

THE ART OF
LISTENING TO GOD

*Studies in some neglected values
of Life, Religion and Missions*

Samuel M. Zwemer



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FOREWORD

OUR opening chapter lends its title to this little book and appeals to the generosity of the reader to give a hearing to its message in as far as it is based on God's Word. The sundry meditations and opinions expressed deal successively with diverse themes related to life, reading, evolution and revelation, the choir and the pulpit, missions and spiritual leadership. Although the subjects are disconnected the bond that binds them together is a certain conservatism of view, or an old fashioned approach.

The things that are true in life are not always new; and the things that are new are not always true. One can sometimes steer a true course along a dangerous coast by heeding old landmarks. Surely conservatism in religion and life can not always and everywhere be at fault. Old fashions, if we bide a wee, often come back into style. In the long history of morals, Puritanism has a way of being resurrected. The beloved disciple John wrote in his second epistle to beware of "anyone who is advanced and will not abide by the doctrine of Christ" (Moffatt). He referred to the Cerinthians who boasted that they were "progressives" and "advanced thinkers" but were foes of the truth. New truth is always an outgrowth of the old. Ideas which are simply old are dead; but ideas

which are simply new may be false. Time and experience are great tests of truth. Human progress passes from milestone to milestone and we can never repay what we owe our predecessors. Yet there are those today who pay a high price for antique furniture or old paintings and seem to have neither willingness nor patience to examine the experience and age-long convictions of their boasted ancestors.

A few of these chapters appeared in various church periodicals, others are new. They are gathered in book form and deal with certain neglected values of the Christian life, the Church and Missions. We trust their variety does not conflict with this unity of aim and that the message will not be altogether futile.

*“For words are things, and a small drop of ink
Falling like dew upon a thought produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think,
'Tis strange, the shortest letter which man uses
Instead of speech, may form a lasting link
Of ages. To what straits Old Time reduces
Frail man, when paper—even a rag like this—
Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's his.”*

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New York City

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*“Scarcely I catch the words of His revealing,
Hardly I hear Him, dimly understand,
Only the Power that is within me pealing
Lives on my lips and beckons to my hand.*

*“Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:
Yea with one voice, O world, tho’ thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.”*

—F. W. H. MYERS’ St. Paul

I

THE ART OF LISTENING TO GOD

THE ART OF LISTENING TO GOD

IT is well known that there are duplicate Psalms and that the Ten Commandments are given twice in slightly different form. The same is true of the Lord's Prayer and of the Beatitudes. This repetition of certain portions of God's Word is still more striking when we think of short phrases. Believe it or not, there is one found in the New Testament no less than sixteen times, eight times in the Synoptic Gospels and eight times in the Book of Revelation. In every case the command falls from the lips of Christ Himself, whether spoken to the multitude, to the disciples, or to the angels of the seven churches. The words He used were these: "*He that hath an ear, let him hear.*"

We may well ask what these words signify and why they are so frequently repeated. It is worth asking this question because our schools and colleges and universities are generally considered to be places where men are taught how to speak rather than how to hear. They are impressed with the responsibility of declama-

tion and proclamation and voice-culture rather than the far greater responsibility of silence, and ear-culture and hearkening to the Word of the Lord; the lost art of listening to our fellow-men or to the whisper of God's voice.

Evidently these words concern themselves with hearing, that is, the capacity, the opportunity, and the responsibility of this one of our five senses. As with Elijah at Horeb, the Lord is not in the wind or the fire or the earthquake, but in the still small voice; "He that hath an ear, let him hear."

"He that hath an ear . . ." The sense of hearing is one of the most delicate and marvelous creations of God. Man shares it with nearly all mammals, some insects and even reptiles. There are cases where these lower creatures surpass man in their capacity to catch the highest or the lowest wave-lengths and in the keenness of their sense-perception. The human ear is not only distinguished for its beauty of form (which has riveted the attention of artists and painters) but the inner ear is a physical miracle in its structure, its development and its use. When we hear a sound, as we all know, it is caused by the wave movements or vibrations in the air. Hearing denotes both the process by which these vibrations act upon the sense organ and also the particular sensation aroused in consciousness by this stimulation.

"Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live." Hearing, therefore, includes volition. We may close our ears or be so absorbed in other pursuits that although the sounds reach the outer and

even the inner ear they do not reach our consciousness. But the whole process of hearing is still a mystery. There are many theories regarding the mechanism of hearing and the perception of sound, which you may find in the text-books. We all know that the ear consists of three parts: the outer ear, to collect the sound waves; the middle ear, which transmits them; while the inner ear analyzes and converts them into wave-impulses, which reach the brain. The external ear is intended to catch sounds. We incline our ears to hear. In the middle ear the waves strike a membrane or drum and are then transmitted by three minute bones called the anvil, the hammer and the stirrup. We are told that these tiny instruments increase the force of the sound-waves ninety times. The middle-ear cavity is filled with air, but the inner ear or labyrinth, with a clear fluid in which are suspended a second series of sacs and tubes of microscopic size and extreme delicacy. These inner organs include no less than twenty thousand nerve fibres to distinguish every sound that enters the ear.

When one reads such elementary facts of physiology, who can help recall the sublime statement of the Psalmist: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?"

Yet this capacity, both natural and spiritual, is not universal. Since the beginning of history and in every land, there have been those who were physically, mentally, or spiritually deaf.

