly used, when applied to plants or animals, for the power of variation implied in their growth cannot be overlooked; but, as we shall see, they are least of all predicable of the facts of the life of spirit.

Process is universal.

This signifies that process is universal, or that everything is in process. And usually this is taken to mean the same thing as that change is the law of things. But process implies sameness as well as change. An object owes its (apparently) separate, or distinct being, in virtue of which we can refer to it as an "it," to the sameness or continuity of the process which it carries on. After all, the many are the different forms of the one. The physicist, in the last resort, considers that his task is to measure the transformations of the same ultimate energy. These transformations are the truth and the being of particular physical facts, and, so far as they go, they manifest the nature of the ultimate reality.

Process implies both sameness and change

The problem of the biologist is much more complex. Once life arises the variety of the activities increases; new functions are performed, such as digestion; new relations and responses to the environment emerge; and that static sameness which, with comparative truth, we attribute to physical facts becomes quite false. At the same time a living thing affirms its unity, unites the destiny of the parts with the whole, and of the whole with the elements, in a way to which there is nothing analogous in inorganic objects. Sensation intensifies the unity still further; and the unity culminates in self-consciousness. It is a great

truth that integration and differentiation increase together. And it is borne out, not only by the history of the biological kingdom, but by that of mankind.

Now, it is too obvious to need showing that these opposite but complementary processes culminate in the activity of spirit. The different stages of human civilization and of individual development exemplify this truth. Rudimentary civilization permits few social services, and the bonds which connect its elements are very superficial. The Red Indian tribes were of little mutual help in times of peace, and they easily fell into fighting. Their unity was slender and shallow, and it usually lasted only so long as they fought side by side. Moreover, the variety of functions which such communities could perform, whether for each other or for their members, was very limited.

Spirit as double process: example, (1) The community.

On the other hand, it is difficult to estimate the variety of the interests of a civilized people, or of the ways in which the weal of the citizen is either directly sought or protected by the State. From the cradle to the grave, whether the individual be in poverty or in wealth, the community serves him, meeting all manner of needs. Its members on their part stand in their station, fulfil the duties of it more or less adequately, and offer each of them some single kind of return. But these kinds fit into each other. One man feeds the ox, another kills and skins it, a third curries the skin, a fourth makes shoes of it; and there is between every pair of makers one whose business is to buy and sell. Other services, less direct, enter in. The merchandise has to be taken from one place to another; someone must have made the roads, and someone else must have constructed the con-

veyances; still others must have dug up or grown the material out of which the conveyances are constructed; and all alike have entered into the inheritance of skill, tradition, beliefs, which it has taken many ages to accumulate. Nothing in this world can show such diversity of interests or such a degree of differentiation of function as civilized society. And its unity corresponds. It is universal. We are all members of it, and we come into touch with some of its activities at every turn of our lives. Its influence permeates all the lives of all its members. It is also intense, that is to say, its significance to the individual is immeasurable. We find that to sever man from society is to empty his life of all value and interest and to make him hopeless; while to break up the unity of a society is to do him the worst of all injuries. Civil war has before now proved the only available means of rectifying social wrongs; but it has also proved both the most costly and the most dangerous of remedies.

(2) The individual.

If we turn from the story of the community and its relation to its elements, and consider the individuals which constitute it, we shall find the same process with the same double aspect. Men differ from one another in all manner of ways: in strength of body and soul: in skill, taste, temperament, interests, purposes and character. No other beings of the same species differ so deeply or in so many qualities. Nevertheless, as we have seen, no animals unite so intimately as men do, or in so many ways, or for such permanent ends. Or again, if we follow the story of the same individual from infancy to old age, unless he has wronged himself, his life has been one continuous and

yet ever new and ever varying process. The variety of his interests has multiplied. His spirit is responsive to more truth, and he is more sensitive to the forms of beauty, and more sympathetic with the interests of his fellow-men; yet his aims have become more and more congruent, his views more and more harmonious, and his character has attained singleness and simplicity. Its unity has become more and more obvious.

The object is the process.

There can be no doubt, I think, of either the universality or the law of the process that is always going on in the natural world, and in the soul of man. The next thing is to realize (what Nettleship so persistently accentuated) that the reality is the process, and that there is no other reality except the reality which is active as the process. That a thing is what it does is a cardinal principle of philosophy, and I make the less apology for recurring to it in that its significance is so far-reaching and has not so far been realized. It looks so simple. A thing that does nothing *is* nothing. Strip an object of its activities, and see what remains: you will find nothing. Usually an object is given a more or less static character, and none of its activities are marked except those which it exhibits in new relations; but the constitutive activities are the constant ones, and the object has no permanence or reality save the constancy of the process.

The Universe, then, is not a unity of correlated and more or less fixed and separate objects, but the scene of a constant process, endless in the variety of its activities which yet so fit into one another as to constitute and maintain the unity of the whole. And, not only does the kind of process express the nature of

objects, but the different objects are simply the different processes.

Unity of the universe due to the singleness of the process: one reality throughout all the diversity.

Now, in the next place, I would observe that the unity of the natural world, or rather the unity of the world as not merely natural, but—seeing it is relative to mind and exhibits itself in the activities of mind, also spiritual—is due to the fundamental singleness of the process of the real. The ultimate reality is one: the process which that reality is, is one. There is one universe because there is one process at all stages of complexity: one reality revealing itself in the endless variety of activities. Modern science is no doubt less dogmatic in many ways than it was in the past. It is more ready to say simply "I do not know." But, on the other hand, it is becoming more confident of the unity of the real; and it no longer resists the view that, as Edward Caird used to express, "the world comes into self-consciousness in man." We cannot always see how the elements of the real are fitted into each other—or why the marvel of harmony should arise from a variety of separate notes—but we can see how the elements lose meaning and reality when they are separated, and we feel when the music stops.

Different view of that reality.

The nature of the world-energy that breaks out into the processes which at different levels the physicist, the biologist, the psychologist and the student of human history observe, is liable to be defined in accordance with the special province of the scientific man's enquiry. To the physicist it is apt to be physical energy always in process of measurable transmutation—so long, at least, as you omit mind. To the biologist the pristine and universal energy is likely

The religious view.

to appear as life; it is a vital force. To the psychologist it is mind. But no conception of the world-energy can satisfy the religious spirit or the philosophic, except that which reveals itself in spiritual activities. The whole enterprise of the real must be simply the achievement of all the conditions of the amplest moral goodness. The religious spirit identifies this fundamental, ever operative universal energy with God—the Christian religion pre-eminently with a God who is Love. Philosophy finds it to be the active energy of a rational perfection which includes with moral goodness, beauty and truth. To both alike it is universal, immanent and active in all that happens, and it is perfect. The God of religion is the same as the Absolute of philosophy; and for both alike the universe in the last resort is the scene of a self-manifesting perfection.

What, then, of evil? We can postpone the difficulty no longer, and I trust that we have now reached a point of view from which it can be dealt with.

The problem of moral evil.

The problem is that of *moral* evil. That of natural evil is relatively easy. All that is natural is but means of the spiritual, and its value, whether positive or negative, is, as we have found, both derived or secondary and conditional. We do not as a matter of fact know whether a man's bad health, or other natural evil, may not be the most priceless element in his life. It may be conducive, as nothing else could be, to his spiritual good.

Finality of moral evil.

But moral evil—to restate the point at which our argument had arrived—has a certain finality of character, just as moral good has. We cannot revalue it in the light of something else. Its value is intrinsic

and negative. A bad act stands condemned at a court from which there is no appeal. It appears as a final flaw in the scheme of things; as something that ought not to have taken place, but, having taken place, remains unredeemed, even if forgiven.

Conclusions as to the divine being drawn therefrom.

The conclusion usually drawn from this final character of spiritual evil, a conclusion which looks inevitable, is that God is imperfect. He is either responsible for the scheme of things that includes evil or he is not. The latter alternative obviously implies that he is a finite being; the former, that he either cannot or will not exclude evil from the scheme and express himself in a flawless universe. Both alternatives alike deprive God of his perfection, and, in fact, stultify the conception upon the truth of which religion depends.

The possibility of moral evil is a condition of the moral life, and therefore of the best possible world.

But another conclusion is possible. Let it be granted that moral evil is final and unalterable, if the world is to serve the spiritual process whereby man attains moral goodness the possibility of doing what is morally wrong must remain. The world, we have said, is the manifestation of a never-resting process which is spiritual. Every act is a step or stage in this process, and it acquires its value therefrom. That which is ultimate operates in it; but it operates in man in such a way as to permit the possibility of moral choice and therefore of moral evil. A world that excluded this possibility would not be the best, indeed it would not be spiritual at all. But granted that such a world is best, then it justifies what is incidental to it.

This argument may, perhaps, be put more simply thus. God has called into being the best possible world: the best possible world is a world in which the

conditions of moral choice and therefore of moral evil exist: moral evil is thus justified in the sense that its possibility is necessary as a condition of what is best.

But the "best possible" world seems most imperfect.

But the objection to this view seems obvious and fatal. The best world is not a perfect world. The flaw, we are told, remains; the fact that the possibility of evil must remain, if morality is to remain, does not justify the evil which is done. If that possibility were never or seldom realized; if men always or generally chose the right when they might have chosen what is wrong, criticism might be silenced. But, alas, who can look either into himself or out upon the world without recognizing the presence of evil, its terrible power, the variety of its forms, its mercilessness, and its inexhaustible resources? It is only by a flight from such a vision that a good man who pities his fellows can renew his faith in the goodness of God. The argument, it is insisted, leaves us with our problem unsolved in our hands. It means simply that this most imperfect world is the best possible: God could do no better.

The demand for a better than the best possible is irrational.

Before admitting this sceptical conclusion it were well to examine some of the conceptions that are employed. And, first, what is to be said of the distinction between the best possible and the perfect? A better than the perfect is neither possible nor desirable; neither is a better than the best possible. Are they, then, not "one and the same"? And is not the demand for a world that is better than the best possible an irrational demand? It is certainly a demand for that which cannot be at all. It is, in truth, a demand for an empty and meaningless non-

entity. The impossible is that the conditions of whose existence do not themselves exist. The conditions are not only not real, but they would be incompatible with those which are real. The demand for a better than the best possible world being irrational, ought not to be made, or, if made, heeded.

Now the demand for a world in which wrong-doing is not possible has all these characteristics. It is not only a demand for that whose conditions do not exist, but for that whose conditions would be inconsistent with what is deemed best—namely, the process of the moral life, the spiritual enterprise. It is no proof of either power or wisdom not to bring about the self-contradictory. God is not imperfect, nor is his power limited because he cannot bring about that which contradicts itself. That were to do and undo at once.

Nor does perfect power imply the power to bring about the impossible.

It is evident that the value of the whole argument which is advanced depends upon the idea which is entertained of perfection. Is a perfect world a world in which nothing ought to be that is not; or in which no change is either desirable or possible? Then "our world" is manifestly, once for all, most *im*perfect. Such a static world, however, we have said, cannot be spiritual in character, nor give man the opportunity of learning and practising goodness. But the learning and practising of goodness, the active willing and doing of what is right, is, we maintain, the best life possible for man; and the world which most favours this end, or which invites these activities, calling upon man with the voice of Duty, is the best world. In a word, the perfect world is dynamic: the scene of the working of the good. Hence evil, the only final evil,

The only moral evil is the evil that seems to arrest the process of attaining goodness.

would be that which arrested this process. Accordingly the question now before us is whether moral evil, as we know it in ourselves and others, does arrest this process, or is itself overcome, and, in the last resort, constrained to enter into the service of the good.

This question is a question of fact. Is it a fact that moral evil is a fixed finality, or does it, when it comes full round, destroy itself, leaving behind it distrust of itself and incentives to another way of life?

Has the evil we know that character?

This question is often put in a way that permits only one answer. Evil is assumed to be something objective and real, standing over against another objective and real fact that we call the good. But neither evil nor good exists in this sense. They are characteristics of what is real but not themselves separate realities. In short, moral good and moral evil are ways in which the will operates, characteristics of man's aims and efforts. They are evaluations, or estimates of facts, true or false; and they exist only when, and as long as, the process of willing goes on.

Good and evil are not facts, but estimates of facts.

Good and evil are the right and wrong process of volition.

The question of the permanence of evil becomes thus the question of the permanence of evil volitions or of the succession of human beings who perform bad actions. At first sight, at least, there seems to be but one answer to it. There is no lack of evidence of unrepentant bad wills. Men not only do not give up their evil ways, but they become less and less capable of doing so. Their enslavement, so far as our observation goes, becomes more and more hopeless. Nor must it be forgotten that one genuine instance of a will that remains unalterably evil—a will that like Milton's Satan makes evil its good—

would destroy the hypothesis of divine perfection on which religion rests. That instance would mean that the limits of the goodness or power of God had been reached and that they had been found inadequate. It were the defeat of the will of a God who is Love.

Can such an instance be produced? Or is this, once more, not a case in which scepticism (or at least doubt) is apt to be hasty, and to take *not-proven* for *disproved*? Has the hypothesis failed, or has it merely not been found true in such cases, because observation has been incomplete?

Only such demands to be made as are made in a scientific enquiry.

It seems to me that the religious man can claim for his hypothesis the same trust as we accord to science. He can claim the right to suspend judgment on the ground that the evidence is not complete. He can cling to his hypothesis, as a hypothesis, or as a possible and sane general law, if he can produce instances in which it appears to hold. We admit the universality of the laws of nature, although there are endless instances in which we cannot trace their operation; we can admit the universality of the operation of the divine will without asking for any further concessions.

In the first place, our observation of moral facts is demonstrably incomplete. We, no doubt, call certain cases hopeless. The man's persistent evil ways are manifestly destroying him, and he "dies in his sins." But can anyone be certain that matters end so? Can it be that his demonstration of the ugliness and barrenness of evil-doing has been on the whole a gain to the world; and is the real result of his life—now, let us say, finally extinguished—a warning against evil and a strengthening of the resolve towards goodness? In that case, although the individual has

been deleted, his life so far from arresting the spiritual process has strengthened it.

It may have strengthened the process in others, I imagine the critic replies; but his own life "taken as it stands" remains a blot and a blur, and a final failure of God's goodness. I admit the validity of the inference if the premisses on which it rests are true. The failure is assumed to be final because it is assumed that death ends matters. But does it? If so, if a man's whole career ends with death, then I cannot justify the existence and destiny of that man nor retain my religious faith. For I consider it is not enough that his blundering life should be a gain to others. The individual himself must come out victor. But who is entitled to affirm that death ends all? Browning conjectured that Death might flash the truth on Guido, as the lightning at blackest night revealed Naples—for an instant.

Does death end all?

> "So may the truth be flashed out by one blow,
> And Guido see, one instant, and be saved.
> Else I avert my face, not follow him
> Into that sad obscure sequestered state
> Where God unmakes but to remake the soul
> He else made first in vain; which must not be." [1]

It is a choice of conjectures or of hypotheses; and to me, as to Browning, the hypothesis of the ultimate failure of Divine Power and Goodness is more improbable than that of human life continued after death. The merely natural arena of this short, fragile, changing, restless life seems to me to be too small to decide issues that are moral, and the destiny of beings whose nature is spiritual. Death may be a mere

[1] *The Ring and the Book*, "The Pope," 2127-2132.

incident in their history, a natural event and nothing more; and a quite different kind of environment may be necessary to elicit and give play to the possibilities of spirit.

But I must leave aside the problem of immortality for the present, and merely deny the right to assume the finality of death and the consequent failure of the divine purpose.

So far we have referred only to the cases in which the bad will is persistent and the evil ways last till the life that follows them sinks below the horizon out of our sight. But what is to be said of those other human lives in which we cannot but discern a complete change—sorrow and bitter repentance for the past, a rededication for the future? There the evil is not only overcome and deleted but made into a stepping-stone of the new life. Its deceptiveness and falsity have been exposed. It is not possible to deny that both men and nations learn thoroughly only when they learn through experience. Indeed, we are often tempted to believe that nothing less than the bitterness of the unworthy life can convince man of the wrong he is doing his rational nature by his pursuit of bad purposes.

Repentance, and victory over moral evil.

Now, this fact throws light upon the nature of moral evil. Left to work itself out and ripen, it will prove to be self-contradictory and ultimately self-deleting. The rational nature, the law of whose activities is to seek to realize what it values as good, finds in evil a false good. Evil never tempted anyone unless it disguised itself. Man has never willed to bring about what he recognizes as dead loss. The *nature* of evil is thus to make itself impossible. Not

only is moral evil capable of being overcome, and of being supplanted by the opposite good, it is converted into it. The impulse towards what is wrong is turned into distrust and hatred of that wrong, and into a desire to serve the right more faithfully. The *same* passions and powers are turned to an opposite purpose. Moral evil *can* thus be turned completely against itself; and this truth as to the nature of evil remains, though the change may occur only rarely.

The good cannot be turned against itself.

At first sight the good may seem to be capable of being defeated in the same way. But this is not the case. No doubt the good purpose is often frustrated and the good act often seems to leave things as they were. But the *moral* effect of the volition and the deed are not lost upon the doer. He has gained by his resolve, and is the better man for his effort. Never does the moral good fail. Far less does it negate itself, disappointing the agent who does the good act by proving empty or delusory. And this is one of the main grounds why the emphasis thrown upon the hazard and hardship of the moral life is misleading.

There is neither hazard nor hardship in following the good.

There is present in every good a necessity that cannot be turned aside or overcome. It is that good results shall follow efforts after the good; that character is built up; that there is positive moral advance on the part of the agent. In a sense, there is neither hazard nor hardship. The moral gain is certain. It is inevitable. All the powers of darkness resist it in vain. And, unless the standard of value is wrong, no hardship can be affirmed in learning goodness any more than in any other progressive effort. The difficulty of doing what is right may be real and very

great, but the attempt is a joy. I cannot *pity* anyone for trying to be good, however "arduous" and unrelenting "reality" may be.

It is in this invincible positive character of moral good that the contrast between good and evil, or, rather, between the good and the bad man, is most manifest. The good man acts more and more consistently with his own rational nature, and in accordance with the scheme to which he belongs. He goes from strength to strength; and that the conditions of permanent well-being are at his back becomes more and more conclusively evident. But evil tends to wipe itself out—to demonstrate its futility. Some kinds of ill-conduct destroy the physical conditions of life. The putrescence in other cases seems confined to the soul—whose sympathies become sluggish, and whose ends become ever narrower and meaner and more selfish.

Evil condemns itself, and to overcome it is not to justify it.

Moral evil, or wrong-doing, is the wrong use of gifts that are good. It is a turning of them against themselves. And the fact that it is thus intrinsically self-contradictory, so far from justifying it, leaves it self-condemned. It is never justified. When by its failure it warns, when having learnt its lesson a nation or an individual devotes itself with new resolve to good ends, the evil, the perverse activity of the bad will, has already passed away.