The Psalmist compares the wicked to "the deaf

adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of the charmers, charming never so wisely." Here, and elsewhere in Scripture, we have types and symbols of incapacity to hear. In the startling words of Paul, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber . . . ears that they should not hear unto this very day" (Rom. 11:8).

Deaf-mutes who suffer physical handicap deserve our pity. The mentally and spiritually deaf deserve greater pity, for doubly sad is their condition. Yet, who can explain the deep significance of Christ's words: "I speak in parables: because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand"?

The art of hearing depends not only on capacity but on opportunity. Many prophets and righteous men have desired to hear the things that we now hear and have not heard them. There was capacity and eagerness to catch the sound but the very heavens were silent. In some cases the hindrance was chronological, that is, these people lived before Christ came. Generation after generation passed away before the fulness of time. The Old Testament prophets, saints and martyrs listened eagerly but they got only the echo of His voice which spake as never man spoke. Again the hindrance was often geographical; not because people lived at the wrong time, but at the wrong place. The Bible speaks solemnly of nations that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Literally, that was and is their condition. Yet, among them there were and are those who are most eager to hear the voice of God. But the silence of eternity remained unbroken.

Plato and Socrates, Buddha and Confucius and Ghazali and Zoroaster cried with Job, "Would that I knew where I might find him." But there was no answer. How eager they were, each in his own way, to hear and yet they had no adequate opportunity.

Again, the silence of God Himself, from Malachi to Matthew, for four hundred years is a mystery. There was no seer nor prophet and no open vision for those twelve long generations. Then came John the Baptist preaching the Word of God. Behold the Lamb of God! How long the islands waited for God's law! Hawaii — New Zealand — Japan. How long darkest Africa was without opportunity to hear the message of the Gospel. How long Korea and Burma and China had ears to hear, but there was no voice that spoke of God's love in Jesus Christ.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

Today we live in a world of opportunity. The gospel message is spoken in over a thousand tongues. It rings from the pulpit and the press. It comes on the air in radio-broadcasts. Christian churches and schools dot the land. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

All this creates profound responsibility. Where there is no capacity or opportunity, responsibility is surely limited, but where we have capacity to hear and God is speaking to us, responsibility can not be avoided.

How shall we learn the lost art of listening to God? When they brought to Jesus the man who was deaf and dumb (Mark 11:15) Christ first withdrew the man from the crowd and sought isolation. Then He put His fingers into the deaf man's ears and lastly He touched his lips. This is the threefold miracle we need today. Until we learn to go apart, to be silent and to listen, we shall never speak with power, for we have not heard God's message.

To learn a foreign language the ear is far more important than the eye or the tongue. "Hearing," said Dr. Cummings, the language teacher, "is not a gift but a skill. The trained ear is the result of training. Subjecting the ear to certain sounds till they wear channels in the nervous system. These channels are made by sharpness of attention to distinguish every distinctive sound. I must listen if I would learn to speak." Even so, to speak the words of God, the language of Heaven, you must first learn to listen, to tune your ears to His voice. Listen to Him, and also to the cry of pain and agony in the human heart that rises from earth to heaven, day and night. For it is so easy to learn to speak glibly and even eloquently. But who today can shut out the noise of the world and turn off the chatter-box of the radio, and listen to God?

And, alas, Mr. Talkative of John Bunyan's matchless allegory is also still with us. He was on the Pilgrim road you remember, and never learned to listen, but how he could talk!

This son of Saywell dwelt in Prating-Row and he tells Christian and Faithful: "I can talk on things earthly; things moral or things evangelical; things sacred and things profane; things past or things to come; things foreign or things at home; things essential or things circumstantial." But he was a sorry fellow and real religion had no place in his heart. A mere gramophone Christian, or as homely Bunyan puts it: "He cheweth the cud but divideth not the hoof, he parteth not with the way of sinners and is therefore unclean."

For hearing is not receptivity only—it is an act of volition. And the condition for physical and spiritual perception is an atmosphere of aloofness and silence. "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." Then He speaks. Saints down the ages have discovered this treasure of silence. "My soul, wait thou only upon God." "Be still and know." "Come ye apart . . . and rest awhile."

We are at last learning to recognize the existence of the delicate mental processes which entirely escape the crude methods of speech. Reverie as a genuine thought-process is beginning to be studied with the attention it deserves, and a new understanding of prayer must result. By its means powers of perception and

response — ordinarily latent — are aroused to action; and thus the whole life is enriched. That faculty in us which corresponds not with the busy life of succession—but with the eternal sources of power—gets its chance.

“Though the soul,” says von Hügel, “cannot abidingly abstract itself from its fellows, it can and ought frequently to recollect itself in a simple sense of God’s presence. Such moments of direct preoccupation—with God alone—bring a deep refreshment and simplification to the soul.”

“True silence,” says William Penn, of this quiet surrender to reality, “is rest to the mind, and is to the spirit what sleep is to the body, nourishment and refreshment.”

Religious silence is not an outworn medieval superstition of monks and nuns. The Quakers have much to teach us in this respect. You remember how Samuel said: “Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.” Too often we say, Listen, Lord, for Thy servant chattereth. “Christian silence is not a piece of amateur psychotherapy; it is a great, practical discipline which makes a highway for God through the wilderness of our disordered thoughts and uncontrolled emotions. It is not an empty space filled with shadows, or a mirror flinging back our own portrait; it is the response of our whole being to the call of God. In it the soul stands at attention.”