If the difficulties of religious faith are to be met, it is not by denying the reality or lessening the significance of evil, but by comprehending its nature. In its own negative fashion, by its own self-contradictoriness, evil also bears witness to the divine government of the world—a government which permits and sustains, and

in the end furnishes the force that declares itself in the spiritual enterprise of mankind. It is not an easy optimism that can maintain the final triumph of what is best. On the contrary, it is the conception of a will which, by making the well-being of mankind its end, has challenged all the powers of evil.

Conclusion.

Our own nature's bent is towards goodness: it is only beings endowed richly, endowed, that is to say, with the gifts of the spirit, that can do what is morally right or wrong. To be able to err and do wrong is a trust and responsibility beyond the reach of the animal; and the world in which man is called upon and given the opportunity of using his gifts, supports and rewards their right use, and puts obstacles in the way of the evil-doer by exposing the ruinous folly of his ways of life. The world in its own way shows that the purposes of God are those of a Love that is perfect, and although they are not always seen to triumph in the lives of men, they are never seen defeated. Never has anyone been sorry for having tried to do what seemed right or mourned over his attempted obedience to the will of God. If it cannot be said that

> "The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound,"

it may be maintained that

> "There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live as before";

and it may even be added that

> "What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more."

" All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist ;
Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour." [1]

That the power and love of God are unlimited remains after every test the most reasonable and probable hypothesis.

[1] Browning's *Abt Vogler*.

LECTURE XV

THE ABSOLUTE AND THE NATURAL WORLD

BEFORE moving on, it may be well to mark the main stages of the way we have travelled.

There is only one method of knowing.

Lord Gifford desired to apply the methods of the natural sciences to religion with a view to proving the possibility of establishing what he called "Natural Religion." Certain difficulties were encountered which arose from the fact that the methods of the sciences differ. They vary according to the subject-matter. This difficulty seemed to be more serious when the subject was that of religion. But in the last resort it was found that there is, in truth, only one method of knowing. The sciences, philosophy, even ordinary thought, are engaged in forming and testing conceptions or hypotheses in the light of which facts are disclosed and become intelligible. And the hypothesis with which philosophy is engaged is proffered by it as the ultimate explanatory principle of all reality. It is the Absolute. And the relation of the Absolute of philosophy to the God of religion is one of the problems we must consider hereafter.

The fundamental nature of religion.

We then enquired into the nature of religion. We found it to be man's refuge from the disappointments of finitude, and, above all, from the shortcomings

which he discovers in himself. Over against the limitations, weaknesses, failures, there stands for the religious spirit the fulness of infinitude, strength and security. "Over against," however, is a misleading phrase, for religion places a divine plenitude in man's own reach. It unites God and man, and unites them so intimately, as it would seem, that a man's very self appears to cease to count. His life is not his own. It is not he that lives, but his God lives in him.

But the claims of religion, thus uncompromisingly urged, seemed to be incompatible with man's moral life. For it can hardly be questioned that one of the essential conditions of morality is the responsibility of the moral agent for his actions, as the results of his own choice and the free expression of his personality. Man's moral destiny is exclusively in his own hands. It is for him, and for him only and alone, to make or to mar his moral character. Neither man nor God himself can do this for, or instead of, him. This moral demand we stated as uncompromisingly as the apparently opposite demand of religion.

The apparent inconsistency of religion and morality.

In the next place we sought, and I believe found, a way of reconciling religion and morality. Morality is the process of realizing the principle of religion. It is religion in practice, and only as religion in practice is morality at its highest and best, or religion itself a reality.

To effect this reconciliation the ordinary view both of religion and of morality had to be modified. Religion ceases to be a satisfaction that brings idle rest; the rest it brings is that of devoted activity in the service of a Perfection with which man has unreservedly identified his own well-being. Morality

The reconciliation.

ceases to be the hopeless pursuit of an ever-receding ought to be, and becomes a process of continued, successive attainment. Every good act becomes, in turn, an inspiration to a better, and brings insight into wider purposes. From this point of view one would hear as little of the hardships and hazards of the moral life as we do in the case of intellectual progress. Morality is continued self-realization through self-sacrifice—the consciousness of sacrificing the self in doing one's duty being most evanescent, and its illusoriness easily exposed. It is the way to the moral act, not the act itself, that is sometimes, though by no means always, rough. And there are lives whose dedication to the Highest, their God, is so complete that He is with them at every step of the journey.

The problem of evil. The easy escape from it.

We were then confronted with the problem of evil —both natural and spiritual; for there can be no denial of the fact that observation of the ways of men shows them to be often irreligious and secular, even when not immoral. It is not everyone who is in pursuit of moral goodness, or who is designedly converting the circumstances of his daily life into means of moral growth. On the contrary there are extremities of wickedness and of suffering, which it would be hard indeed to justify, if we considered them as specific parts of a deliberate plan. There has seemed, therefore, to be no option, except to say that there are " unplanned " occurrences or " contingencies," things which have crept into the scheme unpermitted, or, at least, unforeseen. But it is harder still to justify them (or anything else) except as parts of a plan. So we rejected this very obvious way of running away from the difficulty. Nor was it lack of acquaintance

with pain, or sorrow, or, alas, sin, that enabled us to look the problem in the face, and to seek for a place within the plan even for these evils. We therefore tried anew to determine the essential character of evil.

No natural good or evil has an intrinsic character

Natural evil, such as sickness, pain, bereavement, poverty, absence of the friendly regard of neighbours, offered comparatively little difficulty. Natural good and evil, we found, are not good or evil in their own right. If the moral standard of value is the correct standard, then we must wait for the moral issue of natural occurrences before calling them good or bad.

Moral evil.

The difficulty as to *moral* evil is much more serious. Events in the moral world have a finality of character which natural events do not possess. The good or the evil is intrinsic. There is, as we say, no getting over it. Its existence must simply be acknowledged. There were, however, certain considerations which prevented the need of acknowledging its final triumph, or its existence as limiting or annulling either the power or the goodness of God, and thereby stultifying religious faith.

This life's stage may be too narrow to decide its final nature.

(*a*) First, while it is true that the observation of the lives of men yield instances in which the evil will grows in power unto the end of the individual's life, it is also possible that the end has not as yet arrived. There are other possibilities; and they may well seem to amount to probabilities. It was pointed out that the destiny of beings whose nature is spiritual may be a matter whose issues are too great to be decided by and in this transitory and uncertain physically conditioned life. The absence of adequate premisses ought to arrest judgment on the matter;

and the right to deny is in no way stronger than the right to affirm.

This world may be a school of virtue, and the best world for that reason. If so, the possibility of moral evil must remain.

(*b*) Secondly, and this was our main argument, if the present world can be regarded as a school of virtue and if learning goodness is worthy of every sacrifice, then to permit man to choose between right and wrong (having first provided him with spiritual capacity for making such a choice; and, secondly, given him such a bent towards goodness that he never chooses evil because of its evil; and finally, having placed him in a world which favours good conduct) is a supreme expression of Divine Love. God has given to man a chance of attaining what is highest and best: and God's benevolence could go no further.

If these things are true, then the existence of evil is not equivalent to a refutation of religious faith. We can still believe in the unlimited goodness of God and can recognize the possibility of evil as one of the conditions of its operation.

Can philosophy meet the demands of religion?

These were the main conclusions to which our argument seemed to point. We must now examine them, and in particular decide whether philosophic enquiry verily does in this way ratify religious faith and satisfy its demands. Can the Absolute of philosophy be identified with the God of religion; and can the religious needs of men be met in that way? Will the intelligence of man provide what his heart desires? Can the consideration of finite facts lead to the knowledge of God?

Our investigation must set out from the consideration of such facts and events. We seek to discover that which explains finite things and shows them real;

for they *are* real, though not in virtue of themselves. In the first place, the isolated finite fact is a figment. It is in relation to other facts, and only in that relation, that facts act and are; and it is only in their activities that they reveal and actualize themselves. It cannot be too often or emphatically affirmed that things are what they do. Now this relational process could conceivably be either endless and therefore inconclusive; or it could culminate in the affirmation of that which is at once real in virtue of its own nature and that from which all else derives its reality. I mean that all objects and events when examined would in that case point to it as the ultimate real, from which they are derived and only in relation to which they have themselves meaning, value or reality.

The agnostic's attitude not really possible.

The first course is, in practice, adopted by the agnostic. He despairs of knowing the self-justifying real, and he recognizes that, in consequence, no part of his knowledge has unconditional validity and finality. His attitude, if he could maintain it, is that of one who refrains from committing himself. But such an attitude cannot be maintained. At the heart of every person's experience there are principles which are taken to be true. At least, they are not questioned.

Degrees of certitude.

But while a cognitive attitude which can say nothing except "I don't know" is not practically or theoretically defensible, there are, on the other hand, varying degrees of certitude. And, in one sense at least, the degree of certainty that is required grows as we move from science to philosophy and from philosophy to religion. The scientific man can afford to be less reserved than the others in his confession that his ultimate principles are only his best guesses, and that

his laws are merely hypotheses, and apply only to a limited region, or to some single aspect of objects. But the philosopher stakes the whole of his mental life on his doctrine. The failure of a fundamental philosophical conviction brings into experience universal chaos.

Religion demands complete certainty.

But the ruin that the breakdown of a philosophy brings to the intellectual life is in its turn far less complete than that which follows the loss of religious faith. There is a refuge in the former case in the field of practice: it is possible, by narrowing one's life, to silence the questionings of the intelligence. But in the second case, that of religion, no way of escape is left: in no direction is it worth while for the spirit of man to seek to move. Conviction must be complete; faith must in every practical sense be equivalent to certainty. The impatience of the religious spirit with those who seem to place (as I have done) the faith of religion on the same level as the hypotheses of a science, is quite intelligible. Religion demands certainty that it can trust; philosophy offers what is, at best, only the most reasonable conjecture, the likeliest guess. And it would thus appear that the demands of "the heart"[1] cannot be met by the use of the intelligence. A vast difference seems to separate the conception of the whole or Absolute as the ultimate focus of all finite things which philosophy offers, and the conception of a Divine Being to whose goodness and power there is no limit, which religion demands. We have, on the one hand, a philosophical certainty that looks very empty, seeing

[1] I am using the word "*heart*" in its usual sense, which, so far as I know, has never been clearly stated. In this connexion, however, the word "heart" seems to stand for the whole man.

that it only affirms the wholeness of the universe and the ultimate dependence of things on an Absolute of which nothing except its absoluteness is known; and, on the other hand, we have an ample and satisfying but utterly defenceless religious faith. Can they not be brought together and made supplementary? There is one sense in which philosophy offers more than religion wants. The religious spirit can be content to escape from the world for the sake of being one with its God. It has no direct concern in anything except the redemption of the soul, and once the assurance is reached that the sin has been forgiven, the sin passes out of sight, and is as if it had never been. But the whole or Absolute which philosophy affirms must be all-inclusive and must carry the past with it. There can be no reality of any kind outside of the scheme.

Difference between the Absolute of philosophy and the God of religion.

This means, in the first place, that there can be no contingencies, not even in detail. The links that connect the detail with the whole scheme are there, whether we find them or not, if the conception of the harmonious whole which reason seems to demand is valid. And unless we can presuppose an order that is universal we can affirm it securely nowhere. Every loss must be convertible into gain by the alchemy of the spirit, and every tragedy must on this view contribute to the triumph of order over contingency and of good over evil; otherwise we cannot speak of the Universe as a whole or of the Absolute as its principle. It is one thing to admit that we do not know a *law*, and another to affirm that no law exists. We do the latter in affirming "contingencies."

The comprehensiveness of the Absolute.

In the next place the all-inclusive Absolute which

philosophy establishes, and, indeed, which thought presupposes, must be such as to cherish and maintain, and in nowise obliterate, or obscure, or extinguish the differences of the elements which have a place in it. It must be adequate to the Universe for which it is an experience—adequate to its variety as well as to its unity. And the universe is wonderfully rich in meaning and beauty and spiritual worth could we but escape from our littleness and let it inundate the soul. The poet helps us at times, and with his aid we catch a glimpse of the world's splendour. Then the spring-wind reveals itself as a dancing psaltress passing over the wintry earth's breast to waken it, and is much more than a senseless gust.

The Absolute leaves room for differences within its unity.

> "The herded pines commune and have deep thoughts,
> A secret they assemble to discuss."

They are not merely a group of trees to the poet; and he helps us to rejoice in nature's munificence. Science comes, too, with its steady light. And the artist in colour and form indicates—for he can do little more—the details of the beauty of natural objects in new ways. Nor must we think that poetry is pure invention. It is part of the nature of things which the poet sets free. There is beauty everywhere, not only in the butterfly's wing, but at the very heart of the pebble. Finally, the musician intervenes. He brings with him, perhaps, the most miraculous of all the benevolent intrusions into our commonplace life, and sets free an altogether new feature of the real. The Absolute must not merely contain these, but permit them to retain within it, nay, it must contribute, their distinctive character. It is not a blank

The inadequacy of the idea of sameness.

sameness, as of ultimate substance in which all differences disappear, that the conception of "wholeness" implies. Sameness of this kind implies impoverishment: not inclusion, but exclusion. When it is attained it is found to be empty; and being empty, to have itself neither reality nor meaning. The finite objects within the Absolute whole must be themselves expressions of it. There is no least evidence of the existence of the Absolute except in that which it furnishes itself and as it operates in finite objects. They are processes of the Absolute, and the Absolute *is* the process, or the constant creative activity, which appears to us as the fixed order of the scheme of things. For the static character of objects is, I believe, an illusion. Their apparent fixity is that of an operation ever carried on in accordance with law. The scientific man accounts for an object by discovering its law; and a law is the mode of operation of a universal. Physics knows no reality except some form of energy, and nature is for science the scene of its transformations. And when we pass from inanimate objects to living things, and from living things onwards to beings that live the life of reason, and have cognitive, aesthetic and volitional experiences, the evidences of process accumulate. It is obvious that when rational activities cease, nothing remains; even their objects, whether they be beauty, goodness or truth, pass away. The facts of the world of spirit are ways in which spirit acts, and spirit is what it does. When spirit does not act, nothing spiritual can exist. Truth does not exist as an entity, nor does goodness, nor beauty. To speak of them as taken up into the

The Absolute expresses itself in the processes of nature, and more fully in those of man's nature.

absolute, or contained in it, or as transformed and transcended on admission into it, is to attribute to them an actuality separate from spirit which they do not possess, and to forget that they are its processes. They are, I repeat, the Absolute in process of self-revelation; and its existence consists in this process of self-manifestation in finite objects.

I have spoken of the spiritual manifestations of the Absolute as if they were other than its expressions in the constant processes of nature. But it cannot any longer be doubted that, account for it as we may, mankind is as much a natural growth as a forest of pines. Spiritual activities are not possible to man except in correspondence with a natural environment; and these borrow characteristics from their interaction. More accurately, perhaps, we might say that the kinship of nature and spirit is the primary fact. The distinction between them is that of aspects or elements of the same real. Morality derives its worth from its eliciting a higher meaning and use from secular objects, and the practical trials and tests of a religious faith are its defence and strength and security. The environment has its own function to fulfil; it participates in the spiritual process. The natural region is a stage or degree of the self-manifestation of spirit. Some of the attributes of the indwelling reality are expressed and realized in it. Power we can discern and a power that, unlike our own, is creative. The power which we can exercise over objects is extraordinarily limited. In the last resort we can only move them into and out of contact with one another, and then leave them to operate upon one another. So far from calling them into being, we cannot even alter

The continuity of nature and spirit, and the re-interpretation of the former in the light of the latter.

their qualities: we can only change their position in space.

Besides a power quite other than our own, we can discern in the natural scheme something of the resources of infinite wisdom, or evidences of perfect intelligence; and we cannot cite the beauty of the natural world or the perfection of its order, or the variety and greatness of its uses, without recognizing something that we can hardly distinguish from the limitless benevolence of a munificent will. But it is not merely prejudice that attributes the highest value and significance to the spiritual manifestations of the real—as when it appears as self-consciousness in nature's highest product, namely, man. In the light of man's nature the whole scheme must be reinterpreted.

> "Man, once descried, imprints for ever
> His presence on all lifeless things: the winds
> Are henceforth voices, wailing or a shout,
> A querulous mutter or a quick gay laugh,
> Never a senseless gust now man is born." [1]

There are, it seems to me, two series of reliable conclusions to which philosophy leads by its persistent enquiry into the nature and meaning and reality of finite things. The first series of conclusions relates to the character of the Absolute: the second series concerns the nature of its relations to its parts, or elements, or finite content.

As to the nature of the Absolute, it seems to be evident that it must contain all the conditions of all the finite phenomena. No one contends that the natural scheme produced itself: it manifestly points beyond itself for its explanation. And as to the

[1] Browning's "Paracelsus."

spiritual capacities that manifest themselves in the cognitive, aesthetic and moral activities of man (like everything else that is to be found in him), they have a history which passes beyond his individual existence. No one attributes these capacities to the individual himself in the sense that he discovered or invented them. Even their social origin is only secondary. They have been at the making of society, and are, in fact, forms of the real, and have come to man as a gift. It is only the use made of them that belongs to the individual. These spiritual qualities were, at one time, attributed to matter: but now it is seen that matter does not contain the conditions and cannot produce them. That which is spiritual can have no adequate source except in that which is itself spiritual. The Absolute therefore must be spiritual. The process of its self-revelation in the Universe is a spiritual process. Nature is but the earlier and less complete stage of that self-revelation. Man, as spirit or as a self-conscious, free being, making for perfection—man at his best is a truer and fuller revelation. A perfect man were the incarnated God. This is the truth to which Christianity bears witness. The doctrine is undisguisedly and thoroughly anthropomorphic. Its God must therefore be a person or self-conscious individual to whom there is nothing which is finally strange or alien. Spirit that is not individual means nothing. But individuality implies a more intimate and deep relationship between the Absolute and its finite appearances than is conveyed in the phrases usually employed to express it. It is not enough to say that the Absolute contains finite facts; nor even that it transmutes them by relating them to one another

Summary of conclusions as to the nature of the Absolute. (*a*) It is a spiritual reality.