And it is a great stillness, precisely because it is a great activity. Father Baker, writing of this silence at

its highest point, compares it to the stillness of the soaring bird. "The bird's wings are suspended, motionless; but all the time every muscle is contributing its share to that noiseless cleaving of the air which is at once perfect rest and sustained activity."

And we recall Thomas Carlyle's sharp words to his generation on the need of silence: "Silence is the element in which the great things fashion themselves together, that at length they may emerge full-formed and majestic into the daylight of life, which they are henceforth to rule. . . . Do thou thyself but hold thy tongue for one day, and on the morrow how much clearer are thy purposes and duties; what wreck and rubbish have these mute workmen within thee swept away, when intrusive noises were shut out!" My soul, wait thou in silence upon God! Hearken to His voice. When they were all with one accord in one place, before Pentecost, I am sure there was silent waiting on God. What peace there was in the old-fashioned Sabbath! What a reverent stillness in the house of God — what a quiet and leisurely solemnity in the morning worship at the family altar . . . the Bible never says to us, Be strenuous and know that I am God,—it says, "Be still and know that I am God." Our forefathers in the religious life may have had very imperfect ideals of Christian service. They may have tolerated many an abuse that we would never tolerate today. But they had one element in their religious life in far larger measure that we have, and that was the element of silence.

The word of the Lord came unto Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and John the Baptist and St. Paul, when they were listening for it.

In this way and in no other does the Word of God come today.

“He that hath an ear, let him hear.”

II

IN DEFENSE OF BOOKS AND READING

II

IN DEFENSE OF BOOKS AND READING

THE story is told of a couple of young people in Missouri who were in a quandary as to the selection of a wedding gift for a newly-married friend. One suggested a pickle-castor, another a chromo, a third said why not a nice book—"oh, but they *have* a book"! Of course, there is a kind of superstition about literacy and letters. In China and in Arabia, written paper is sacred and never trampled under foot, but put into a cranny in the wall. You are told that in one country ninety per cent of the people can read and write, while in another, ninety per cent cannot. Then you jump to the conclusion that the former land is far more intellectual and civilized. One billion, one hundred million people (two-thirds of mankind) live wholly outside the world of books, but the figures mean little. Some of the giant conquerors of history were perhaps unable to read at all.

A strong argument could be made, I believe, for the advantages of *illiteracy* in developing common sense and the senses of sight and hearing and smell, to a degree that is astonishing. Illiteracy also compels to observation, meditation and reflection, so that the wild

desert of book-ignorance sometimes makes seers, philosophers and saints who dwell in an oasis of the Garden of Allah. Reading is not always intellectual activity. Men hate having nothing to do and are therefore fertile in the invention of things which are equivalent to nothing—things to kill time—such as knitting, pasting postage stamps, knotting strings, solitaire, smoking or such light reading in which nothing happens to the mind save an endless procession of consonants and vowels. The trouble is that anyone can read to pass the time, but one has to learn how to read to promote real education and culture. The French scholar, Dimnet, in his invaluable little volume on the Art of Thinking, makes this perfectly clear. He describes Americans on a railway train all holding fast to a paper or magazine, but no one *thinking*.

When we write in defense of books and reading, we refer to books that abide and reading that requires activity of the gray matter of the brain. The book is the origin and foundation of civilization and culture. The book is the tool of scholarship. The book is the trademark of education. The whole history of civilization goes back to the day when man began to write records. Everything else is prehistoric and shrouded in mist. Archaeology is blind until it finds inscriptions. It is the book that stands preëminent, invincible, overwhelming in human affairs.

The Vedas set the pattern for Indian social life and thought. The Book of the Dead, painted on the walls of the tombs of Egypt, perfectly portrays the type of their oldest civilization, and the library of clay tablets

at Ur of the Chaldees is an index to Sumerian life and thought in the days of Abraham.

At the beginning, Sinai, God and a tablet of stone— at the end, God on the great white throne with an open Book. Between is the eternal battle of the books, the clash of contrary opinions, the Armageddon of the warfare for truth and righteousness in the world of thought. In the words of Clarence Day: “The world of books is the most remarkable creation of man. Nothing else that he builds ever lasts. Monuments fall, nations perish, civilizations grow old and die out; and after an era of darkness, new races build others.

“But in the world of books there are volumes that have seen all this happen again and again, and yet live on still young, still as fresh as the day they were written and still telling men’s hearts of the hearts of men centuries dead.”

What are some of these immortal volumes on the five-foot shelf of international fame and age-old influence? First and foremost, we place the Book of books in any one of its thousand translations. Moses and Job, David and Isaiah, Amos and Malachi, John and Paul—these and their companions are the real immortals. No French academy ever elected them, no hall of fame ever selected them, but their line has gone out into all the world and their words have influenced all ages and all humanity. The secret of the hiding of their power is that they saw His glory and spoke of Him in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily—Jesus Christ our Lord.

All other sacred books of the East will be “gone with

the wind” when this Book stands as the Rock of Ages. The great poets are also immortal, each in his sphere—Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Goethe, Dante, Milton—who can trace the influence of their minds and thoughts on every age? Time would fail us to recall the great historians who unroll for us the panorama of man’s life on earth; to tell of the great philosophers who have grappled with the problems of life and destiny; or to name even a few of the scientists who have put the eyes of their readers to the world’s microscope and telescope revealing the glory of the Creator; for example, the lives of Louis Pasteur or Madame Curie.