(*b*) Hence it is an active process, culminating in the activities of a perfect humanity

Implications of a complete anthropo-morphism.

through its own unity. Facts are not first given as isolated and then linked together in a system. They are not at one time separate from, and at another taken up into, the Absolute. The Absolute permanently sustains them. But to regard God as a Being which somehow sustains the different modes of finite existence without implicating itself in their destiny, is also inadequate. If we admit the spiritual character of the power that expresses itself in the Universe, we at the same time admit its individuality and its self-consciousness: if we admit its self-conscious individuality, we admit that which is for itself and gives everything a turn inwards as subjective experience, and, at the same time and for the same reason, that which finds itself everywhere and is veritably omnipresent. But no purely monotheistic conception can meet these requirements: not even that of a creator who projects its products and then lets them be. Self-consciousness inextricably entangles the individual in its object. The self-conscious being is immanent in his world. Every discovery of the meaning or of the use of an object is a refutation of first appearances. For the object at first appears to be purely external and exclusive. It is there; I as subject am here. But in the degree in which it is known, its oneness with myself by which it both enriches me and acquires meaning and value, becomes more and more indisputable. My world, in fact, thinks and wills in me, because I have overcome its strangeness. Nevertheless even the idea of immanence is inadequate to express the relations of the Absolute to its elements. For the Absolute not merely dwells in their midst like the peace at the

Inadequacy of the ideas of substance and immanence.

depths of an ocean whose surface is storm-tossed. The Absolute which philosophy affirms, is one with them. It shares in the activities of the finite object, and is a doer and sufferer in the world's life.

The identification of God with the world-process.

I have repeatedly urged that if we desire to know what an object is we must observe what it does. In order to bring out the whole of its characters we must vary the environment by reference to which it acts. For all the actions of an object are reactions—a solitary object would show no activity, and, in fact, never be known. To him, then, who would know God, the answer of philosophy would be: Observe this never-resting Universe as it moves from change to change, nor forget the troubled, tragic, sin-stained, shameless elements in the world of man, and you will find God working his purpose and manifesting himself through it all. Identify him with the power that sustains the processes of this natural-spiritual world and you identify him with that which, as we have seen, makes for fuller spiritual excellence. You identify him with something that is better than any static perfection.

But, it will be answered, to identify the Divine Being with the Absolute of philosophy and the Absolute of philosophy with the world process is to represent the Divine Being himself as passing from one imperfect form of existence to another. Religion, it has been admitted, demands perfection in the object of its devotion. How can such a conception, then, meet its requirements? The answer is twofold. In the first place we might examine the static conception; in the second place, we might ask whether there can be movement, not only from imperfection to imperfection—the pursuit of a receding ideal with which

ethical teaching has made us familiar—but from perfection to perfection, a movement which is positive attainment all the way. Can the perfect be for ever radiating forth new perfections?

The idea of static perfection examined.

As to the static conception of the perfect, I have already indicated how changelessness means absolute inactivity; and how inactivity can be attributed to nothing real which we know, and least of all to spiritual reality. For it to be at all is to be operative, outgoing, losing itself to find itself immersed in the Universe and returning to itself through the Universe. I cannot call that which does nothing—which for ever stands aloof from the world-process in eternal fixity—God. Such a God could not at least be a God of Love, for love identifies the lover and the loved. Love cannot stand aloof: love lives in the life of its object and shares its fate. Even the isolation of the moral agent does not shut out love. It shares the sorrow, though not the guilt, of ill-doing, and the joy of righteous living.

Bearing in mind what I have tried to prove, namely, that the Universe which makes for fuller spiritual goodness is the best possible, I cannot hesitate to identify the God of religion and the Absolute of philosophy. Nevertheless, as absolute self-consciousness and as knowing the end from the beginning, God is more than the world-process. That process fulfils his purpose. But God, as having purposed the process from the beginning, or *as not* acting blindly not knowing what he doeth, is greater than and transcends the Universe. He is already perfect and possesses the future, for it is his Will which is being realized in the world.

The divine movement from perfection to perfection.

The suggestions of man's moral history.

All the same there is movement from purpose to fulfilment, or from possibility to actuality, and the perfection of the instant may be the condition and inspiration of a new perfection. Something of that kind seems to me to be presented by the spiritual history of man. Nothing in the world can be better than the doing of a right deed. In its own way, it is obedience to and realization of the absolute law of goodness; nevertheless it is a stepping-stone to some better action still. A wider view of duty ensues, or a deeper and more joyous loyalty. Morality is acquirement *all the way*, and, in spite of the limited range of every human action, in so far as what is right is done, there is movement from perfection to perfection. Right actions are perfect actions in their place, provided they elicit the best that the circumstances permit. They are often done by very imperfect men, and still they stand unstained. Yet every such action is a stepping-stone only; once done it yields its result in the character of the agent, and he carries that result within him ever afterwards as an element of his personality and the condition of further service. And every stage has its own worth. The seed of a living plant may be perfect, so may its bud and its flower and its fruit. Its history is not the story of a movement from failure to failure. And it seems to me that we can say the same thing of the succession of the stages of the spiritual life. Looking back, it is true, makes any stage preparatory—a thing essentially imperfect in itself; but all the same, every stage has its own character, and had its right to be, and was justified as it stood.

I admit that the conception of a moving perfection, or of God as a being who ever expresses himself in new perfections, has its difficulties; but, unlike those of the conception of a static Deity, they are not insurmountable. Every least addition to our knowledge we welcome as a lasting attainment. We accentuate the positive aspect of the process. What reasons have we for regarding our moral actions as failures or morality as anything else than what is best of all in process? I know of none. Our unexamined assumption of a static perfection, our habit of postponing the triumph of the life of spirit to an end, which we have never attempted to define, has blinded us to the possibility of a growing perfection and of a best in process. Still less have we taken the process itself as the evidence of perfection. And yet these things are implied in the conception of spirit, and of God as a God of Love. For no one will for a moment admit that love can stand aloof from its object unconcerned by its fate. The religious man, like Enoch, "walks with God." A light, like that of the Shekinah, always shines upon his path. He has no will of his own in an exclusive sense; and there is a sense in which not even his personality is any longer his own. These are familiar experiences. Are they possible if God dwells apart and contemplates for ever his own perfection? Would they be possible were God the monarchic Ruler, or the Stern Judge demanding a *quid pro quo* in the blood of a redeemer in return for forgiveness of sins? Or are not all these conceptions irreconcilable with the fundamental truth of the religion of love?

The God of Love.

Philosophy has performed only a portion of its task

in showing how the finite world implies the Absolute. It must also show what necessities, if any, dwell in the absolute, and account for its eternal outgoing and expression of itself in objects. It is not only true that "the finite world cannot be conceived to be complete and independent, and that its existence must therefore be referred back to God," but also, as Caird said, that "in the nature of God there is a necessity and reason for the existence of the world." To the question sometimes asked, "Why did God come out of his isolated perfection so as to complete himself only through the medium of the Universe?" the answer is relatively simple. It is given in the conception of God as Love. Love *must* have an object. Philosophy gives an answer which, in the last resort, is the same. Absoluteness undoubtedly implies that self-completeness, that positive and commanding relation to objects, that possession of its own experience, which are involved in self-consciousness. A self-conscious being which has no object and does not possess its opposite, and affirm its unity in terms of it, is impossible. Hence an Absolute without a world is empty nothingness, just as a world without the Absolute is impossible. Nature is the experience, the living operation of the Absolute, and the Absolute is not only omnipresent in it, but real in virtue of it. It is as manifesting itself that the Absolute, on its part, lives and moves and has its being.

As consciousness implies its object, so must the Absolute express itself in the Universe.

The religious consciousness, as we have seen, may almost be said to consist in this conviction of the omnipresence of what is most divine, namely, perfect and unlimited Love. Those who can rise to the sublime attitude of Wordsworth find no difficulty in

the conception. It is in no exaggerated mood of emotional exaltation that he found an "Active Principle"

The religious and poetic acceptance of this view.

> "Subsist
> In all things, in all natures; in the stars
> Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,
> In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone
> That paves the brooks . . ."

and even where it is "least respected, its most apparent home, the human mind."

Wordsworth affirmed this as "a matter of fact"—and philosophy finds in the conception of a self-conscious Absolute the same plain truth. The erroneous versions of the world's meaning are the irreligious and prose versions: not that of the devout, nor that of the poet, nor that of the idealist philosopher, but the version of the plain man. Where

The ordinary view of the ordinary man is false to facts because it omits their highest qualities.

> "Moral dignity, and strength of mind,
> Are wanting: and simplicity of life
> And reverence for one's [him] self: and last and best
> Confiding thoughts, through love and fear of Him
> Before whose sight the troubles of this world
> Are vain, as billows on a tossing sea":

in these cases the truth may be hidden for a time. It is beyond the reach of the unprepared spirit; which is left the victim of its own shallow deceptions. It is not enough that the world's harmonies should be divine; the soul that can hear must be musical. It is in the awareness of this deeper significance of the world and of life, in this glimpse of the essentially spiritual character of the commonest experience, that religious conversion consists. And it is not the language of exaggeration to speak of "The eyes being opened, or the blind seeing." Ordinary

experience is abstract, and what is omitted in our ordinary moods is the best, the most true and the most beautiful.

I take it, then, quite literally, that the character of the relation that holds between the Absolute of philosophy, or the God of religion, and the facts and events of nature is most accurately rendered in our deeper religious convictions, in such poetry as Wordsworth's, and in the philosophic rendering of it by our great Idealists. The poet, the philosopher and the religious man, each in his own way, helps us to know the natural world in its truth, or as it verily is. They set free its limitless suggestiveness, reveal its beauty, expose its purpose and its meaning—helped herein, I need hardly say, by science. Except in the light of their teaching, we do not know the scheme as it is. What we are apt to miss are its splendour and its final significance; and what we recognize is an impoverished remnant, the commonplace counterpart of our own life and interests.

But the relation of the Absolute to the natural Universe is relatively simple: much simpler than its relation to man. We do no violence to the natural scheme by regarding it simply as the expression of the divine will and the mere instrument of a divine purpose. But to represent man as the effect of any kind of anterior cause or the implement of any foreign aim is to do him vital wrong. This deeper problem must be the theme of our next lecture.

LECTURE XVI

GOD AND MAN'S FREEDOM

I HAVE said that the relation between God and the world is much more simple than his relation to man. The world referred us back to him as the ground of its possibility: and, on the other hand, in his nature as self-conscious there is an outgoing necessity to which the religious consciousness testifies in its own way, when it declares that the final reality, the ultimate energy, is limitless and all-powerful Love. But the relation of God to man raises new questions. For, as we have seen more than once during this course, that relation must be such as to leave the privacy, the freedom, the responsibility of man's personality untouched. And it would appear at first that such non-interference necessarily implies that man is shut up within himself and isolated. Participation in anything that is common or universal seems to be impossible to spiritually responsible beings. If we admit both the testimony of morality to the responsibility of the individual, and that of religion to his oneness with God, we do so, we are told, at the expense of the intelligence. To believe both these opposite conceptions we must turn reason out of doors.

The relation of God to man raises more difficult problems than his relation to nature.

Opposing elements may both be real.

I should like to show, however, that this very common attitude, which forces us to a choice between these two alternatives, is an unexamined and untrue prejudice. The assertion of man's unity with others or of divine immanence in him does not necessarily violate the independence of man. The differences between one self-conscious individual and another, between man and man, as well as between man and the Absolute, are real: the activities of every subject are *its* own: no one thing ever ceases to be itself so long as it is at all, nor does it perform the function of another. I am not concerned to deny or to lessen their differences. But I do deny the implied assumption, namely, that the assertion of difference and distinctions is tantamount to the denial of unity, and that we are shut up to the choice between abstract unity and abstract difference.[1] The efforts of the philosophers to prove that all is appearance save the universal substance in the background, or, on the other hand, to show that particulars are the only realia, have, fortunately, proved unsuccessful. The Universe refuses to be reduced either to blank sameness or to a collection (even if a collection !) of unrelated facts and incidents. In the face of such a refusal it may be well to ask whether the Universe may not realize and reveal itself in the particulars, and whether divine immanence in every element of finite being may not make the latter all the more real.

Facts refuse to be either separated or reduced into pure sameness.

I find no evidence to support the "either—or" attitude. Physics will attribute the fact it would explain neither to the operation of the world-forces apart from the particular object nor to the latter apart

Examples of unity in difference in science and in the arts.

[1] See my article on "Divine Immanence" in the *Hibbert Journal*.

from the Universe. The flower needs the help of all the world if it is to bloom; but not all the world can *make* it bloom if the plant has no co-operating life of its own. If we observe the manifestations of the spirit of man—his knowledge, or his art, or his personal character, or his social world,—we shall find on all hands what look like universals immanent in particulars, unities existing in and by virtue of differences, and differences deriving their very nature from the unities. A piece of music is not an aggregate of sounds; nor is a picture a collection of colours; nor is a geometrical demonstration a succession of statements and nothing more. The demonstration is the exhibition of the truth of one hypothesis and of only one; the work of art is the embodiment of one conception and the expression of one mood. Hence one artist cannot take up another's work, nor even always complete his own, if the mood has passed. There are poems, like some of those of Coleridge, which will remain fragments to the end of time,

"The Campanile is still to finish."

The elements or parts of a poem or proof, or of any other product of the intelligence of man, derive their value and their significance from the unity which dwells in them, and which all alike serve to express. The particular note makes its joyous or pathetic appeal because it is part of, and belongs to, a great musical movement. Take it out of the movement and you deprive it of its beauty: it becomes a meaningless shout. Put a different note in its place and you may ruin the movement. The particular curve or arch or turret lends its beauty to, and it also borrows its beauty from, the edifice as a whole. Tear the porter

How the unity of the whole gives value and meaning to the parts.

scene in *Macbeth* out of its context and it sinks into poor comedy; leave it in its context, where it represents the idle, common world in contact with the terror and the tension of the scene of murder, and it both retains and gives tragic value.

I do not see how it can be denied that in all these instances the unity of the whole is immanent in all the parts; or that the unity is as real as the particulars in which it is expressed; or that, when sundered from one another, they are aught but unreal abstractions. Nor do I see how the topic of exclusion, the "either —or" attitude of mind, can do justice to such facts.

Can man's nature as self-conscious separate him from all else?

But, it will be replied, in all these instances, culled from the various arts, the particulars, or elements, make no claim to independence that is in the least analogous to that of self-conscious individuals. The mutual exclusiveness and isolation are but faint shadows of the exclusiveness and isolation of persons. That is true. Nothing is so shut up within itself, and barred and bolted against invasion from without, as the self-conscious individual. But it is not the whole truth. If the subjective differences are deeper and more decisive, the unity of rational beings, that is, of self-conscious persons, is also fuller and more significant. The elements that are common to them all, and constitutive of them, mean more, and are more numerous. Moreover, both their differences and independence on the one hand, and their unity and community on the other, grow with their own growth. Once more, I do not deny or minimize the privacy, or the independence, or the exclusiveness of rational selves: but our concern for the moment is their unity—the universals that express themselves in the separate lives.

I must first insist on a truth which, I trust, is fast becoming a commonplace of ethical doctrine. It is that man's ethical powers are rooted in the social community into which he is born and within which he is brought up. He is anteceded, I should even say "anticipated," by it in a spiritual sense, just as the materials of his physical health and growth are prior to him. They are there ready for him to assimilate and appropriate, and convert into living forces within his spiritual structure. Aristotle insisted on this truth, but not even yet is it definitely and clearly recognized that apart from the contribution made to the individual by the social whole he is quite meaningless, impotent and, indeed, unreal.

Society prior to the individual.

Now, all these social elements, from amongst which the individual selects and appropriates those which he can assimilate, are *common* elements; that is to say, they are forces within the lives of the members of the social world. They weld the individuals into a single unity by endowing them all with the same qualities. They give to the life of the society its main features and direction. It is owing to them that a community is controlled by the same impulse and, at times, swept by the same passion. Their common elements are, in truth, the controlling powers, although they are both impotent and meaningless except as entering into the characters of the individual members. The individual is their living unity. They are in and through him, and he is in and through them. The interpenetration of whole and part, unity and differences, universal and particulars, is beyond dispute and of essential significance to both.

The elements which are common to a society, unite it.

So full is this interpenetration that we can attribute

Narrow limits of individual originality.

nothing whatsoever original or creative to the individual. He brings with him into his social, as into his physical world, nothing but a power of appropriating, that is, of converting the social forces which play around him, or at least some of them, into personal forces, into opinions, convictions, volitions. The language he speaks is his country's; the thoughts which he expresses are its traditions; the habits he forms are its customs; he is its product almost as the fruit is of a tree.

His beliefs and habits being traditional are more truly his society's than his own.

During the first part of the individual's life, nay, during the whole of the life of the plain man, that is, of the man who has not made the beliefs he entertains and the principles he has adopted into objects of his reflective and reconstructive thought, these constitutive elements of mind and character belong more to the community than they do to the individual himself. His appropriation of them being uncritical, his life being ruled by hearsay, it is also incomplete. He follows their guidance, and is the instrument of the social fabric rather than his own master and guide. Most of the mental operations of the plain man are his own only in the superficial sense in which we say that a machine makes a particular article. He is, in truth, the means through which his society operates. His thoughts are merely its traditions, accepted, assimilated, understood to some extent; but never tested, never brought before the bar of the individual's own judgment and justified there. His religion, for instance, is apt to be very much a matter of hearsay, and its profounder truths to be on that account facile opinions and nothing more. Even his moral judgments, which of all things should be the most independent

and intensely personal, have the same character. It has never even occurred to him to criticize the moral code of this society of which he is a member; but he goes with it the whole way without a moment's hesitation when he approves actions as right, condemns them as wrong or tolerates them as indifferent. The methods that he employs in his trade or profession—the way in which the carpenter handles his tools, or the farmer tills his land and gathers in the harvest—all these things have been accepted as matters of course, and have never been objects of free choice. In a word, human life, in so far as it is subject to traditional ways, is not free.

Perhaps I ought to dwell for a moment on this matter. We usually speak of human freedom as a thing to be either affirmed or denied in its entirety and fulness. The alternatives, we consider, are fixed and final: man, we say, is either free or not free. But this is not true. There are no fixed elements in human character. Man has to acquire, or "win" his freedom, just as he has to acquire knowledge or goodness; and there are degrees or stages of freedom as there are degrees of knowledge and virtue. In so far as man is not master of his own thoughts, in the sense of having convinced himself by rational methods of their validity, he is not free. He is in their service: they are not in his. He is the instrument by means of which the society of which he is a member continues to exist; and he carries onward its moral customs, its religious beliefs, and its methods of industry, commerce, and of every other form of activity. But an instrument is not a free agent. As a rule, we do not in the least realize how limited our

Freedom must be gained, and is gained little by little.

freedom is, or the extent to which we are the instruments of social purposes and exponents of social views and nothing more. The range of our creative activities is very small. The new contributions we make to our social inheritance are very limited. When the end of life comes, we discover that, after all, we are leaving our world very much where we found it. If we have made a contribution, it is confined to some single aspect: we have discovered a scientific truth, or invented an engine, or introduced some fresh element into the commercial and industrial methods of the day, or possibly given our times reasons for reconsidering some of their ethical or religious opinions; and we have done this single service by devoting our lives to it. The vast remainder we found in our world, accepted uncritically, and left unchanged. It is a social possession rather than our own.

Mr. Balfour on Tradition and Reason.