In the words of Sir John Herschel, we can sum it all up: “Give a man a taste for books and the means of gratifying it and you can hardly fail to make a happy man. You place him in contact with the best society, with the wisest, wittiest, bravest and purest characters who have adorned humanity, and you make him a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages.” The man who loves to read and reads the best books has “all this and heaven too.” But we must not forget the acute observation of Mark Twain: “A classic is a book everyone talks about, but no one has read.” How many books did you read last year?

In our day we face two subtle enemies of the book, two modern foes of true culture. Writing in his recent volume, entitled “In Defense of Letters,” George Duhamel, the brilliant Frenchman, while admitting that books are at the very foundation of civilization, expresses a fear that “the two great windmills of communication,” the radio and the cinema, will crowd out the

book. These modern mechanical contrivances have their place, but they cannot take the place of the printed word. He makes the clever observation that reflection is impossible and incompatible with the cinema and the radio, but that it belongs to the reading of the book.

Here you can turn back the pages and turn back your thoughts. A book is a live thing and enshrines the soul of the writer. Here we meet genius face to face. The lure of the radio-set has become so general and so persistent that in many homes the book and the very art of reading are crowded out. I think every college graduate would surely admit that more than one-half of the radio programs are of such inferior character as to be of no educative or cultural value. What intelligent mind can be interested in the blatant repetition of advertising nostrums or the eternal jazz of the music-hall band? Then, there is the news with its strident interpreters, the political speeches, the town hall meetings, and the cross-word brain twisters—how much of truth or beauty or philosophy can you really squeeze out of your dial in twenty-four hours?

Older than the radio windmill are the daily and the Sunday newspapers, both deadly enemies of solid reading and meditation. The good is an enemy to the best. Wendell Phillips wrote many years ago: "It is a momentous, yes, a fearful truth that the millions have no literature, no school, and almost no pulpit but the press. Not one in ten reads books. But everyone of us poisons himself every day with a newspaper. Every drop of our blood is colored by it. Let me make the newspapers, and I care not who makes the religion or the laws."

Never were truer words uttered. The radio and the daily press are in league to produce superficial judgments, intolerance and a totalitarian state of mind which is mental slavery. The newspaper habit is as great an evil as the drug habit. If long indulged in, it puts the mind asleep.

Not the pulpit, but the Sunday newspaper is the opium of the people. Facts and fancies can be shoved into the mind like books into a bag. But the bag has gained nothing. It only bulges. The larger the newspaper and the more frantic the reader, the greater the vacancy of the intellect. Our great dailies count forty pages every morning and some people devote an hour or more to wade through it all. But the result (unless we have learned to use a blue pencil and scissors) is nil. That is why yesterday's newspaper is of no value except to wrap packages in! The cinema and the radio are very modern. The first moving-picture show was given in New York April 23, 1896, and the radio-set is still younger. But they have grown to colossal proportions in four decades. Like Dutch windmills, they run all the time. One hundred thousand picture theaters spread their luring nets and catch old and young. The permanent investment in the moving-picture business is said to be two billion dollars. The magnates of Hollywood draw larger salaries than kings and princes. The average picture costs \$300,000, and the United States public pays one and a half billion dollars to see such every year. Approximately 150,000,000 individuals attend the movies each week. If the show lasts two hours, that means 300,000,000 hours, or over 34,000 years

looking at pictures! Methuselah would stand amazed at the progress of such civilization!

The cinema and the radio also have a universal appeal because they require no thought. Charlie Chaplin's antics produce laughter in Denmark and in Japan alike. The Esquimaux and the Chinese look into the back windows of Chicago with equal interest. It requires no high school education to turn the dial to "Amos and Andy" or to sit for hours watching the latest comics on the silver screen.

Dr. Rajah Manikam, one of the Indian delegates to Madras, expressed the opinion that "the American public has gone crazy on pictures and radio, with the result that many of them might be described as semi-literate." The enmity of these two windmills of communication to serious thought and book culture is threefold. They take too much time. They cost too much money. They give too little in return.

The editor of the *Daily Princetonian* states that "despite the fact that there is no mention of cinema in the university catalog, students average six college hours a week watching films." The hours spent at the motion picture are killing time that would give an accurate knowledge of some science or the culture of poetry or philosophy. The price of a cheap radio set is ten dollars. That would pay for excellent complete editions of Shakespeare and Plato and Milton and Dante. But to make the exchange will cost you much more in gray matter. Will you pay the difference? There are people who have paid five hundred dollars for a radio, and spend less than five dollars annually on books.

How can we cultivate anew the passion for books and reading? To do this there should be real bookshops in every small town and a library in every home, so that we may return to the golden age of American culture when around the center table, father and mother and all the children gathered to read books. As I see it among clergy and laity, old and young, we need a revival of the art of reading. It always has been, and is, the root of culture. True culture has distinguishing characteristics. In the *Catholic World*, a few years ago, there was an editorial on the subject which listed six qualities—all of them the result of reading and meditation—and they mark the man of education:

(1) The educated man must be able to think. He can distinguish conviction based upon a process of reasoning and meditation, from mere emotional prejudices, snap judgments and fanaticisms. He is willing to hear the other side of any question.