Mr. Balfour in his *Foundations of Belief* quite justly accentuates the part played by tradition in securing the unity and the continued existence of society. The less reflective a community is the more conservative and repetitive it is. The higher the level of civilization, the greater the progress it makes from age to age. There is nothing more static than contented and uncritical ignorance. In this respect our social life is quite safe—such is the extent of our ignorance and our traditional servitude. Besides, even those who do outgrow the traditions and customs of their times do so by the help of their times. They must assimilate its wisdom before they can surpass it. Where Mr. Balfour errs is in representing tradition and reason as essentially in opposition and conflict, whereas their conflict is just an accident of their growth. For

tradition is the product of reason. There never was a tradition which was not at an earlier stage a bold, original idea, whose propounder was, probably enough, persecuted. And the employment of reason upon a tradition generally deepens its meaning and transfigures rather than supplants it. But one wonders what reason means for Mr. Balfour. He seems to have identified its operations with those which are described in the *Formal Logic*, which every teacher condemns and none discards.

All these considerations point in the same direction. They indicate the significance of the common elements to which society owes its unity in the lives of individual men, and illustrate the operation of universal forces in men's theoretical and practical ways. No one can measure the debt of a man to the society into which he is born. The range of the elements of the common life, their comprehensiveness—which is such as to leave out only a minimum of petty personal peculiarities—is hardly more arresting than the intensity with which they unite. Rational beings enter into, possess, live in and for and by means of one another, to a degree that is nowhere rivalled. We matter more to one another than outward circumstances, except perhaps when a man is reduced into an animal by the urgency of his physical needs, and can, for instance, think of nothing except of his hunger, or thirst, or physical pain. We share in more things, and these are, as a rule, the most vital. Moreover, we share in spiritual matters without breaking them up or partitioning them. I may own a field similar in size and shape and soil to my neighbour; but his field is not mine nor is

The intensity of the unity which binds men together.

mine his. But both of us may acquire knowledge of the same truths, obey the same principles of conduct, entertain the same religious beliefs. Truth always is universal in character, and so indeed is goodness. In physical matters the unity is never quite complete: an element of exclusiveness survives, and though goodwill and generosity may overcome it, they cannot delete it. Property in material things necessarily has this exclusive characteristic. What is mine is not yours, and what is yours is not mine. But in spiritual matters the privacy of ownership goes along with the opposite quality, so that to say "I in you, and ye in me" is not merely the exaggerated utterance of religious emotion, but the daily experience of mankind. It is a truth illustrated constantly on every happy hearth and in every other harmonious human society.

The union of man with God.

But our critic may reply that while the unity and mutual interpenetration of men in society is plain and indisputable, man's oneness with his God is another matter. I agree, but it differs through being deeper and more comprehensive. A man's religion is a man's life—the chief, the dominant, and all-pervasive element of it. It is that to which he is unreservedly devoted. In this case his very self is involved—given utterly away to the object of its devotion.

Self-sacrifice and self-realization are parts of the same act.

But it is recovered at the same instant. In fact, the giving of the self and the receiving of it back endowed with the priceless consciousness of being at peace with God, forgiven, united with him in love, constitute one single movement. The self returns to itself as if completing a circle. It is a grave error to break up the act, as if self-sacrifice came first, and the

recovery of the self, the reward of the act of devotion, lagged behind and followed afterwards. The dedication is not possible without the simultaneous consciousness of a purified, strengthened, "saved" self: nor these without the dedication. To give ourselves to God is to have God with us and in us.

Here, then, we have precisely that for which we have been seeking, namely, the coincidence, nay, the inseparableness of the independence and individuality of man and his unity with his God. This truth will be denied by no one who has felt the personal *uplift* which comes from adopting some great cause as a life object. In fact, man does not gain possession of himself in any complete sense until he gives himself. His infinitude escapes him until he discovers a worthy end of life. And this is as much as to say that he cannot do without a God. Till he finds him, his life is a thing of shreds and patches. Once he does find him, he will find him everywhere. Even an unworthy God has this omnipresence. The worshipper of Mammon is never really out of the service of his deity. Everything is valued by him from the point of view of material wealth. Consideration of material wealth will direct the course of his life, fill his thoughts, make and rule his home, and thoroughly cramp his soul. But worthier Gods have the same character. They are present and operative throughout every detail of the religious man's life. The good man, in the midst of his deepest sorrows and most painful sufferings—if he does not lose courage and let go his hold—recognizes the will of his God, and wills that "His will be done." "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art

To find God is to find him in everything.

there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."[1] The categories of exclusion break down utterly. So far from being weakened, the individuality of man is immeasurably strengthened by his consciousness of his oneness with his God. His victory is assured; for God being with him, the whole scheme of things is with him. Both freedom and the consciousness of freedom grow as the individual comprehends more fully and makes a wiser use of the scheme of things and unites himself with its tendencies.

That moral freedom implies an eternal self. Spiritual pluralism.

In their anxiety to maintain man's freedom certain philosophers have been led to conclude to a community of finite spirits co-eternal with the infinite. To assign an origin to a self-conscious being in the sense of finding the conditions of his existence in something or somebody anterior to himself is, they maintain, to deprive him of his freedom. He becomes the agent and instrument of these prior conditions; and his actions are in strictness not his own. In fact, they maintain that he has no self and is not a self. He is just a product and link in the chain of endless natural causation. The individual in order to be free must be new; and either arise from nothing, or be brought into being by itself. But both of these alternatives are unreasonable. There remains a third, however, namely, that he shall have co-existed eternally with God as a member of a society of spirits which never had a beginning, or of an Eternal Republic of which God is President or, at least, the first among equals. And being spirits, they must express them-

The Eternal Republic.

[1] Psalm cxxxix. 8, 9, 10.

selves in objects even as we conceive God to do, and make manifest their presence in the Universe and their operative part in the scheme of things. Such are the conclusions of the Pluralist. He is driven to this conclusion no less by ethical than by theological and philosophical considerations. He cannot entertain the conception of a solitary, monadic God, a God aloof from or without a world, a subject without any object. God expresses and eternally realizes himself in the world process; that process is his working, the revelation of his nature, his nature being so to work. On the other hand, neither can the Pluralist entertain the idea of selves which are the outcome of previous conditions and nevertheless free. And the conception of an Eternal Republic of spirits seems to meet both requirements. It makes God a member of a community of spirits instead of being solitary, and it secures man's freedom—the condition of a moral life.

Man is a child of nature and has had his antecedents

Now, this view contains truths that it is well to accentuate. I sympathize fully with the refusal of the Pluralists to compromise man's freedom, or in any way to betray the apparent creativeness that is involved in moral responsibility. But their refusal is made on grounds which are not tenable. They give a wrong account of those powers of origination which we must attribute to a will which is free. These spring from the nature of mind, not from the absence of antecedent conditions. Mind may be as much a natural product as the acorns of the oak-tree. All the evidence we can get of any individual mind points in that direction. There is no doubt that the child, at his birth, brings with him, as a part of his disposition, all manner of conditions that were anterior to his

arrival. He is a mixture even at his birth, and the meeting-place of many forces—not a bare "mind" or self. Selfhood has to be acquired. The evidence already ample to common experience is supported by modern science, which is every day exposing more fully the continuity of man with his antecedents, and his affinity and ultimate oneness with the world into which he has come. We may still be unable to give a convincing account of the nature of the relation between mind and body, or nature and spirit, and may be driven one day towards, and the next away from, Pampsychism; but the existence of the relation, that is, of some kind of continuity, is not a matter of doubt even to the parallelists, who would fain neither affirm nor deny the unity. In a word, man must be regarded as a natural product. What we have still to do is to determine more clearly the character of a natural world which could have man as its product. Man's freedom cannot be maintained if, in order to be free, he must have no antecedents. He is new only in the same sense as the bud or the flower is new, which is on the tree to-day and was not there yesterday. In that sense the whole scheme of things is new at every succeeding instant. Man's freedom must be accounted for in some other way than that of denying his origin and making him eternal.

The true condition of freedom.

In the first place, I would again urge, what is constantly overlooked, that man is not born free. He is born capable of becoming more and more free by his intercourse with his fellows and his experience of the world. He exhibits this capacity of becoming free when he first gives his own interpretation of a fact, and assigns to it his own value. He is free in the

degree in which he has realized a self that is rational, and in regard to those matters on which his judgments have universal validity and are true to the nature of things. No doubt this world, both within and without him, partakes in his acts of judgment, as in all else that he is and does, whether as a physical or as a spiritual being. Apart from his world, as I have frequently urged, he is nothing and can do nothing. We may even say that his world breaks into self-consciousness, and thinks and wills in, and through, him. But that constitutes rather than destroys the conditions of his freedom. That is to say, he is free by the help of his world, and in virtue of the rational activities which he performs; even though nature also performs them in and through him. For the world becomes an object of his experience and the content of his self, as he interprets its meaning and determines its value and use. And it is this rational recoil upon the world which makes it his object, and constitutes the individual freedom. What was outer becomes inner. The authority that was alien and external becomes a personal conviction, and the rule of behaviour is self-imposed. Nor are the rules less original in that they are *re*-imposed, or that he makes them out of provided material, by the help of an experience that was uncritical and only half-conscious. They are derived from the objective world, for man must borrow every item of his experience as well as make it; but he does borrow, and in borrowing he re-constitutes. For the purpose is the individual's, and so also is the estimate of relative values, and therefore the approval or disapproval of actions as right or wrong. The standard of value, the purpose, and therefore the motive are

introduced by man. They depend upon his interpretation of the needs and nature of the self, and of the means of realizing it. And it is the motive, the good which the individual seeks as his end, which ripens unto the act and makes it an expression of spiritual freedom. The Pluralists have missed the meaning of self-consciousness, and they have sought freedom in isolation from circumstances, instead of by the use of them.

The theology and cosmology of the Pluralist.

In the next place, the refusal of the Idealistic Pluralist to isolate God, thereby making the existence of the Universe contingent on a capricious will, is justified. The Pluralist finds in God's nature his need of an object. Nevertheless, it does not follow that we are entitled to conclude to a multiplicity of eternal spirits, whether finite or infinite, nor to constitute an Eternal Republic with God as President. Neither ordinary experience nor science supports such a view. For science there is one Universe. It forms a single system in which all things have their place and function; and it implies one ultimate reality, whose process of self-manifestation the Universe is. Of course the question is altered if there are contingent happenings, or events which have had no antecedents. But, on the other hand, if it be true, as James held at one time, that "the negative, the alogical is never wholly banished," or that there are real indeterminations, real beginnings, real ends, real crises, catastrophes and escapes, then there is an end to *all* reasoning. We cannot say that $2 \times 2 = 4$ if, now and then, or in some places, $2 \times 10 = 4$. That neither philosophy nor science has traced any absolute unity in the details of events and facts is true: the conception of unity remains a hypo-

thesis. But it is a hypothesis, without faith in which the attempt to know, which is to discover the relation of facts to facts within a system, would not take place. James's own remedy for the situation is a condemnation of it. Belief is to be made a matter of "will," a violation of the value of the rational use of evidence which would be admitted in practice by no one. The fact is, however, that with every advance in every form and department of knowledge, and indeed of civilization, the hypothesis of a single power, which expresses itself in the harmonies of a Universe whose marvels ever grow with our insight, is being steadily substantiated as valid. And, on the other hand, the conjecture of a multiplicity of minor deities, or of a finite and limited God who is first amongst other finite spirits, is revealed more and more as the creation of the imagination. There are no premisses—unless we admit a pluralistic, that is, a chaotic universe—from which any such conclusion can be drawn. All the premisses we can have are derived from our experience of the world as it now is; and our experience, whether cognitive, or practical and ethical, rests on the assumption of a Universe which is a single rational cosmos. All the probabilities point to a Deity who is immanent and operative, and ever expressing himself in the ever-changing continuity of the world-process.

Man the fullest revelation of God.

Nor can there be any doubt that the fullest revelation of the nature of the Deity is man at his best, the perfect man. We can conceive nothing higher or better than a life devoted to right doing. Nothing except what is morally right finally justifies itself or has absolute worth. Hence, in making God partake in the movement, and in regarding him as the ultimate

source of the impulse towards the best; and, on the other hand, in regarding man, at his duty, as re-enacting the will of God and realizing it anew in every good action, we are affirming that unity of the divine and human which at the same time preserves the independence and freedom of finite spirits. The alternative to this view is obviously untenable. A God severed from the course of the Universe becomes an empty name, as the history of theology amply proves; and, on the other hand, it is not possible to account for the Universe except by reference to antecedents which are adequate. And no antecedent is adequate except a God who is spirit, and perfect in power and goodness. Again, to sever man from the Universe is to reduce him into helpless nothingness, and at the same time it is to make the moral world a human invention.

The sceptical alternative.

The sceptic would find a remedy for some of his doubts in the attempt to give his own *positive* theory of his world. But now that naturalism and materialism are silent, no such theory is offered to us, and we are flung back upon our anthropological views as our ultimate theoretical and working conceptions. But if the problem of the relation of God to man is more difficult than that of his relation to the natural world, the discussion of it is also more illuminating.

LECTURE XVII

CONTINGENCIES

THE faithful analysis of the nature of self-consciousness overcomes the main difficulty of the relation between God and man. We saw, in the last lecture, that the unity of men, as rational beings, is deeper and more intimate than any other. They can be moved by the same forces, know the same truths, and pursue the same ends. Things spiritual are by nature common to all. Yet, on the other hand, each man as rational is moved only by inner forces; the truths are elements in his own knowledge, and his ends are his own and as private as if he alone willed them. The unity and independence of men not only exist together, but grow by means of each other. The more rational liberty men enjoy, the stronger the unity that binds them; the more they individually acquire universal views and adopt universal ends, the more they live for society and society lives in them, the stronger and the more significant is their individuality. A great man is the voice of his people and his time.

The unity and independence of men.

Though the same truths hold of the relation of man to his God, difficulties emerge when the relation is considered from the point of view of the latter. The way from the finite to the infinite has been always

The unity of God and man, and their independence.

more easy for the feet of the pilgrims than the way from the infinite to the finite. We readily adopt the view that represents the world-process as a manifestation of the nature of the will of the Absolute; we are slow to identify the Absolute with that process, or to acknowledge that the Absolute partakes in any way in the vagaries of the volitions of mankind. Surely, we are told, the divine being is no shareholder in man's sinfulness!

Two ways are advocated by which the difficulty may be avoided: one is to represent man and all finite existence as, in the last resort, phenomenal and temporary appearance and nothing more; the other is to refrain from the complete identification of the world's course with the Absolute.

The accent on man's finitude.

Idealists are agreed in regarding man as a "finite-infinite" being. But they differ as to the significance in man's case of these two aspects. On one view man's final and distinctive characteristic is his finitude. He is a finite being; but he is troubled with aims that are infinite. He is doomed to a spiritual unrest of which other finite beings, such as the animals, know nothing. He aims at spiritual perfection. To attain it is his only mission; and he exhibits his true nature, or reveals his true self, only in the pursuit of it. But he never does attain. Not one act of man has yet hit the mark. If he did attain, he would collapse *qua* individual. He would become one with the Absolute in such a way as to be transcended and to disappear. He thus remains an unsolved contradiction, and, as such, bound to pass away. He is only an element in the Absolute, and has only an adjectival existence on this view; and his

deeds, right and wrong, have the same dubious reality. He has his own place, but only as part of a passing show.

The accent on man's infinitude.

On the other view, and in direct opposition to the former, the last and distinctive feature of man is his infinitude. Ideally, there is nothing anywhere which is to him simply an alien or exclusive other. All that is or can be may be his object; for he is an intelligent or rational being, and his counterpart is the Universe as a whole. But, like all other beings who are subject to the law of evolution, man is only the process of becoming that which he verily is. His deepest reality lies in his possibilities. They are possibilities of greater spiritual excellence, and so of fuller justice to the self, and therefore come to him in the form of obligations. He is under an obligation be it noted, not to be, but to become. That is to say, it is the process that is imperative: the movement from less to more. He has to make good his infinite nature; to become more and more Godlike; to unify himself with God; and in these very acts of unification to stand out more and more as an independent individual.

The identification of God with the world-process.

In these lectures the view adopted has been the second. The union of man with God, or, in other words, the immanence of God not only in the natural world, as its final truth and reality, but also in mankind, has been held uncompromisingly. I have repeatedly affirmed that "a thing is what it does"—quoting Mr. Nettleship's great saying; and I have rejected the notion that a thing is a being which lurks somewhere in the background behind its deeds, and is therefore unknown and unknowable. Hence it

follows that if we cannot account for the Universe—including man—save by referring it to the sustained action of the Absolute and by representing it as the process by which the Absolute reveals itself, no option remains except to identify the Absolute with the world-process. It is in its light that the Universe is comprehensible; and it is in the light of the Universe that the Absolute is comprehensible.

Can "the whole" be in process?

But this is a step which philosophers no less than theologians hesitate to take; and that for reasons which certainly deserve attention. It is insisted that process within a whole—the process of growth, for instance—is possible when process of the whole would be unthinkable. The part or element of a whole may evidently appropriate its environment and grow by means of it; but for the whole or Absolute there can be no environment—nothing by reference to which it could change. The difficulty is real, but it is not insuperable. Self-conscious beings are capable of changes purely from within. Man, as a spiritual or rational being, has within himself, and apart from all intercourse with his outer world, an experience on which he may reflect and resources on which he may draw. Spiritual experience sometimes discovers its own meaning and enriches it greatly by doing so. There is a transition from an experience that is traditional, imitative, uncritical, partly conscious and partly instinctive into an experience that is reflective. By this transition experience achieves fuller meaning, but it takes place without reference to any environment. Whether in this matter we can draw any inference regarding an absolute experience, it is difficult to say. In one aspect the transition is

Process of a whole, or from within.

plainly impossible; for we cannot attribute to an absolute experience the traditional character and that ignorance of itself which are characteristic of the ordinary human consciousness. The Absolute knows the end—were there an end!—from the beginning; and fuller knowledge thereof cannot be acquired. Nevertheless, one may ask, what is involved in the transition from the cognitive or intellectual foresight and anticipation of events, on the one side, to the experience of them, on the other, as actually taking place? The distinction is quite real; and there may be in the actual participation of the Absolute in finite processes, or of the God of Love in the doings and destiny of his children, more than there can be in the mere foresight of them. That participation cannot lack meaning and value, as we readily see if we conceive the opposite, namely, a God who sits aloof from the world-course and looks on.

A second difficulty is found in the fact that any process implies temporal succession; but an Absolute which is subject to temporal conditions, or which changes, is held to be a confused and self-contradictory conception. Such an Absolute would differ to-day from what it was yesterday and from what it will be to-morrow; and that, we are told, is impossible for the Whole, the perfect.

This difficulty, I believe, springs from taking a half truth as the whole truth. For that which changes also persists. Succession implies permanence, and it can take place only in that which has duration. It is a succession of instants or nows which issue from the same permanent reality. Time as *mere* succession is an aspect of a fact and nothing more, and can exist

Time and eternity are aspects of a process.

only in relation to its opposite, namely, eternity. But eternity, also, as ordinarily understood, is an unreal abstraction. For it is taken to be extended and fixed —stretched out endlessly, like space, before and also after the flux of time. But eternity is that which expresses itself in an endless succession of instants. It is the possibility of endless nows. And every now for the rational being, at least, carries within it something both of the past and of the future, and therefore "transcends" time. Eternity is not a spatial expanse, nor when we speak of God as living in eternity, or of our fellow mortals as entering therein, should we think of eternity as a fixed separate region. Eternity does not exist except as breaking out into an endless succession of Nows; and there is nothing except what is now. What was is not now: nor is what will be. Thus each successive Now is all comprehensive. The meaning and value of the past are gathered into it, and the possibilities of the future exist in it.

In a word, the Whole it is big with is in process. Reality reveals itself in a successive series of finite facts. By this I do not mean to imply that the succession constitutes the facts; or that, in the last resort, things consist of time, so that "time is the essence of the life of a living being and the whole meaning of its reality." It is one thing to say that everything that is moves or changes, and another that it consists of motion and change. Motion, change, taken by themselves are abstractions. They are not reality, but ways in which reality exists and behaves.

Concrete facts are not reducible into "time," although they are never at rest.

To say, for instance, as modern physics does, that a stone is not a fixed and static thing but a temporary

meeting-place of different activities is not to reduce it into a succession of movements of time, although all its activities take place in time. The weight of the stone is its active relation to the earth, an instance of attraction; its colour means that it reflects some rays and absorbs others; its hardness or softness indicate the amount of energy with which its particles attract each other. There is activity and therefore change at every turn, and change implies time though it is not itself time. Nothing is reducible into time. Time is itself, as I have insisted, an abstraction. We do not explain things by running them back into single, simple elements; we drop their qualities. To make time the essence of reality we must drop all qualities. Even change would not survive. Similarly, although process is real, process is not reality any more than a static condition is. But the consistent adoption of the idea of process, instead of the static and spatial conceptions now assumed, is possibly the deepest speculative need of our time. With it should be placed the conviction that explanation is to be found in the most concrete, and not in the most simple and abstract, conceptions. It is the whole that matters for knowledge; the function which each thing performs within the whole, the character it gains by its relation to it, these constitute its reality. And the whole itself must be regarded as functioning, declaring, and realizing itself in its elements. "To me," says Mr. Bradley, "as to every one else, the world is throughout full of change. Change is no illusion, although apart from that which persists in, through and by the change, it is nothing."

Philosophy must, I believe, change its accent.

Explanation in the light of the most concrete, not of what is most simple, that is, of self-consciousness.

That helplessness which a fixed and static perfection implies, that eternally immobile substance with which theology in the past has identified its perfect God must give way to the most concrete and active Whole which we can conceive. And that Whole is the conception of self-conscious individuality—the absolute self-consciousness. It is necessarily all-comprehensive, for it has no complete other; and it is essentially an outgoing activity. The conception of Absolute spirit or subject, gives to religion a God who is living, and to philosophy an Absolute that sustains the Universe and expresses its perfection in its changes. Spirit implies an objective content; and Absolute spirit implies the Universe. Hence to explain that Universe we need this most concrete of all our hypotheses, instead of such abstract notions as those of substance and time. It is by reference to a more and more comprehensive whole that we explain, and there alone should we seek the ultimately real—in a direction directly opposite to that of the Bergsonian philosophers, as I understand them.

Explanation by the more concrete, not by the more simple—by the idea of spirit and not to that of time.

It follows that the main problem of philosophy and the central concern for theology is the possibility of identifying the world-process as we know it with our conception of the Absolute or of God. And, I have indicated, both theologians and philosophers hesitate to do this, except under qualifying conditions and with reservations. There are, for them, in the world-process facts and events that are outwith the will of the Absolute. God has allowed them to be—possibly because he could not help it, being himself finite; possibly as the best means of securing the conditions necessary for the moral adventure.

The view that there are occurrences which God cannot prevent, or which happened without his willing them, implies, of course, that there exists another additional cause and that he is limited. On some theories, not only is his power limited, but his goodness. He is a finite being in the same sense as men are finite, though he has much more power than man, and is man's leader in the moral battle as well as his comrade in arms; and he has to become good. And the issue of that battle, so far from being a foregone conclusion, is quite uncertain. It depends upon our doing our best and playing our part, no less than upon him. And the uncertainty of victory is supposed to be capable of inspiring the fight with an earnestness which otherwise it could not have. Moreover, the view that God shares our infirmities is held to bring him nearer to us than the conception of a God eternally perfect; and it is maintained that it is impossible to maintain both the perfection of God and his genuine participation in the fate of mankind.

A finite God.

I intended to dismiss the view of a limited God as not worthy of serious criticism; but it may be well to point to one or two reasons for holding that it is unsatisfactory.

In the first place, it is not at all certain that the uncertainty of victory will add earnestness to the moral struggle, whatever it may do in others. If it does, it is at the cost of the purity of the moral motive, which never does consider or calculate consequences. Duty calls a man to his post, and he comes—without making any prudent calculations of probabilities beforehand. The religious man, moreover, has already committed himself to the good causes and

The stimulus of an uncertain victory is questionable.

made himself over to his God, holding nothing back; and the conception of the perfection of him in whom he has trusted, with the conviction of certain victory, are an inspiration to him. Never has its assurance slackened the zeal of the ethical or religious spirit.

In the next place, both religion and philosophy presuppose and demand a finality which is inconsistent with the limitations of finitude. The conception of the Absolute, or the hypothesis of systematic and all-comprehensive unity, or of a single focus in which all things meet, and which is the source from which all the forms of energy flow, is essential to a view which maintains that in the Universe, as we know it and try to know it, it is order and not chaos which rules. This is the presupposition on which all science rests, and, in fact, it stands at the background of all attempts at consecutive or sane thought. For why should thought be consistent or contradiction be a sign of error if facts are not in rational connexion? Pluralism, admitting "real indeterminations, real crises, catastrophes and escapes," might conclude to a finite deity, or a collection of such deities, if it could reliably conclude to anything. But that, of course, it cannot do. "Real indeterminations" may intervene at any point. If the Universe is one, the Absolute of philosophy is one, and so is the God of religion: if facts are not rationally related in a single system, reason is helpless.

All-knowing demands that reality be a rational system, and Pluralism should not pretend to draw any conclusions.

But other, and possibly better, reasons for hesitating to identify the world-process with the will of God have been offered. Contingencies have been admitted to enter here and there into the general scheme, as

A waste basket for contingencies.

being the best means of securing the conditions necessary for the moral life. God could have prevented them, but he has willed, so to speak, to turn his back and let them take place; he has assigned to contingency, and inconsequences, and irrationalism, and chaos, a domain in which to run amok. He has "let himself go into his opposite," as Hegel once suggested.

The realm of accident were thus another proof of his wisdom and goodness and power. But, I may ask, if it is purposed, is it a realm of accident? In any case these contingencies are confined to the moral region. Natural law permits none in the physical world. Natural laws are all admitted to be universal and absolute. But nature, it is held, brings no reliable support to man's ethical aims. The natural world, with its rewards and penalties, may support morality on the whole; but it does not do so in detail. Hence the moral life is a hazard, and hardship, and venture all the more real on account of the looseness of the relation between the natural and the spiritual world. Life, it is said, furnishes a better school for virtue, tests man's courage more ruthlessly, gives him a better opportunity for "showing what stuff he is made of," because of the contingencies which sweep over its surface like sudden storms. By stultifying his foresight, and by its disregard for the moral value of a man's deeds, nature teaches him not to trust in, or set high value on, anything except interests which are spiritual. The uncertainty and inconsequence, the extremity of the venture, turn in his hands into opportunities. He will cease to calculate consequences, and do what is

right for its own sake all the more readily, if consequences are mere contingencies.

That this apparent looseness of relation between the natural and the ethical spheres exists can hardly be denied. The facts must be acknowledged. While, on the whole, nature upholds purposes that are sane, and the more prosperous people turn out to be on the whole the more virtuous; while, in other words, to act reasonably is to respect the laws both of nature and of morality, nevertheless there are numberless examples of the direct collision of natural and moral good. By simply keeping silent the speculator might have made his fortune: that good cause has cost him his domestic comfort, his material prosperity, his health, or even his life—such are the things we are often told. And the conclusion drawn is that the natural scheme is non-moral.

Collision of natural advantage and moral goodness.

But to admit the apparent indifference and lack of all connexion is one thing—these are facts; to call them contingencies is another. The admission of contingencies plays such havoc with philosophic theory and religious faith, and the results of doing so are so stupendous that we are entitled to look round for some other way of accounting for the facts and overcoming the difficulties they raise.

The facts are there, but they are not contingent.

In the first place, then, it may be insisted that moral law is not less universal and necessary than natural law. Moral actions, as already suggested, have moral results which follow immediately and with absolute necessity. The dishonourable action makes the man dishonest on the *spot*. The result can neither be averted nor postponed. But we constantly confuse the issues, and look for *natural* results to follow in the

We should not expect moral causes to bring any results except those that are moral.

same way, so that a man suffers some natural punishment when he does wrong, as promptly as he burns his hand if he puts it in the fire. We would demand that he be made poorer in pocket, or in health, or in general esteem and influence, whereas it is the opposite that often happens. To every tree its own fruit. It is the natural antecedent that will bring the natural consequent, and it is moral causes that have moral effects—so far as our observation of the individual life can show. On the larger scale of national and human history, I admit that the dependence of natural events on spiritual antecedents becomes more plain. But we infer, all too hastily, from our observation of the individual life, that natural and moral facts are not connected, and that anything may happen. This border region between the natural and the moral is supposed to be the playground of contingencies. No one, not even the Absolute, takes charge of it.

But the difficulty may be of our own making. The error of affirming contingency may arise from the expectation of necessary connexion where none is required. We would not call it a contingency that an apple tree does not grow pears, or thistles, or grapes. The moral corruption which inevitably ensues upon moral wrong-doing, and, on the other hand, the inspiration and strength which come from the consciousness of right-doing may be in themselves adequate consequences. And that such is the case is an assumption on which morality rests, as I have already tried to show.

In the next place, I would observe that non-interference is one thing: contingency is another. It is

possible to conceive God, or the Absolute, supplying man with the conditions of the good life, and supporting him, in the sense that he is the inexhaustible reservoir of power to which man can turn when his strength is spent or his courage fails. We can say with certainty that there are three things with which man has not endowed himself: they are gifts, and gifts from a power which itself possessed them. These are (1) the spiritual powers, or the rational faculties, implying freedom amongst other qualities; (2) an ever-changing natural and social environment, by interaction with which he can realize his powers and learn to do what is right; (3) a desire for the Best, which corresponds in man to the law of self-preservation in animals, controlling every choice however deeply we blunder as to what is best, or however blind we are to the fact that the best is always ethical or spiritual in character. Except as the source of these gifts, the spring at which man may always slake his thirst, God may be conceived as standing aloof, and even as retaining his perfection when man blunders. On this view, there is a part which God fulfils and a part which man fulfils, even though the spiritual well-being of man is the aim of both, and although the will of man may be one with the will of God, in whose service he finds freedom. The deed, the use of his powers and his opportunities —except that these are given to him—are exclusively the individual's own. Neither God nor his fellow-man can take up his burden or appropriate the value of the opportunity. His will remains free and independent when it concurs and obeys, no less than when it revolts and disobeys. And if we have regard to this

Non-interference does not necessarily involve contingency: and the moral venture is man's.

Can God be perfect although man errs?

aspect only, we can represent the sphere in which he exercises his will as left to him.

Immortality as an extension of man's moral opportunity.

This line of argument offers a very alluring way out of the difficulty. But it is closed by the considerations which arise from the side of religion. It is intolerable to the religious spirit that God should stand aloof unaffected by the events of the moral world, as this view would imply. After all, God's gifts to man were not purposeless. They were the means of his spiritual well-being. And if that well-being is not secured, then in this matter God himself has failed. God's gifts in that case, it might be said, have proved scanty. Another environment, another set of circumstances by reference to which the individual could react, might have awakened his spiritual interests, and shown that the Best he was always seeking can be nothing but the moral best. He must have more and different opportunities. The demands of another station in another life, and possibly in another world, may be met by him and his soul saved thereby. And such another chance—the chance that immortality brings—will be given by a perfect God whose purposes must not come to naught. At any rate the alternative of the immortality of man's soul seems much more probable than that of the defeat of the purpose of the God of Love.

And in any case there are no events in the moral, any more than in the natural, region which we can justly call contingencies, unless we mean by that phrase, to characterize, not the event as itself having no cause or no constant antecedent, but our own ignorance. A man's deeds spring from his character. They are his way of meeting the wants he

believes he has discovered in himself: the results of his own self-interpretation. They have antecedents in him, and they have consequences upon him; and although owing to the complexity of human character we cannot foretell a man's volitions, still they depend on what he is and are not contingencies. The rigour and universality of law in matters of spirit are in no sense or degree less than they are in physical matters; and the admission of sheer accident would have analogous consequences. "If you are willing to be inconsistent," says Mr. Bradley, "you can never be refuted."[1] If by calling an event an accident or contingency, we mean simply that the causes of its occurrence were not anticipated or are not known, then we are dealing with a confession of ignorance which all of us can make every day of our lives. But the doctrine we have referred to implies more. It affirms that events do take place in incalculable ways. Their incalculability is the truth concerning them. We should err if we sought their cause, or assumed that they had any particular antecedent, or were determined by any specific conditions. The former attitude is consistent with the effort to acquire fuller knowledge. The latter stultifies every such effort, arrests and paralyses it at the first outset. For on that view, to know, that is, to discover the relation of a fact to reality as a whole, were to discover an illusion: it is presumed from the beginning that the event or fact *is* unrelated. That reality constitutes one system, that the system is all-inclusive, that within it all its parts have free play and full function, and that these parts or elements so agree as to be ration-

[1] *Truth and Reality*, p. 235.

ally coherent — this I have taken for granted all along.

I have not discussed the view that *realia* are particulars, that we begin with the many and must find the one, that the relation between the particulars, the unities, are really mental fabrications, that objects are independent, owing nothing to each other. All the forms of Pluralism I have set aside. The whole process of thinking, as illustrated most clearly, perhaps, in the natural sciences, begins and ends with the conception of unity in differences, that is, of system. There is no science, nor the promise of it, until there is a colligating hypothesis—as I have tried to show. Prior to that we have nothing but a collection of facts, which are more or less similar to one another. Sameness, on this view, is the only kind of universal that is conceived: and the idea of a principle which is active, breaks out into differences, gives to the elements within the whole their character and their function, is in truth not considered. For Idealism, on the other hand, this is the only type of principle which counts: and the same is true of the special sciences. They are founded upon hypotheses; they start from the assumption of a concrete system: their whole task is to apply that hypothesis, testing it by reference to particular facts, and seeking in it, at the same time, the real meaning of these facts.

The assumption of a systematic universe and the rejection of all forms of Pluralism.

It is evident that to one who occupies this point of view, whether as a philosopher or as a scientific man, the admission of contingencies, of even one sheer contingency, is disastrous. To do so is like breaking the string on which pearls are hung. It does not

Consequences of the assumption.

matter at what point or how many times the string is cut, there results the same chaos.

We cannot admit contingencies and retain the uses of reason. Philosophy and science become impossible, for at any point there may be an intrusion of that which negates their use. And it is questionable if religion will then survive at a less cost than that of admitting the finitude of God, and attributing to at least a portion of the world-process an irrational spontaneity. Events that are not cannot create themselves; nor can they come from nothing, having no antecedent. Is it not likely, seeing that no one ever discovered such events, and there is no science, philosophy, or religion which can consistently search for them, that we have no evidence that they exist?

The refuge in the idea of occurrences outwith the principle that manifests itself in the world-process cannot be justified by any ethical considerations. It is to seek shelter under the wings of what is irrational. Rather than seek such a way of escape, it were better to admit one's failure. Only, that course requires courage! There can be no doubt of the demands of reason or of philosophy. The Absolute leaves no room for its absolute "other," which a contingency would be. The Absolute is not at all, if it be not all-comprehensive: there is then no Universe, or the Universe is not a "single system," and philosophy and the sciences are out on an impossible mission.

But are we justified in the course which we have followed throughout these lectures? Have we a right thus to identify the Absolute of philosophy with the God of religion? I must try to answer this question in the next lecture.

LECTURE XVIII

GOD AND THE ABSOLUTE

I ENDED the last lecture with a question. I asked if we were justified in identifying the God of religion with the Absolute of philosophy, as has been done throughout our whole course. Is it true that our intellectual and our religious needs find satisfaction at the same ultimate source? Will the yearnings of "the heart" be stilled by the same conception of reality as that to which the frank and rigorous use of the methods of reason points? Or must we distinguish between God and the Absolute? God and the Absolute.

The same problem meets us in another form. What is the relation of Love and Reason, and what are their respective functions? It is generally assumed that religion is not less obviously an affair of the emotions than philosophy is of the intellect. A religion that leaves the worshipper cold and indifferent and self-centred fails just as hopelessly as the philosophy which does not satisfy the demands of reason. Emotion appears thus to have a place and function in religion which it does not claim, and which would not be readily conceded to it in a philosophical theory. This fact is usually overlooked by philosophers, and to do so is an error; for, although Love and Reason.

in the last resort the whole man is involved in all his moods and activities, the differences between these still remain. There are many different ways in which the spirit of man expresses itself, just as there are many different kinds of reality to which it is called to respond.

As to the relation of God and the Absolute, Mr. Bradley says quite roundly (as is his admirable way), "For me the Absolute is not God. God for me has no meaning outside of the religious consciousness, and that essentially is practical. The Absolute for me cannot be God, because in the end the Absolute is related to nothing, and there cannot be a practical relation between it and the finite will. When you begin to worship the Absolute or the Universe, and make it the object of religion, you in that moment have transformed it. It has become something forthwith which is less than the Universe."[1] There are thus two supreme beings—the Absolute which Mr. Bradley identifies with the Universe and with the reality to which speculative research leads; and God, who is something less than the Universe and everything to religion. The Absolute is related to nothing, and there cannot be a practical relation between it and the finite will. Nothing stands over against the Absolute. All that exists is part of its content. God, on the other hand, must stand in relation to my will. Religion is practical. There is a perfect will, and there is my will; and the practical relation of these wills is what we mean by religion. And yet, if perfection is realized, what becomes of my will, which is over against the complete Good Will?

[1] *Truth and Reality*, p. 428.

While, on the other hand, if there is no such Will, what becomes of God ?