(2) He must be able, as a wise Frenchman put it, to disengage the reality of things from the charlatanism of words. The uneducated are captivated by pompous words, pretty words, rhetoric and the wind of oratory. But the Lord is not in the wind or fire or earthquake. Some Europeans, when asked whether the Americans are educated, retort with a laugh, "Look at their new religions." (Father Divine, Mormonism, Christian Science, Russellism.)

(3) A third mark of an educated man is tolerance. This is a quality of the mind rather than of the heart. It is mental rather than moral. Intolerant people are not inhuman, but they are unintelligent. Take, for example,

the attitude of some so-called educated people toward Roman Catholicism, the Ku-Klux-Klan, Communism, or Judaism.

(4) He should have a philosophy of life. This does not mean a course in philosophy, although that is important. But he should be able to answer intelligently such questions as, What is the origin and destiny of man or of human history? If a policeman meets a man on the street and asks him, "Who are you? What are you doing here? Where did you come from, and where are you going?" and the man replies, "I don't know," to each question, he may be taken to a psychopathic ward.

(5) He should know something about art and the tools of culture. Although not a musician, he should know enough to appreciate it. Although not an artist nor an architect, he should be able to judge a good picture and a good building. And this applies to the drama and poetry as well. A bachelor of arts should know something about the arts. When an age becomes exclusively scientific, men lose their taste for literature as did Charles Darwin. It would be small gain to know all about smashing the atom and exploring the nebulae if we lost our appreciation of Shakespeare or Browning.

(6) The educated man must have a religion. An atheist is not educated, no matter what number of degrees he can write after his name. Man is not the creature of the drawing-room or the stock exchange. He has eternity in his heart and unless God is there also, the process of the education of the soul has not yet begun.

With religion comes the sense of mystery, and awe, and wonder. It delivers us from flippancy and irreverence. The whole world is a sanctuary and in every human heart lurks brotherhood. This kind of education, you say, is ideal. So it is. But it will become real when men love books and the Book of books.

III
ON USING SIMPLE LANGUAGE

III

ON USING SIMPLE LANGUAGE

IT must have occurred to other old-fashioned readers as it has to me, that one of the chief hindrances to clear thought and easy understanding is the persistent use by some modern writers of a style in which the sense is sacrificed to sound and jargon. The rule seems to be: abstain from all appearance of simplicity and clarity. Some present-day writers seem to think that to be obscure is a sign of intellectual attainment. Multiplicity of words or the use of words that are not current-coin in the every-day mart of speech is foolish. There is a shoeblack in Houston, Texas (according to the *Christian Monitor*) whose sign reads: "Pedal habiliments artistically lubricated and illuminated with ambidextrous facility for the infinitesimal remuneration of 5 cents per operator." He had a sense of humor, but one may doubt whether the vision was made so plain that he who runs may read. One finds this sort of English not only in eccentric advertising but in sober books and periodicals. We give one or two examples taken at random.

Surely even Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" or Barth's "Existential Thinking" is easy to understand

by the side of this American item found in a London weekly: "News from the economic front: According to one school of thought we are now experiencing a major intermediate recession in a major cyclical recovery, but this view is opposed by those who argue that it is a minor intermediate recession in a major cyclical recovery. More pessimistic are the people who dispute whether it is a major or a minor intermediate recession in a minor cyclical recovery; and those who plump for a minor intermediate recession in a minor cyclical depression are outbid by those who insist that it is a major intermediate recession in a minor cyclical depression. The realists ask us to face the fact that it is a minor intermediate recession in a major cyclical depression and the Cassandras all go out for a major intermediate recession in a major cyclical depression." The truth, the London critic continues, "can probably be summed up in Calvin Coolidge's dictum that when a large number of people are out of work, a state of unemployment can be said to exist."

"To talk nonsense or poetry," said a writer in *The New York Sun*, "or the dash between the two, in a tone of profound sincerity, and to enunciate solemn discordances with received opinion, so seriously as to convey the impression of a spiritual insight, is the peculiar gift by which monomaniacs, having first persuaded themselves, contrive to influence their neighbors, and through them to make conquests of a good half of the world, for good or for ill."

Muddled theological thinking results in similar style of obscure tautology. Here is a definition of God as

given by a professor of Pomona College, in "a ten-day discussion of the Christian message for our times." He calls himself "an empirical theist," and says: "God can be conceived as the growing reality in our midst making for mutual value and community." This is not a great improvement on "God is Love" or "God is Light." It certainly is less philosophical and far less intelligible than the definition of the Westminster Shorter Catechism: "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." A New England professor of Philosophy defines religion as "what a man does with his solitariness." The Apostle James had a clearer idea of what pure and undefiled religion means (James 1:27).

In an able article on "The Indigenous Church," in a quarterly Review of Missions, we read: "It is my purpose to focus attention on the question of expansion versus consolidation of the activities of the local church, or of a larger or smaller unit of a fellowship of churches from the point of view of finance." Paul put it more simply: "Now concerning the collection." Moreover, *his* chapters on "the indigenous church" at Corinth, on "rural problems" and on those who indulged in "self-expression" because of "an inferiority complex" are all in words of simple wisdom. The present futuristic style of the modern writer is an easy trick. Discard Anglo-Saxon vocabulary and use circumlocution; then there is no limit to the possibilities of this vehicle to conceal thought. This is how one could transpose Galatians 4:4: "However, at the synchronizing of the cosmic crises the Supreme Deity projected His filial essence

by a parthenogenetic process into the cosmos and in conformity with the legal system of the Jews he endeavored to emancipate those who were under legalism, with the intent that we would thus be enabled to acquire filial affection." But the Authorized Version gives a clearer message.