Mr. Bradley refuses the escape offered by the idea of rejecting the Perfection of God, and, instead, accepts as final a fundamental contradiction in religion. Religion demands and at the same time rejects a perfect God. God's will expresses itself in the activity of man, and yet it must stand over against the will of finite beings. Mr. Bradley emphatically insists that the real presence of God's will in mine, our actual and literal satisfaction in common, must not in any case be denied or impaired. This is a religious truth, he adds, " far more essential than God's personality." But is it compatible with his personality ?

Mr. Bradley's affirmation of the personality, whether of God or man, is almost always hesitating and qualified; and he denies altogether the personality of the Absolute. He also speaks of the super-personal, a word to which I can attach no definite meaning at all. " A God that can say to himself ' I ' as against you and me, is not in my judgment defensible as the last and complete truth for Metaphysics." [1] " The highest Reality, so far as I see, must be super-personal." [2] It is on this matter of the significance of personality that I differ most deeply from Mr. Bradley—if I understand him correctly.

But I must first refer to another matter. Mr. Bradley denies that " Religion has to be consistent theoretically." If we seek consistency, we will be " driven to a limited God." But apparently we

[1] *Ibid.* p. 432. [2] *Ibid.* p. 436.

We must rest in contradictions as ultimate.

ought not to seek it. We should be content, so far as religion is concerned, with contradiction. He is convinced that there are "no absolute truths," and that "on the other side there are no mere errors. Subject to a further explanation, all truth and all error on my view may be called relative, and the difference between them in the end is one of degree." [1]

The defect of what we call truth arises from its incompleteness. Something is always left out by us. It is abstract; above all it omits its own opposite; and "with every truth there still remains some truth, however little, in its opposite." [2] "The idea that in the special sciences, and again in practical life, we have absolute truths, must be rejected as illusory. We are everywhere dependent on what may be called useful mythology, and nothing other than these inconsistent ideas could serve our various purposes. These ideas are false in the sense that they are not ultimately true. But they are true in the sense that all that is lacking to them is a greater or less extent of completion, which, the more true they are, would the less transform their present character. And, in proportion as the need to which they answer is wider and deeper, these ideas already have attained actual truth." [3]

It is not possible to deny that all our knowledge is incomplete. It is also, in the last resort, hypothetical. But it is another thing to admit that there is no difference between truth and error except a difference of "degree." True ideas, as Mr. Bradley admits in the last sentence I quote from him, answer to needs. That is to say, they fit into, are consistent with, find a place

[1] *Truth and Reality*, p. 252. [2] *Ibid.* p. 253. [3] *Ibid.* pp. 430-1.

within our conception of reality as a systematic whole. What we take for error refuses to do so. I admit that our conception of the system may be false, but I also affirm that although incomplete it may nevertheless be true. By incompleteness we mean simply that the elements which are its content are not fully known. In a word, the conception formed of the whole would be "general" and in that sense abstract. Our knowledge, as I have shown, rests on a hypothesis, and the hypothesis is always on its trial. Its incompleteness *is* incompleteness, and not error. Our knowledge does not misrepresent, although it omits.

Incompleteness is not error.

Understood in this way, the quest for consistency in our thought of religion, as in all our thinking, is not a matter of choice. We are always seeking consistency. We cannot rest in contradictions. But we can be content with opposites. We may hold that two truths may differ, and on that very account supplement and complete each other. Indeed, I am not convinced that we ever do reach the truth before we can state "both sides," and find that each of the opposites demands and exists in virtue of the other.

Opposition is not necessarily contradiction.

Religion amply illustrates this fact. Affirm nothing but the unity of the divine and human will, or, on the other hand, affirm nothing but their independence of each other, and religion becomes impossible. The truth is that the union of wills can take place only if they are independent. It is their concurrence that makes them one, and they cannot concur if either of them is not free. There are many ways of uniting and disuniting chemical elements; but nothing can unite wills except the adoption of the same purpose

Double aspect of reality illustrated in religion.

by free agents. And the adoption of a purpose is an affair of the individual as a separate being. Only wills that are free can truly unite. A society of slaves has very little coherence, and has at no period of the world's history been powerful for either good or evil.

Unity and individuality said to be contradictory to each other.

But the mutual inclusion of persons, that is, of self-conscious individuals, is, unless I err, possible in the opinion of Mr. Bradley only at the expense of their independence and individuality. In my opinion, on the other hand, their common life deepens their individuality, and strengthens them as independent persons. And here lies the central issue. The more a man is the voice of his times and people, and of what, at their best, they are striving to be, the greater he is as an individual. He is a more significant unit, because of the extent of the common elements. Mr. Bradley argues, quite correctly so far as I can see, that if we assume that "individual men, yourself and myself, are real each in his own right, to speak of God as having reality in the religious consciousness is nonsense."[1] That is to say, if men are separate individuals, then God must be still another separate individual, and the "indwelling" or "immanence" of God, which is essential to religion, cannot be. But Mr. Bradley goes on to prove that men are *not* independent individuals or separate beings. "The independent reality of the individual . . . is in truth mere illusion. Apart from the community, what are separate men? It is the common mind within him which gives reality to the human being: and taken by himself, whatever else he is, he is not human."[2]

[1] *Truth and Reality*, pp. 434-5. [2] *Ibid.*

Mr. Bradley on the unity of persons.

Then he proceeds further to enforce the truth which many years ago he stated in his *Ethical Studies* in a manner calculated to lift it beyond the reach of controversy. Even when an individual sets himself against society, it is on the resources of his society that he draws: he has not a shred that is exclusively his own. "When he opposes himself to the community it is still the whole which lives and moves in discord within him, for by himself he is an abstraction without life or force.[1] If this be true of the social consciousness in its various forms, it is true certainly no less of that common mind which is more than social. In art, in science and in religion, the individual by himself still remains an abstraction. The finite minds that in and for religion form one spiritual whole have indeed in the end no visible embodiment, and yet, except as members in an invisible community, they are nothing real. For religion, in short, if the one indwelling spirit is removed, there are no spirits left. "The Supreme Will for good which is experienced within finite minds is an obvious fact, and it is the doubt as to anything in the whole world being more actual than this, which seems most to call for enquiry."[1]

But that unity is impossible except by the exercise of individual functions.

I admit all this readily, and gratefully: I first learnt it from Mr. Bradley many years ago. But I cannot admit that the participation of individuals in common elements lessens either their independence or their individuality. Least of all when, as is evident, that participation is not possible except by the rational adoption of these common elements, that is to say, except by the exercise of powers which are intensely

[1] *Ibid.* p. 435.

individual. If my community is to live in me, *I* must interpret its meaning, *I* must adopt its traditions and creeds, *I* must make its ends my personal purposes. And every one of these activities is personal and, in a sense, private and exclusive. In this reaction the material offered by the community is recreated by me; and the reaction at once enriches the communal store, and exercises and develops my individual powers.

But this aspect of the truth is not recognized by Mr. Bradley, though, at times, he seems to accept both sides. "I cannot, for one thing," he says, "deny the relation in religion between God and finite minds, and how to make this relation external, or again to include it in God's personality, I do not know. The highest Reality, so far as I see, must be super-personal. At the same time, to many minds practical religion seems to call for the belief in God as a separate individual."[1] Mr. Bradley himself can accept this belief only if, in the first place, its practical value is clear, and, in the second place, if it is supplemented by other beliefs which really contradict it. And these beliefs, I must add, are most vital to religion. He then proceeds to indicate some of these beliefs. He shows how much the Universe would be impoverished if the Maker and Sustainer were not also the indwelling Life and Mind of the inspiring Love. But he cannot reconcile this "pantheism," as he calls it (which to me also is priceless), with a God who is personal and individual. "The so-called 'pantheism' which breathes through much of our poetry and art is no

Mr. Bradley's neglect of this truth and emphasis on the pantheistic aspect.

[1] *Truth and Reality*, p. 436.

less vitally implied in religious practice. Banish all that is meant by the indwelling Spirit of God in its harmony and discord with the finite soul, and what death and desolation has taken the place of living religion! But how this Spirit can be held consistently with an external individuality, is a problem which has defied solution."[1]

But; I would ask, is personality ever "external"; or is such a personality an unreal creation of our own, fashioned by taking account of only one aspect of a person, namely, the subjective? If personality means, as I take it, a rational subject conscious of itself and of its world as an object, then it does not stand in an external relation to anything whatsoever. Self-consciousness is essentially that which overpowers external relations. Man as a rational being goes out of himself, so to speak, so as to know and use objects (and there can exist nothing which is not potentially his object), but he always returns to himself enriched, for he brings back as a part of his own experience something of the meaning and use of the facts he has been dealing with. Not only so: there is nothing save self-consciousness which does overcome external relations. It alone achieves unity in difference. Self-consciousness is one with itself only through its relation to objects; for a subject that has no object, that does not say "I" as over against something else, is not possible. In denying personality, or self-consciousness to the Absolute, Mr. Bradley is thus permitting external relations to be final; and his Universe is in no sense a unity. Its differences cannot be made to come together. Everything within it holds every-

Only in self-consciousness is unity achieved through difference.

[1] *Ibid.* p. 437.

thing else at arm's length. The ultimate relation between its elements is negative; and the Universe is, at best, a mere collection of particulars.

To arrive at the truth of this matter we must restore to self-consciousness all its functions. In order to do so it is not necessary to reduce the debt of the individual man to his community, or his dependence upon it for the living experience which enters into his powers; nor is it necessary to impoverish the Universe by denying the pantheistic conceptions which are implied in the "indwelling spirit of God." Every word said by Mr. Bradley on this aspect of the ultimate reality seems to me to be true; but not less true is that activity of the self-conscious being by which alone he converts his world into his own experience and establishes his "separate" individuality. It seems to me obvious that an Absolute which was not a person, that is, not a self-conscious individual, could not be immanent in a world of objects, or reveal itself in its processes.

Hence the Absolute must be a person.

Now, these two aspects seemed to Mr. Bradley to be not only opposites but contradictory, and therefore could not be reconciled or even held simultaneously Their co-existence, as a matter of fact, was a matter of which the intelligence could make nothing. "The immanence of the Absolute in finite centres and of finite centres in the Absolute, I have always set down," he says, "as inexplicable." He cannot maintain the personality both of the Absolute and of man, or recognize them as complementary; so he denies both alike.

Opposites may be complementary to each other.

Now, what I would wish to make clear is that the mutual indwelling, or possession, is the condition of

spiritual existence, and of rational personality. It is illustrated, and practically explained, by the many ways in which the mutual participation takes place. The more a man enters the life of others, the richer his own life. His uniqueness or difference from others is the greater, the more he adopts and enlarges and carries out the ends of their common giver. Every deepening of unity in difference exemplifies the process. Science is quite familiar with the fact that "integration and differentiation" go together, and are double aspects of one and the same process. The growth of learning, or of spiritual power of any other kind, shows the operation of the same tendency. As a man grows in wisdom, experience becomes at once more consistent and more wide of range.

"Either-or" implies system.

Of course the fact is unintelligible if the "either-or" attitude of thought is final. But it is not. "Either-or" plainly implies "system." That each points beyond itself is proved by the fact that each needs its opposite and exists only in virtue of it. Were it not for its relation to man, the Absolute were not Absolute, and *vice versa*. The Absolute realizes itself in finite centres; and more fully in that finite centres are spiritual, and that man is man only in virtue of the indwelling of his God. The religious spirit is awakened whenever it apprehends this truth. It then seeks its own realization through obedience to God's will.

Whenever we have such mutual implication on the part of opposites, we are, in truth, dealing with system, *i.e.* with a unity that has neither reality nor meaning except in the different elements, and

with differences that are intelligible only when considered in their place in the system. And if we only follow our thoughts out, we shall find that in the end everyone of our ideas is a system. Every sentence is a system, every proof, every theory, every rational statement; and so is every fact. Rational experience on the one side, and the Universe on the other, is a system of systems. The relation of finite centres to the Absolute is but the supreme example of a fact which is universal.

Significant consequences of this view.

The importance of this result is great. It means that philosophy, instead of finding in religion a self-contradictory and unintelligible fact, discovers that religion attains, as at a leap, the results which it itself seeks by toilsome methods. The intelligence is always, if its work is prospering, finding some deeper unity amongst wider elements, or new qualities and features in the unity. Here in the object of religion the unity is *all*-comprehensive, and within it *all* differences are, in the last resort, harmonized. Religion teaches the apparently impossible maxim—"If you would save your life, lose it." "Give yourself if you desire to find yourself." "Live! live the full and the best life. Attain an altitude where it is not you that lives but God lives and works in you." But philosophy by means of its conception of an ever self-differentiating Absolute sustains the religious consciousness. It shows that religion so far from differing from, or contradicting, ordinary rational experience is continuous with that experience, and differs from it only in that it is more complete and perfect. It is a very great matter for religion thus to gain the support of the enquiring

intellect, and it is a great matter for philosophy that its enquiries, in the degree in which they are sincere and thorough, support the religious view. The theoretical attitude then supports the practical attitude of man towards the Universe, and he thereby attains the deepest peace and the greatest spiritual good.

" God," says Mr. Bradley, " for me has no meaning outside of the religious consciousness, and that essentially is practical."[1] And, apparently, theoretical inconsistency is of comparatively small consequence in religion. All that matters is that its tenets should prove practical. " To insist on ultimate theoretical consistency . . . becomes once for all ridiculous."[2]

Practical and theoretical.

I admit the difference of the theoretical and practical, though as a matter of fact they are both practical or purposive, as I have already shown. But I cannot admit that what is theoretically unsatisfactory can be practically effective. We cannot act on ideas which we have detected to be mutually destructive. And if the last word which theory or philosophy can say of religion is that it is inconsistent, then religion is left impotent for all practical good.

The difference of the religious from the philosophic attitude.

No doubt the distinction between the religious attitude and the philosophic is real. Religion like other practical interests (of which it is supreme) is confronted with its fundamental presuppositions only occasionally; while the philosopher, so to speak, is always fighting with his back to the wall and dealing with ultimate issues. In this sense a man's God is rarely absolute or all-comprehensive, one with the nature of things, or the ultimate living reality which expresses itself in the ever-changing universe. God is

[1] *Truth and Reality*, p. 428. [2] *Ibid.* p. 431.

man's immediate help: in him is satisfied the need which happens to be urgent and imperative. He is man's leader in battle; or the judge between him and his enemies, or his instrument of revenge. Is the punishment of the powerful enemy the primary need? Then he calls his God forward. "Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell. . . . As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me."[1] God is at first the creation of the present passion—as we have seen; and it is only little by little, in the course of centuries, that he comes to represent the interests that are universal, and to comprise within himself *all* the conditions of well-being. Inconsistency in rudimentary religion is thus, in truth, of little moment; but as the religious consciousness develops, the demand that its God shall be perfect in every way, infinite both in power and in goodness, becomes more and more imperious. The religion of the future cannot afford to be inconsistent. It must justify itself at the bar of reason, and prove that it has its place within "the universal system," and a function of its own, if it is to maintain its hold of the practical life of mankind.

This demand for absolute perfection which an enlightened religion makes is met in Christianity by the conception of a God of Love who is also omnipotent. In him all spiritual and natural perfections meet. He is, in fact, the same being as the "Absolute" of the philosopher. And both philosophy and religion would gain by recognizing this fact. But the Perfect Being whose attributes satisfy the intelligence has had comparatively little place in our religious

[1] Psalm lv. 15, 16.

creeds; and the philosopher on his part, in contemplating religion, has made little count of love, or of any other sentiment or emotion. One reason for this fact is the misuse made of love by religious apologists. They have made feeling bear testimony to the truth of their religious beliefs. But to act as a witness is not the function of feeling. No judge, if he can help it, will give it a place either in the witness box or on the bench. He will not acquit or condemn a man because a witness *feels* that he has, or has not, stolen the article. And feeling, whether it be love or hate, can no more testify to the truth in religious matters than in secular. On the contrary, it distorts, blinds, renders even the truthful man untrustworthy. Love can find every perfection where sober sight sees little but defects. It can arise from or attach itself to the most undeserving object. And the history of religion gives ample evidence that mankind has reverenced, worshipped, adored and loved all kinds of unworthy gods.

Nevertheless love has its own place and part to fill, and a most significant function in religion; and I am inclined to think that philosophers have overlooked this fact. Neither the intelligence nor aught else can discharge that function. We would recognize at once the cold, forbidding character of a domestic hearth where everyone completely understood everyone else, but had neither love nor liking for him. It were the same in religion. Even had man that complete comprehension of his God, or of the Absolute which philosophy seeks, and the full splendour of the divine nature could break upon him, unless there were love, the attitude of man towards his God would not

be religious. Men may know their God and fear him; instead of seeking him, they may wish to flee and hide from him. But they cannot worship a "loveless God." They recognize that "a loving worm within its clod" were diviner than such a deity. For love is one of those facts which has ultimate and absolute and unborrowed value. Man may obey the divine commands from a sense of duty, as demands made by an autocratic will; and God might care for the creatures he has called into being, from a sense of justice. But religion does not come in till love enters and rules.

Now I am disposed to think that it is only on one condition that philosophy can conclude that God is love. It has to find operation of love amongst its data. And it must look to religion; for *this* datum is supplied most unambiguously by the religious consciousness. There love is simply all in all.

Let me illustrate. So long as natural science in its theological enterprises omitted to take any account of man it could not hope to find a God who was spiritual. Inert or dead matter, the crudest form which reality could take, was made the ultimate cause and origin of all objects. But when nature was found to imply a human or spiritual result as its own ultimate achievement, then it had to be newly construed, and a better idea of God, or of the first cause, than dead matter had to be found. Speculation started from fresh data. Amongst the premisses from which religious conclusions were drawn, henceforth, were the spiritual capacities and experience of mankind.

To-day, both religion and experience enrich still further the data of the philosopher. By observation

of that experience he discovers for the first time the function of love in uniting God and man. Only where love rules does the unity of persons attain fulness, and the difference of "you and me" disappear, so that the humblest devout man can say "I and the Father are one."

But, on this matter of the power and place of love in man's religious and secular life, I am tempted to turn to the poets, and above all to Browning, who, as a poet of love in all its sublimer forms, stands alone.

Browning as a philosophical and religious teacher.

In endeavouring to estimate the value of his teaching, I have asked "What, then, is the principle of unity between the divine and the human? How can we interpret the life of man as God's life in man, so that man, in attaining the moral ideal proper to his own nature, is at the same time fulfilling ends which may justly be called divine?"

The poet, in early life and in late life alike, has one answer to this question—an answer given with the confidence of complete conviction. The meeting-point of God and man is love. Love, in other words, is, for the poet, the supreme principle both of morality and religion. Love, once for all, solves that contradiction between them which, both in theory and in practice, has embarrassed the world for so many ages. Love is the sublimest conception attainable by man; a life inspired by it is the most perfect form of goodness he can conceive; therefore, love is, at the same moment, man's moral ideal and the very essence of Godhood. A life actuated by love is divine, whatever other limitations it may have. Such is the perfection and glory of this emotion, when it has been translated into a conscious motive and become the energy of an

intelligent will, that it lifts him who owns it to the sublimest height of being.

> " For the loving worm within its clod,
> Were diviner than a loveless god
> Amid his worlds, I will dare to say." [1]

So excellent is this emotion that, if man, who has this power to love, did not find the same power in God, then man would excel him, and the creature and Creator change parts.

> " Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,
> That I doubt his own love can compete with it? Here, the parts shift?
> Here, the creature surpass the Creator,—the end what Began?" [2]

Not so, says David, and with him no doubt the poet himself. God is himself the source and fulness of love.

> " 'Tis thou, God, that givest, 'tis I who receive:
> In the first is the last, in thy will is my power to believe,
> All's one gift.
> . . . . . .
> Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst thou,—so wilt thou!
> So shall crown thee, the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost crown—
> And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor down
> One spot for the creature to stand in!" [3]

And this same love not only constitutes the nature of God and the moral ideal of man, but it is also the purpose and essence of all created being, both animate and inanimate.

> " This world's no blot for us,
> Nor blank; it means intensely, and means good." [4]

[1] " Christmas Eve."
[2] " Saul."
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] " Fra Lippo Lippi."

'O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:
And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
What further may be sought for or declared?" [1]

In this world then "all's love, yet all's law." God permits nothing to break through its universal sway, even the very wickedness and misery of life are brought into the scheme of good, and, when rightly understood, reveal themselves as its means.

"I can believe this dread machinery
Of sin and sorrow, would confound me else,
Devised,—all pain, at most expenditure
Of pain by Who devised pain,—to evolve,
By new machinery in counterpart,
The moral qualities of man—how else?—
To make him love in turn and be beloved,
Creative and self-sacrificing too,
And thus eventually Godlike." [2]

The poet thus brings the natural world, the history of man, and the nature of God within the limits of the same conception. The idea of love solves for Browning all the enigmas of human life and thought.

"The thing that seems
Mere misery, under human schemes,
Becomes, regarded by the light
Of love, as very near, or quite
As good a gift as joy before." [3]

Love thus played in Browning's philosophy of life the part that Reason filled in Hegel's or the blind-will in Schopenhauer's. He reduces everything into ways in which this principle acts. And it widens the outlook of the poet beyond the things of space and time

[1] "The Guardian Angel."
[2] "The Ring and the Book—The Pope," 1375-1383.
[3] "Easter Day."

and this life. Love not only gave him firm footing amidst the waste and welter of the present world where "time spins fast, life fleets, and all is change"; but it made him look forward with joy to the immortal course. The facts of eternity, no less than those of time, are love-woven.

So far as I can see, the demand of philosophy, placed at its highest, is thus met by a religion whose God is a God of Love.

LECTURE XIX

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

We assume that reason is the most fundamental principle in our theoretical life. If there is not rational connexion between facts and if the relations between them are not discoverable by the methods of reason, then the whole region of the real would be for us chaotic. We could draw no conclusion; no practical maxim would be reliable. Man would be helpless in a tumble-down universe.

Can it be that Love on the practical side of life fulfils a similar function? Neglecting for a moment the fact that spiritual forces imply each other in such a way that any one of them may be conceived as containing the rest, would a loveless world be more possible or desirable than an irrational one?

The spiritual function of Love.

Assuming, as is often done, that "reason is cold" —either passionless as Hume thought, or the antagonist of all passion and desire as Kant thought, could men live together in such a loveless relation? That is to say, would social life and all it brings be possible? And again, would religion be possible? Would the dedication of the self to the best, and the worship and service of it take place, where no love crowned the object with worth?

Both answers must be negative. Love is no less a condition of right or rational practice than Reason is; and when Hegel passed from the former to the latter there was no fundamental change of outlook.

And, of course, reason includes love and love at its best includes reason. To act in the most rational way towards our neighbour is certainly to behave in the spirit of love. Every service if it proceeds from Love gains thoroughness, and value, and beauty. There are few if any circumstances in which the loving attitude is not the most reasonable and practically effective.

But accentuate their affinity as we may, the speculative attitude and the religious remain different. They are rarely both occupied at the same time. The temper of mind which doubts and tests and reasons for and against a doctrine differs fundamentally from that which trusts, adores, loves and worships.

The combination of Love and Reason.

When doubt comes, as it does upon all reflective minds, there follows, or ought to follow, an appeal to reason. And if the frank use of the methods of reason support the faith then there is great peace.

There are few attitudes of the spirit more worth striving for than that which is inspired and guided by a religious faith, that is itself, in turn, supported and ratified by our interpretation of the ultimate meaning of the finite facts of the world in which we live.

How far have we achieved this purpose?

What are the results of our enquiry?

At first sight these results appear to be pitifully meagre, even if our conclusions follow by a sound process from sound premisses.

In the first place, *all* our conclusions are *hypothetical*, and, as we have seen, to treat a religious faith as if it were a hypothesis repels many good people, philosophers among them.

But when the function of hypotheses in our practical and cognitive life is more closely considered there is less dissatisfaction. For *all* our knowledge is found to be hypothetical, being incomplete; and we cannot reject all knowledge. That were a self-stultifying attitude, as absolute scepticism always is.

In the next place, let me remind you, our hypotheses are, in every department, our ultimate explanatory conceptions. Only in their light are facts intelligible. Knowledge does not arrive at completeness either of content or certainty. "We are made to grow." It satisfies, however, if we have succeeded in establishing some universal hypothesis, and tracing its presence in every detailed fact that comes under it.

Our results are hypothetical, but nevertheless convincing.

And if it be true that the sanest explanation hitherto offered of the facts and events of our finite life is that which refers them ultimately to the operation of the Absolute of Philosophy or the God of Religion, then religious faith is so far ratified. No stronger kind of proof than this can be offered in any science.

If, again, the practice of religion, the religious life, brings new reasons for the faith; if spiritual facts, in other words, prove more and more that they are their own sufficient justification, then the sense of the truth of religion grows, and has a right to grow. Practice brings new tests, and nothing explains the nature of a thing or its value so fully as its activities. Pragmatism is quite right in accentuating test and trial; its error is to leave out the intelligence which draws the con-

clusions: and religion indubitably sustains the pragmatic tests.

Except in one matter.

If I could say that our enquiry had resulted in placing religious faith on this basis, *i.e.* on the *same* basis as the colligating conceptions which the scientific man calls his hypotheses, I should be more than satisfied. But I must be frank and confess that I have achieved nothing so convincing.

You may remember the emphasis that was thrown upon the difference between not-proven and disproved; and the sharp distinction we drew between the instances in which a law of nature or a hypothesis had not as yet been traced, and the instances in which it had been proved to fail, being directly contradicted by a relevant fact?

In the latter case the scientific man at once gives up his hypothesis, and fumbles about for some other: for until he finds one he is helpless amidst a chaotic collection of enigmata.

Our hypothesis apparently disproved by failed lives.

Now, it seems to me that the central hypothesis of a philosophy of religion, the vital article in an enlightened religious creed, is thus challenged by facts which we have all observed and which are not reconcilable with it—except on one condition.

The central article to which I refer is the faith in the omnipotence and limitless love of God—the spiritual perfection of the Absolute. The fact which contradicts this faith—a fact which an honest and fearless intelligence will not try to deny—is the ultimate failure of some human lives, and, therefore, in these instances, of God's goodness or power. We follow certain lives to the end of their career, and at the side of the grave we turn away our thoughts from

the contemplation of them, knowing they were a blunder and tragedy. The ethical enterprise which human life is supposed to be had come to what is worse than nothing. All would be well if, like some writers, we could be satisfied with a God who, while not caring for the individual, cared for the species; or with a general triumph of the good. The conception of a God whose goodness or power, or both, is limited might also satisfy. But we have rejected these facile solutions of the difficulties. No scientific spirit could be satisfied with them. On the contrary, the scientific man would affirm that *one* genuine failure of the good, in any one single life, deprives us of the right to be convinced of the divine perfection which we deem to be essential to religion.

The sceptical inference is undoubtedly sound. That is to say, the premisses can yield no other conclusion to honest thought. But, on the other hand, the premisses from which the inference proceeds may be insecure, unreliable, incomplete, or even false. Let us examine them.

But our information is incomplete.

In the first place, our knowledge of *any* particular object is confessedly incomplete; and this is especially true of the exceedingly complex object we call man. The life we have condemned as a failure may not have been a failure. Our view of the individual may have been wrong. In the next place, the life-process we have witnessed and from which we drew our conclusion may have been incomplete. It may have been stopped in mid-course. We have no more right to assume that death *ends* matters than to assert the opposite. *We do not know what takes place at death.* We cannot tell whether or not death is more than a temporary sleep; and we can draw *no* conclusion,

either sceptical or otherwise, in such circumstances. Death is manifestly a part of, and has a place in, the scheme of things. As such it is capable of a rational explanation, but that explanation has not been found as yet. There is nothing more obscure within the whole psychological region than the relation of the soul and body, and the dissolution of that relation. There are many theories, and every one of them is more or less probable. For instance, it would appear that when a physical organism achieves a certain complexity of structure it performs the activities usually attributed to spirit or soul. On the other hand, the exact opposite may seem to be true, namely, that only in spirit or soul does the body acquire any meaning, and only in virtue of that 'end' does it exist at all. Such was Aristotle's view. "The soul was the first perfect realization of a natural body possessed potentially of life."[1] The ordinary psychologist restrains himself, and propounds no theory of the relation of soul and body. There are two series of phenomena, he tells us, which, so far as we can observe, are independent; and yet they have a concurrence that suggests intimate connexion. I, for my part, have affirmed that the distinction between soul and body, or nature and spirit, by no means amounts to their independence of each other. The idea of an unbroken evolution, according to which mind, too, is a natural product, precludes such a view. Moreover, the impotence and meaninglessness of both man and his world when held apart, suggests a unity within their difference.

The failure of Psychology to give help.

Amidst such a variety of opinions it seems to be impossible either to affirm or to deny the immortality

[1] Edwin Wallace's *Aristotle's Psychology*.

of the soul on psychological grounds. The future may reveal that which, in its very nature, necessarily conquers death; but that discovery has not been made as yet.

And of Biology.

The biologist is not much less helpless than the psychologist. To all appearance the death of an animal is its end. It has been all along, as an individual animal, less the care of nature than the species is; and even the species may disappear. Is nature careful even of the type? On the other hand, the biologist affirms the unbroken continuity of every kind of life. The life that is in the oak of to-day—the *same* life—was in the first oak that ever grew on the cooling earth. There has never been a single break, or gap, or need of the recreative act which a new beginning demands.

Natural facts that suggest victory over death.

Have we here a hint, within the natural region, of something that masters death? Can death be merely a recurrent incident in the history of a plant or animal? That it has a place of its own in the scheme of things is undeniable, as Hegel said; and it follows that it has significance only in virtue of its part and function within that scheme. Death contributes somehow to its perfection. How?

There is another natural feature which seems to suggest the same positive conclusion as to immortality, namely, the cumulative character of the life-process. The history of spirit, whether in its theoretical or practical activities, shows this fact quite clearly. The past does not vanish. It is preserved. Knowledge, experience, character grow, and growth implies this conversion of the past into an active element of the present. There is no way of accounting for the

growth of human civilization if the process of living has not this cumulative character.

Now, so far as I can see, this fact would become practically meaningless if death ended all. Death, whenever it came, would set the process at nought: and death may come at any moment. Its coming is the *only* certain thing in man's life; but the *when* and *how* of its coming are the most uncertain. The "cumulative process" and every other human interest gives it no pause. It takes the babe from its mother before the process has begun; or the mother from the babe who is left without her care. The strong man is called, the feeble is left: the man of wide uses, and social sympathies and services, is summoned, his useless neighbour is left to cumber the ground till old age brings its imbecilities. Can such an apparently lawless event as death have the importance that would accrue to that which puts a final end to the soul's enterprise? It seems to me to be much more natural to conclude that death is, in truth, a very insignificant event, seeing that its "when" and "how" of coming count for so little.

Nature changes objects, but does not annul.

The fact is that nature does not destroy and demolish. It *changes*. The probability is strong that nothing is ever finally lost. Physics will not admit the abolition of any form of energy: its task consists of watching its transmutations. But what waste would compare with that which death would bring, were death equivalent to extinction! The whole purpose of man's life, as we have described it, would be set at nought and spiritual ends placed at the mercy of the most incalculable of natural events. Is it not far more likely that death is a pause than a break—at least

in the case of man? For man's case is not like that of any other animal: he is self-conscious, and self-consciousness brings rights. Man has *a right* to the conditions which make for his well-being, if, indeed, the rule of the world is in God's hands; and extinction at death would sometimes violate, and at other times greatly limit that right. Man's self-consciousness, and his claim to the conditions of moral well-being, have a final claim, which cannot be over-ridden by death.

Before I return to the main issue I may mention that the continued existence of man after death has been held to imply his existence previous to the present life. This does not seem to me to follow. Until we arrive at the conception of a self-conscious being, we do not discover that whose worth lies in itself, and which has intrinsic rights. Other beings may be used as means to something other than themselves; but a self-conscious being is never reducible to such a condition. Now self-consciousness, we concluded, was the result of a long evolutionary process, and so, likewise, are the rights and claims which self-consciousness brings with it. Amongst these is the right to immortality. For being in himself an end, the scheme of things must continue to serve him, and not overwhelm or destroy him. He must not be at the mercy of death, or of any other external power.

A previous life not proven.

Notwithstanding these considerations, all of which point in the same direction, I am not prepared to maintain that the observation of man's present life in this world furnishes adequate premisses for either the affirmation or the denial of man's immortality. Not that the balance between the two possibilities is even. For there are no premisses at all from which denial

can justly issue. There cannot be any negative evidence: there is only silence. On the other hand, the extension of life beyond natural death seems congruous with the natural scheme, instead of being, like extinction, sheer waste of achieved results. When we know more of the nature of the soul, or spirit, or mind, and of their relation to the body, we may discover grounds in present facts for a more confident conclusion. At present we must look in another direction than that of the merely natural scheme.

Spiritualism put on the rubbish-heap.

I need hardly say that I am not inviting you to consider the evidence which Spiritualists offer. Perceptual knowledge of those who have passed away in death is not given to us, nor, I believe, is it capable of being acquired. My faith in Spiritualism, in all its forms, is too weak to permit me even to examine them. With your permission, I will fling Spiritualism, so far as these lectures are concerned, upon my rubbish-heap.

The argument must depend on man's nature.

The grounds to which I refer as possibly offering premisses for reliable conclusions are all moral, or spiritual—if you like, you may call them religious. They are furnished by man's nature, though by no means necessarily by his desires. Royce finds within our finite personalities an insatiable divine discontent which calls for and implies satisfaction. Surely mere discontent can constitute no claim. It must be some positive element that can imply the satisfaction. I do not think that the Universe exists in order to make man contented. For that purpose all that is necessary would be to extinguish his ideals, and turn him back into a ruminant. Man's rights spring neither from his discontent nor from his desires. They arise from his

intrinsic nature, the final purpose of his life and of his world—namely, moral progress. That is the conception which we have throughout made our standard of values and the source of rights. And here we come upon the crowning use of it. It means that man is immortal *if* immortality is a condition of the fulfilment of the purpose of God, as expressed in man's moral life and the world-process.

Not merely on his desires.

The ground of immortality does not lie in our desires. I do not think that our desires are consulted. "What appeals to me," says Mr. Bradley, "... is the demand of personal affection, the wish that, where a few creatures love one another, nothing whether before or after death should be changed. But how can I insist that such a demand (whatever one may dare to fondly hope or dream) is endorsed by religion?"[1] I do not think that religion does endorse it. Not that it is a small matter to disappoint the yearnings of love; but that love itself, if it be not love of God, is not the spring from which necessities flow.

Religion needs immortality.

I do not think that natural affection, desire, or friendship count, except as elements in a moral system. Religion *does* demand the fulfilment of the conditions of a good life; and I am inclined to think that the immortality of the soul is one of these conditions. Otherwise, as Mr. Bradley says, "mere personal survival and continuance has in itself nothing to do with true religion. A man can be as irreligious (for anything at least that I know) in a hundred lives as in one."[2]

But the continuance of life, or rather its repetition, gains importance in that the hundred lives offer a

[1] *Truth and Reality*, p. 439. [2] *Ibid.* 440.

hundred opportunities of learning to adopt the good as the law of conduct. Immortality extends man's spiritual chances, as I understand them. Some time, some where, in some life, under some new circumstances and conditions, the soul, one would say, will awake and apprehend its true nature and destiny. For my assumption is, that the intercourse between man and his world will have a character on the other side of death similar to that which it has on this side. Such seems to be the demand of a moral universe.

Morality does not depend on it.

There is an ethical sense in which the immortality of the soul loses all importance. The possibility of endless existence ought in no wise to affect our personal conduct in the present. It does not enhance the obligatoriness of duty if there is life beyond life in an endless series, nor loosen it if, when death comes, we cease to exist. Morality does not depend upon the immortality of the soul: but religion does.

I do not deny that many truly religious men doubt or even deny the immortality of the soul. The problem of immortality stands apart from those of religious faith. But this result comes from the incoherence of such religious experiences. They have not been carefully scrutinized. Otherwise it would be evident that the belief in a God whose goodness and power are unlimited, which we have deemed to be essential to religion, is not possible *unless* the soul be immortal. A single life given to man would not exhaust the resources of infinite goodness. There must be "life after life, in endless series."

Logical evidence: our poets contemn it.

"Everything finite," says Mr. Bradley, "is subject in principle to chance and change and to dissolution of its self. But from this it does not follow that finite

beings are unable to endure, as themselves, for an indefinite time. And in the end the argument that we are finished when our bodies have decayed, seems to possess but a small degree of logical evidence." [1] Many thinkers would say that it possesses none; and that it is none the worse for the absence of logical evidence. Their belief in immortality does not rest on logic, they tell us. The future life is a matter of faith. The first thing, for instance, that impresses the student of Tennyson and Browning is the fulness of their belief in the immortality of the soul. If they ever did doubt its truth—which is very questionable—doubt only "shook the torpor of assurance from their creed": it left the belief itself more strong and fixed. Tennyson's view regarding the state of the soul after death changed at different times. Browning emphatically set aside both the final woe and the final extinction of the wicked. Neither could Tennyson adopt the belief that any soul would in the end be excluded from the love of God. But their faith in a future life never wavered or weakened, nor did their conviction that it was in spite of reason, rather than by favour of reason, that it could be held.

Man is not merely finite.

Let us examine these attitudes. Finite beings, thinks Mr. Bradley, may be able to endure, as themselves, for an indefinite time. But is man adequately described as a "*finite*" being? Have we not found that self-consciousness implies what is more than finite? Does it not signify what is self-determined, and what, therefore, is not at the mercy of anything save itself? Mr. Bradley ought not to debate this question on finite grounds.