Some years ago when irritated by the present-day jargon in some new Bible translations and the "psychological" and "psychiatrical" diversions of certain pulpits, I "translated" the Twenty-third Psalm into ultra-modernistic form. The late Dr. C. Wistar Hodge, to whom I read it, was greatly amused and asked me to print it. Here it is:

"A MODERNISTIC VERSION OF THE
SHEPHERD'S PSALM

"The unseen Infinite is the source of my motivation, and I shall not want personality. He maketh me to experience true self-expression and to attempt new projects in the psychology of adolescence. He restoreth the right complex to my introvert soul. He leadeth me into a preface to morals for goodness' sake. Yea, though I peregrinate through the present doleful depression, exuberant health gives me a stiff upper lip. I can grin and bear my fate. Good luck is always with me. Its creative impulse and the pep of my *élan vital* they comfort me. Surely normal behaviorism and carefully controlled altruism will follow me until the jig is up and then (properly cremated) I shall dwell in a marble urn forever."

No new translation can ever equal the simple Anglo-

Saxon of the Authorized Version. The finest Christian hymns are those which are written in simple language. Dr. J. Gresham Machen used to say that the hymn beginning, "There is a green hill far away" contained the whole sum of Christian doctrine. It has five stanzas and all told one hundred and twenty-two words. Only *two* of those words are not plain Anglo-Saxon (i.e., crucified and redeeming) and nearly all but these are words of one or two syllables! Read the hymn to any child and it needs no explanation.

In the same way the charm of Bunyan's great allegory is its simple English style, limpid and clear as a brook, fresh and vigorous as a mountain torrent.

In contrast to this, one has only to turn to pages of certain journals on religious education, the so-called poetry of Ezra Pound, and popular books on modern psychology, to find ready to hand a whole vocabulary of uncouth terms to express such common original sins as pride, selfishness, lust or avarice. Why not call them by their old names? Why introduce into the literature of Christian youth a terminology that is wholly foreign to the style of the Old and New Testament writers? These writers know nothing of inferiority or superiority complexes, of introverts and extroverts, of the psychological moment and the creative-hour nor of "contacting the divine"!

One wonders whether these people speak as they write, and whether, in that case, the common people ever hear them gladly. Or are they the spiritual children of the famous Dr. Learned Aloof, who

*“A parish priest of austerity
Climbed up in a high church-steeple
To be nearer God, that he might hand
His Word down to the people.*

*“And in sermon-script he daily wrote
What he thought was sent from heaven,
And he dropped it down on the people’s heads
Two times one day in seven!*

*“In his age, God said, ‘Come down and die,’
And he cried out from his steeple,
‘Where art Thou, Lord? and the Lord replied,
‘Down here among my people!’”*

We all know that there is no excuse for such preachers, for in the King James Version of the Bible we have an inexhaustible well of English pure and undefiled. And we all have something to draw with, although the well is deep. Paul refers to this very matter in his advice to the clever Corinthians, who spoke with new tongues in his day. He might have written the first verse of the thirteenth chapter (with the change of *one* word) as title for the chapter that follows.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not [*clarity*], I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. . . .” “So likewise ye, for ye shall speak into the air In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding that I might teach others also than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue therefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.”

IV

LIFE BEGINS AT SEVENTY

IV

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WHY should it not? According to vital statistics, when a person passes the seventieth milestone in good health, there are still some miles to run; and we have the highest authority that life began at seventy in the case of Abraham, the father of the faithful. When other people put on their slippers to sit by the fire, Abraham put on his seven-league boots and started from Ur of the Chaldees to find the Promised Land. All he did before that is unrecorded and unimportant. For him, at least, life began at seventy.

“Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old when they spake to Pharaoh” and obtained the emancipation proclamation for all Israel. Joshua was eighty-five years old when he finished his military conquest. Eli still judged the people when he was ninety-eight years of age. History does not confirm the common verdict on early senility. Plato died, pen in hand, in his eighty-first year. Socrates was ninety-four when he composed the work entitled “*Panathenaicus*,” and lived five years after that. Titian, the great artist,

was painting "with incomparable steadiness of hand," when cut off by the plague at the age of ninety-nine. The same remarkable retention of youthful energy was the case in Voltaire, Anatole France, Goethe and von Ranke.

Since the time of Aristotle, the vital cycle has been thought to be a fivefold multiple of the period of growth, and Buffon estimated that one hundred years is the physiological duration of life! The number of reputed centenarians is doubtless in excess of the real figure. Nevertheless, the expectation of life and general health is increasing. So there is less reason than heretofore to repudiate the talents of old age and prefer the counsel of Rehoboam to that of Job or Solomon. There are, in fact, many reasons why real life begins at seventy.

(1) Experience is a hard teacher, and if we ever graduate from her school, we ought to have a signed diploma at seventy. The dreams of youth yet unfulfilled may find execution after seventy. Young men see visions, but old men dream dreams, and the dream of ripe old age is a vision in embryo of the world to come. As Sir Thomas Browne (1658) remarks:

"In seventy or eighty years a man may have a deep gust of the world, know what it is, what it can afford, and what it is to have been a man. Such a latitude of years may hold a considerable corner in the general map of time; and a man may have a curt epitome of the whole course thereof in the days of his life, may clearly see he hath but acted-over his forefathers, what

it was to live in ages past, and what living will be in all ages to come. . . .