[1] *Truth and Reality*, p. 467.

I need not say that he shows no tendency to rely on anything except logical evidence; and the logical evidence *against* immortality he finds to be very weak. In this respect he is at the opposite pole from the poets. They believe that logical evidence goes for nothing.[1]

Experience is, in fact, our logical evidence and everyone uses it.

So it does, if what is meant is the *conscious* use of logical methods. But supposing that reasoning is such as we have described—the bringing to bear of the experience of the past upon the facts of the present? If our view is valid their faith *had* its premisses: these premisses were the results of intellectual and more or less correct judgments: and judgments are, one and all, the results of a logical process. The poets had discovered that the grounds of their faith were hypothetical; but they had not discovered, nor even asked, what are the nature and significance of hypotheses. They were not aware that our hypotheses are, in the last resort, not merely the foundations of our knowledge, but "the light of all our seeing."

The final proof of any fact is by negation.

It is not usually realized that the final proof of any fact is negative in character. An object is proved real, an idea is proved true, when the denial of it brings consequences which are recognized as too insane to be entertained. Argument at that juncture closes; the critic is silenced.

I admit that the test is not perfect or complete, for, after all, it is employed by a fallible intelligence. But all the same it is the final test, and remains final, whether used or mis-used by the individual.

The question we have thus to ask is: "Does the denial of the immortality of the soul imply such an

[1] See the writer's *Immortality of the Soul in Tennyson and Browning.*

insane consequence?" We have already answered it. It is not possible to maintain the limitless love and power of God if the soul be not immortal. There are men, so far as we can see, who die in their sins. If death ends all, then their lives can be called nothing but failures. These persons have missed what is best; they have not used the opportunities of life to build up a good character. The failure of their lives is, so far as they are concerned, the failure of God's purpose. It was not benevolent, or it was not strong enough, to secure their well-being. The imperfection of God implies a breach of purpose, and therefore, of order, somewhere in his Universe. Sheer unreason has found an entry. It is not possible any longer to set out from the hypothesis on which everything depended for us—namely, that the world-process, of which man is a part, is ethical in character, and the expression of the sovereign will of a perfect Being.

The line of argument.

And what of those individuals who have not missed the purpose of their present life—but, as we would hold, have all their lives morally "attained"? Is the result of their strivings, failures and successes to go for nothing when death comes? To affirm this, it seems to me, is impossible except to those who have not learnt to value spiritual achievement.

What remains for him who thus gives up the ethical character and the universal ideal of the cosmos? We have only to ask the question to perceive that he who gives these things up, gives up the conditions under which his rational faculties can be of use. And the answer of the believer to the unbeliever is overwhelming: denial of the immortality of the soul implies absolute Scepticism.

No stronger proof of immortality possible.

No stronger proof of immortality is either possible or necessary than that which shows that it is a necessary condition of an orderly universe. The two hypotheses support each other. The truth of each of them, taken by itself, is probable: its truth by relation to its complement is irrefragable.

God is. God is perfect. His lovingkindness and power are unlimited; and his greatest gift to man is the gift of the power, tendency and opportunity to learn goodness. God's goodness being unlimited, the opportunity not made use of by man in the present life is renewed for him in another life, and in still another; till, at last, his spirit finds rest in the service of the God of Love. For my part, I wish for no stronger proof of the permanence of the spiritual process, and I ought not to care for aught beside: that supreme good involves every good.

LECTURE XX

THE RESULTS OF OUR ENQUIRY

I HAVE come to the conclusion that we cannot close this series of lectures in a better way than by surveying the results of our enquiry. There are features I should like to accentuate, as possibly the most worthy of being considered further by you. *First*, things were said which, if not new, are certainly not familiar; *second*, there are others whose truth is doubtful, and a matter of controversy; and *lastly*, there are truths which I consider to be fundamental to a rational religious faith.

The three parts of the cour

You have probably observed that the course falls into three parts. In the first part we dealt with the obstacles in the way of enquiry into the validity of our religious creeds by the frank, and severe, and free methods of science. In the second part I expressed, as unsparingly as I could, the antagonism between the religious and the secular life. I considered carefully the apparently irreconcilable opposition of morality and religion, pointed out the erroneous conceptions from which the contradiction arose, and, finally, indicated the principle and method by which alone that contradiction could be solved. In the last part we were engaged with the conception of the God of Religion

and his relation to the finite world, and especially to man; and we identified him with the Absolute of Philosophy. The result seemed to be to prove that reason comes to the support of the religion which is enlightened. Enquiry, if free and thorough, will demonstrate the validity of our religious faith.

Such, expressed in general terms, were our themes. Our question now is, what did we make of these themes? What are the conclusions, negative or positive, as to the value and validity of our religious faith, which we are entitled to regard as decisive, and ought to carry away with us?

A confession. I must in the first place of all make a confession. Not merely are our conclusions somewhat meagre, but they are unsatisfactory in a far more serious sense. They are based, from beginning to end, upon an assumption which I have made no attempt to justify, and which, if false, deprives our attempt of all value. The assumption is that the moral life has a value which is final, unlimited and absolute. By the moral life I mean the *process* of forming a good character; by good character I mean a way of living which, in all its details, is dedicated to the service of the best, and is therefore the fulfilment, at one and the same time, of the moral law and of the will of God. From the absoluteness and finality of the value of the process of learning goodness it follows, that everything which furthers that process is good in the most unqualified sense, and that everything which hinders it is evil. Moral progress is our principle of evaluation and our only authoritative measuring rod. We approve and we condemn by reference to it, and to it only.

Now, if the moral process, the practical life that is

spent in achieving spiritual excellence, has this unconditioned worth, and is the best, then the world which provides room for that process is itself the best world. It is better than the so-called perfect world, or world in which the ideal and real are supposed to coincide— a world which is perfect in the static sense. In such a world nothing could be done without committing evil, and doing harm; the voice of duty could not be heard because what "ought to be" already "is"; there could be neither the need nor the possibility of choosing between right and wrong. It would not be a moral world at all. It could not furnish man with the conditions of the moral or spiritual enterprise, and the moral life would not be possible. But no one would dream of calling the present world as it is to-day "perfect" in this the usual, static sense of that term; nor can anyone doubt for a moment that it furnishes the most ample opportunities for the exercise of the will to virtue. The calls of duty are loud and constant, for him that hath ears to hear. Our view then is that the moral life is the best thing conceivable, and that this present world, owing in a way to its imperfections, furnishes the opportunity for the moral process and demands it as the ultimate good. But we have not *proved* these truths. They are assumptions, and their truth may be doubted and denied. Indeed, judging by our ordinary conduct, many of us do deny the absolute value of the moral process. We are always prone to postpone spiritual considerations, and to seek first the things that perish.

The perfect world is not fixed and changeless.

Men have consciously and consistently made use of other standards of value, both in their judgments and in their way of life. The Hedonists are a conspicuous

The Hedonist standard of values.

example. In no wise could they justify a world, however virtuous, in which there was more pain than pleasure. And, as a rule, it is very difficult to convince men who deny the sovereignty of ethical conceptions, that they are in error. We may urge, for instance, that the value of moral facts lies wholly in themselves, and is as little dependent on, as it is derivative from, aught else. But they will say the same thing of pleasure—especially if you permit them to call it "happiness." "Assure me happiness all my life long, and assure the same to all those whom I love, and I shall ask no more. I shall then say what Faust said when at last Mephistopheles claimed his soul, 'It is enough. Let the moment stay.'"

Now, I do not admit that the Hedonistic position is unassailable; but I should like to expose and emphasise the difficulty of raising the secular spirit to a level from which it will judge things spiritually. The consistent use of spiritual criteria is not easy to any one in the present world; and to the secular-minded man the argument will to the end seem to rest on sheer assumption, and our results will appear to be just the innocuous fancies of unpractical philosophers. It is probable that nothing short of the actual experience of living the religious life will suffice to justify our assumption, and to qualify the critic to pass judgment.

In any case, without that assumption we are quite helpless: while, granted that assumption, many more important consequences are found to follow. These consequences I shall now try to bring into the foreground.

The first consequence which follows from our

assumption is that it provides the means of reconciling religion and morality. The moral life, as the best life conceivable, becomes on this view the process of realizing, in the circumstances and amongst the calls of ordinary life, the good which is absolute, and thereby of fulfilling, in utter devotion, the will of God. Morality becomes religion in practice; and right conduct can be defined as doing the will of God. Morality and religion are found to be complementary and inseparable aspects of the good life. The former is inspired, guided and controlled by the latter, and the latter achieves reality in its moral incarnation.

The reconciliation of religion and morality.

The second consequence which follows is that, on this view, the moral life instead of never attaining is attaining in every virtuous act. The process of forming character through our volitional efforts is seen to be as positive and genuine an advance from stage to stage as the cognitive process; for by doing what is right we learn how to do better. And that is the only way of learning that best and highest of tasks. The moral world instead of presenting a scene of "hazards and hardships" and failures, instead of being radically such a blunder that its success in identifying the real and the ideal would be its own extinction, shows us a constant conversion of the past life into a stepping-stone. For man rises a better man from doing a fine action, and a worse from doing a mean one. Moreover, every good act is, in its way, perfect. If the *whole* law is not directly realized in it, the law as applicable to the actual circumstances is put in practice. In the circumstances neither man nor God could do better; and the performance of duty is just the highest use of circumstance.

Morality always attains.

I cannot, for my part, regard these results as of small significance. The antagonism between morality and religion, the view of the former as merely human and therefore of low value, and of the latter as something aloof from the secular life, and therefore in the last resort a matter of mysterious and incommunicable experience, weakened the power for good of both of them. Nor can I consider that the consistent and persistent presentation of the moral life as a tragic matter, a failure in that which is best of all, instead of a joyous process of learning more thoroughly what is right, could have been without its deterrent effects. We cannot, of course, advocate the pursuit of moral good on *the ground* of the prosperity it brings: that were to reduce morality, the supreme good and "highest end" (as Aristotle taught us), into means. Nevertheless, we can hinder the moral progress of no one by indicating in what a fair country the man who is learning goodness is travelling. Here is the true primrose path; and as I have already hinted, the pilgrims who go along this way go singing. They are in the company of "The Shining One": their moral life is a divine service.

In the next place, the assumption of the sovereign worth of the *process* of learning to know and to do the will of God, and of the present world as existing in order to furnish the opportunities for that process, throws a new light on *the problem of evil.*

The problem of evil.

Our line of argument on this matter was both short and simple. If the spiritual process of learning to recognize and realize the best has the supreme value which we attribute to it, then the world that makes that process possible is the best world. It is a better

world, be it noted, than the so-called " perfect world " of ordinary opinion. That so-called perfect world obviously stands in no need of improvement, and has no room nor call for change. There is nothing in it that " *Ought* " to be done; there are no unrealized ideals: on the contrary, to do anything were to introduce change, and a change for the worse; for the real and the ideal already coincide. Morality is not possible. No duty calls. Spiritual enterprise is extinguished. If we choose the good (as we would), we should find that it is already there, accomplished; so that we can but stand with idle and empty hands. It is never a *moral* good.

But a world in which the moral life is not possible, a world in which no lover of what is right can move hand or foot, a world that is static, as if struck by a magician's wand, were, I should say, a most undesirable world. Man's spirit wants to be up and doing, and if it is a dedicated spirit it wants to be up and doing for the God it loves. Nothing conceivable could be more stale than existence in a perfect world. It manifestly cannot compare in spiritual worth to a world where the cry for help arises from the social environment, and where obedience to the voice of duty, and the giving of that help, are recognized as the fulfilment of the will of a loving God.

A stale world.

I in no wise seek to justify evil. I cannot maintain that in itself it is a form of the good: under no circumstances can it be changed into good. But I *leave room* for it; for I recognize that in this instance the striving for the aim *is* the attainment of it, the battle *is* the victory. The process of learning to do what is right is the spiritual excellence we are seeking.

Divine immanence.

The third result that accrues from the assumption which we are making is the conception of the indwelling of infinite perfection in finite objects—the immanence of God in man's nature and his participation in his moral strivings. Man's blind and pathetic gropings after the best become, from this point of view, the working within him of the divine will. Nothing can be more divine than the process of acquiring spiritual excellence. It is a movement to new perfections, each realization of the best being the starting point for a new departure. Instead of a Divine Being who dwells aloof from the world-process and can only look on at it, seeing that it is already statically perfect, God reveals *himself* in that process. He *is* the process from stage to stage, that is, from perfection to perfection.

God's working in the human soul may often seem to be most imperfect and obscure: for man, being the medium of the operations, limits both their range and their power. The human agent must *adopt* the will of God as his rule of behaviour, and the range of man's choice is small. The divine working cannot pass beyond the boundaries of man's free choice: for what is a command on the one side is on the other a conscious obligation and devoted choice.

Difficulties of the conception.

No doubt this view brings difficulties. How can an action, it will be asked, be at once the working of the divine will in man and the expression of man's free choice? The fact seems undeniable, at least to the religious spirit: man's attempt to live the good life is unhesitatingly pronounced by it to be the consequence of its dedication of itself to the divine service in such a way that it has no wish, or desire, or aim

which is exclusively its own. The religious man, I repeat, gives up his very self.

We met this difficulty by refusing to apply exclusive categories. Spiritual beings, we affirmed, include one another.

Spirit is never exclusive or finite.

The attitude of spirit is, in the last resort, not exclusive to *any* object. All things are possible contents of its knowledge and instruments of its purposes. The world is there waiting for man, by means of his rational powers, to enter into possession of it. And we cannot make it too decisively clear to ourselves that the parts or elements in the world—the facts, in short—the possession of which signifies most, are those which have already become the expressions of, and are embodied in, human character. "The world of man" is for every man the object best worth knowing, and the powers asleep in that world are those best worth awakening.

Both, instead of either-or.

Individuals, we have said, are never primarily or ultimately exclusive, though they have their exclusive, or inner, aspect. They are infinite by nature and therefore all-comprehensive, although hindered and limited by littleness of their medium. It were, indeed, a tragic world were the relations of men to one another exclusive and negative. Who wants a hearth where the child cannot say "*My* father" and the father reply with "*My* child"; or a country whose citizens do not feel that it is their own, and also that they belong to it? Our domestic, social, nay I shall add, our *human* life is one unbroken illustration of the mutual interpenetration of rational beings. The see-saw category of "either-or," which has hitherto been in use in social questions, has brought endless difficulties. It

is time that we should try the concrete view, and start from the idea of "*both*."

Man and the Absolute.

This view of the individual and of the relation of men to one another is, once more, in direct antagonism to that of Mr. Bosanquet and Mr. Bradley. They cannot, as we saw, assign individuality to man, as well as to the Absolute. In the last resort, he is a finite being to them. His individuality must prove to be a phantom, and his existence phenomenal only. The indwelling of God must to them be destructive of man's personality. When taken up into the Absolute, the finite being is transmuted, and the transmutation, I believe, involves the extinction of personality or independent individuality. But, on the view I have tried to set forth, the indwelling of God *constitutes* the personality; for, as already shown, what is done to his world by the individual is done by the use of powers which the world has given to him. By his immanence in man God empowers man. The constituent elements break into consciousness in him, and are focussed in his self-consciousness. In that act of becoming self-conscious the individual gathers himself together, free *from* his world, in order, thereafter, to be free in and by means of his world. Except on these terms I do not see how both the immanence of God and the freedom of man, or how both religion and morality, can be maintained.

If God is immanent in finite things he is not changeless.

Now the conception of divine immanence, seriously entertained, carries with it a further consequence. It involves the rejection of the idea of God as perfect in the sense that he is unchangeable. It looks obvious that what is perfect cannot change except for the worse. But even were that true, it does not justify

us in saying that the impossibility of change or its absence is either a feature or a condition of perfection. Changelessness may be a ruinous condition. It is evidently a conception that is totally inapplicable to life in every form and at every stage. Life is constant self-re-creation. We are in some ways and in some degree new beings every day, for the past constantly enters into us and becomes a part of us. The instant that process stops, death ensues : death *is* the stopping of a process. But it is also the substitution of another : decay sets in. As a matter of fact, in neither the world of dead objects nor in the world of living beings can we find anything but process. The whole Universe is a single process; and, if our conclusions hold, the reality at the heart of that process, which expresses *itself* in it, and which in truth it is, is the Absolute of philosophy, the God of religion.

Process is everywhere.

It does not seem easy to justify the conception of the Divine Being as moving from perfection to perfection. Compared with the later stage, the earlier manifestly comes to appear to be defective and imperfect. A movement from perfection to perfection looks like a logical impossibility. Every present, when it arrives, seems to condemn what went before as at least a partial failure. But, at stage *A*, may not *a* be perfection ; and at stage *B* may not *b* acquire that character ? Is it quite certain that there are static limits to the indwelling perfections of the divine nature, or indeed to anything that develops ? What is admirable in a grown-up man can be repellent in a child. We value events often on the ground that they are timely : the fact is there to meet the need. Besides, may not *the process* once more, rather than

God moves from perfection to perfection.

either of the stages, be the true object of judgment, and the divine mode of existence? God himself may have in his power no better way than to sustain the process by which goodness is achieved.

He is the perfect in process.

To me the idea of God as *the perfect in process*, as a movement from splendour to splendour in the spiritual world, as an eternal achievement and never-resting realization of the ideals of goodness in human history, is endlessly more attractive and, I believe, more consistent with our experience in the present world than the idea of a Divine Being who sits aloof from the world-process, eternally contemplating his own perfections. Love, at any rate, is directly and finally inconsistent with such an aloofness. And the religion of Love, which Christianity is, undoubtedly identifies the destiny of God and man: God suffers in our sufferings, and rejoices in our joys. He is our Father; and he moves with us, because he moves in us.

A friendly and helpful world.

There is one more consequence which follows from the fundamental assumption on which our whole course rests. I shall merely indicate it. It is the view which, for the first time, we are enabled to entertain of the world as friendly and helpful, and of God as an inspiring, and empowering, and guiding presence. It is the view which we advocate that, for the first time, *recognizes* the friendliness and helpfulness of man's environment, and *apprehends* the inspiration and power which the recognition of God as dwelling in us and active in our deeds brings. These forces were there always; but the ordinary theory hid them from our sight. Now we can rejoice in a morality that is positive and triumphant; in a religion that breaks into this joyous morality; and, above all, in the knowledge

that God is with us, and that, therefore, nothing can be finally against us.

Religion and Philosophy at one.

We have, in this course, so far as I am able to judge, followed the methods of science and admitted nothing which did not recommend itself to, and stand the tests of, an enquiring intelligence. And it is no small matter that the use of the methods of science, if strict and unsparing, can thus support a rational religious faith.

Were men strengthened and sustained by such a faith, it seems to me that Browning's words would have a wide application. Many an unobtrusively modest, religious man could describe himself as

> "One who never turned his back but marched breast-forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
> Sleep to wake." [1]

[1] *Asolando.*

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