“In such a thread of time and long observation of men he may acquire a physiognomical intuitive knowledge, judge the interiors by the outside, and raise conjectures at first sight.”

(2) Life begins at seventy, because we are then nearer the river that has no bridge and, once across that stream, life that is eternal has begun. For, as Robert L. Stevenson puts it in his lines to John Brown:

*“There are kind hearts still for friends to fill
And fools to take and break them;
But the dearest friends are the auldest friends
And the grave’s the place to seek them.”*

After seventy the great cloud of witnesses around us is no longer a dim mist of unrecognized figures. We can distinguish them clearly, and the count is every year larger. Some of them beckon to us, and that is why our best days may be those lived nearest to heaven and the great company of those who have already crossed over the divide. That may account for the far-away look of those who formerly were, perhaps, near-sighted and narrow-visioned.

(3) Life begins at seventy because then we have passed our tutelage and apprenticeship in the school of life. We are said to retire from active service. Others sit in our places of responsibility. The daily round and the common or uncommon task is now a

matter, not of necessity, but of freewill. It is an escape from the bondage of Egypt (and its flesh-pots) into freedom. Metaphorically speaking, Egypt has only one dimension—it is long as the Nile which flows on forever. It is a land of no breadth, has no mountain heights and no deep mines of wealth. After seventy we can enter the goodly Land of Promise, walk through all its breadth, sink shafts to find new lodes of treasure, and climb the snow-covered ranges. Pisgah and Nebo come after the desert wanderings. Life may not last much *longer* at seventy, but it should be *broader* and *deeper* and *higher* than at seventeen or thirty-seven. Real life has four dimensions.

Cicero does not hesitate to compare youth and middle age to the drudgery of the sailor in the forecabin and old age to the privilege and responsibility of the pilot.

“Those, therefore, who allege that old age is devoid of useful activity adduce nothing to the purpose, and are like those who would say that the pilot does nothing in the sailing of the ship, because, while others are climbing the masts, or running about the gangways, or working at the pumps, he sits quietly in the stern and simply holds the tiller. He may not be doing what younger members of the crew are doing, but what he does is better and more important. It is not by muscle, speed, or physical dexterity that great things are achieved, but by reflection, force of character, and judgment; in these qualities old age is usually not only not poorer, but is even richer.” The crowning glory

of old age, when it is found in the way of righteousness, is influence—that ubiquitous and inseparable part of personality which, like our shadow, grows longer as the sun of life declines.

(4) Life begins at seventy because of *memory* and *imagination*. We can look further backward and further forward. At seventy we stand near the crest of the hill while, looking backward, we have the memory of two generations and the footprints of our predecessors, as well as of our contemporaries, to study. Modern history is stored in our own private library, and we can read it even when our eyes are dim. Looking forward, we have the joy of anticipation and the revelry of a pure and healthy imagination such as that of the poet who dreams of a new earth, or like the seer of Patmos with his vision of the Holy City. After seventy we can cross the delectable mountains and enter Beulah Land. As John Bunyan tells us:

“In this country the sun shineth night and day; wherefore it was beyond the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and also out of the reach of Giant Despair, neither could they from this place so much as see Doubting Castle. Here they were within sight of the city they were going to; also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for in this land the Shining Ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven.”

(5) Life begins at seventy because at this age we should at long last learn that life consisteth not in the

abundance of things we possess. At seventy we may surely cease to grasp and hoard and lay up treasures on earth. We have time now to take an inventory of all the things in our coffers and cellars and garrets that are best gotten rid of, as wise travelers do and marked: "Not wanted on the voyage." Job's words should often be our meditation: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither." Carlyle's "*Sartor Resartus*" has a good chapter on the same subject. And the Apostle draws the sensible conclusion: "We brought nothing into the world, neither can we carry anything out." It seems obvious, therefore, that every man should be his own executor and start giving away (if not on a large scale, like Carnegie and Rockefeller, at least according to his measure) before his hands or will suffer from senile paralysis. At seventy, if not before, ye should "make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." It is a terrible thing in a world like ours to die like the rich fool who built larger barns at seventy! Here is a beatitude for octogenarians: "Give and it shall be given unto you good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over." For "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

*"The angels from their thrones on high
Look down on us with pitying eye
That where we are but passing guests,
We build such strong and solid nests;
And where we hope to stay for aye
We scarce take pains one stone to lay."*

(6) Life begins at seventy with new responsibility. The writer of the Seventy-first Psalm looks back: "By thee have I been holden up from the womb . . . Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth." But he also realized the responsibility of old age to work till daylight fades, for the night cometh when no man can work. The task of old age, according to the Psalmist, is twofold: to give thanks to God for the past, and to witness for God to the rising generation. There is a peculiar privilege of old age. When our old jobs are taken away; when others are sitting in the places we once called our own; when, *nolens volens*, we are retired, let us accept our lot gracefully, although the blow come suddenly. The poet of the *New York Herald-Tribune* was only half right when he wrote:

*"Our tasks may glow like jewels or excoriate like gins,
But, once their motive is withdrawn, the deadly ebb
begins:*

*We call it 'hardened arteries,' 'pneumonia,' and 'flu,'
But men will die of heart-break when they've nothing
left to do.*

*The useful art of patricide, to an impartial mind
As practiced in these later days seems gentler, more re-
fined*

*Than when they led their aged out, defenseless (there's
the rub)*

*To line them up against a wall and kill them with
a club.*

*The method of the modern world is more humane and
neat—
We do not push them off the cliff or fatten them to
eat—
But weary sands are running out, the twilight closing
gray,
The doom of death's upon them, when we take their
jobs away.*

But there is one job that no one can take away, because only old age can fulfill its requirements: it is to show God's strength to the rising generation and His power to every one that is to come (Psalm 71:18). Even among primitive tribes, such as the Gallas and Masai, there is the custom of age-grades and the institution of the elders who are the repositories of tradition and custodians of the tribal secrets, at once the heirs of the past and the pledge to posterity. All the sturdy strength of primitive social life rests on this high respect for old age; and Confucius built Chinese civilization on the same rock foundation. At seventy we are heirs of the past, but no less do we hold in trust a heritage for the future which we must hand over as faithful trustees. The tales of a grandfather may inspire callow youth to new heroism and deeper patriotism. Old age is the custodian of contemporary history, and history is philosophy teaching by example. All this makes life worth living at seventy and beyond.

(7) Finally, at seventy life for the Christian becomes more strenuous, more deadly earnest. He must redeem

the time because the days are evil. Paul, the aged, pressed toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. His candle burned brighter until the perfect day. There was no let-up in his apostolic activities. The life of Raymund Lull the mediaeval missionary, affords another example. He writes: "Men are wont to die, O Lord, from old age, the failure of natural warmth and excess of cold; but thus if it be Thy will, Thy servant would not wish to die; he would prefer to die in the glow of love, even as Thou wast willing to die for him." And when he was over eighty on his way to preach Christ to the Mohammedans of North Africa, he exclaims:

"As a hungry man makes despatch and takes large morsels on account of his great hunger so Thy servant feels a great desire to die that he may glorify Thee. He hurries day and night to complete his work in order that he may give up his blood and his tears to be shed for Thee."

Horatius Bonar put it for himself and for us all in two stanzas of a forgotten hymn:

*"Sin worketh, let me work too;
Sin undoeth, let me do.
Busy as sin my work I'll ply
Till I rest in the rest of eternity.*

*"Death worketh, let me work too;
Death undoeth, let me do;
Busy as death my work I'll ply
Till I rest in the rest of eternity."*

And the Master Himself told us: "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work."

And as we work and wait day by day in the twilight of life no prayer is more fitting than that of the ancient collect of which I found a copy, beautifully printed, on sale in Salisbury Cathedral:

"O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life, until the shades lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done.

"Then, Lord, in Thy mercy, grant us safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

V

IS SUICIDE SIN ?

IS SUICIDE SIN ?

EVERY year in our country some twenty thousand discouraged, despairing, desperate men and women take their own lives. It is also clear from statistics that suicide is on the increase. The mood that prompts it is produced in every financial crisis or national disaster. It may be brought on by ill-health, unemployment, debt, loneliness, disgrace, or the fear of the law in the case of criminals. In every case a wave of despair warps judgment, confuses the mind and deadens the conscience. Yet those who know the facts and have studied statistics never hesitate to tell us that the vast majority of the ever-increasing number of those who put an end to their own lives do so with deliberation and therefore are accountable to God and society for the act they commit. We do not judge those who have lost their reason or (what is far more rare) are temporarily insane. Such are not always responsible for their conduct. But he who deliberately contemplates suicide and then commits the deed is guilty before God and man.

This is the well-nigh universal verdict even among

primitive races and according to all the great religious leaders of the ages. The Dyak headhunters of Borneo have no high code of ethics and yet when a very rare case of a wife committing suicide occurred, we are told that "all the relatives stood over the corpse and beat it unmercifully, accompanied with loud denunciation of her action because she had by the act disgraced the whole tribe." Here, as among other races, the suicide did not receive honorable burial.

Plato and Aristotle both objected to self-destruction as cowardly and an offense against the state. Plato also declared it unnatural since a man is his own closest friend. When some of the Stoics suggested suicide as the way out of misery in the presence of Epictetus he said: "Wait for God, sirs; when he gives the signal and sets you free from this your service, you shall depart to Him. For the present endure to live in the place where He has stationed you. Wait, do not depart unreasonably." Only those Greeks and Romans who denied personal immortality ever advocated suicide. The Buddhist religion condemns it: "Any monk who says, do away with this wretched life full of suffering and sin, death is better, preaches murder and is a murderer." Buddhist saints and Hindu saints never commit suicide in spite of all their ascetic practices. Religious opposition to suicide is found in all strata of civilization and in nearly all the ethnic faiths.

Suicide is not once referred to in the Koran and was probably rare among the Arabs, even as it is today. But it is strictly forbidden in the Traditions. We are told that the Prophet refused the funeral rites to a

suicide and I remember an unusual case in Eastern Arabia where a Moslem suicide was summarily buried and a red cross marked on the grave to warn the passer-by of the horror! Paradise is closed forever to the Moslem suicide, although an exception is made when the suicide is clearly unintentional.

It is reported by Bukhari that Mohammed said: "Whosoever shall kill himself shall suffer in the fires of hell and be excluded from heaven forever." And no funeral prayer is said over him. Suicide is very rare in Moslem lands just because of the nature of a Moslem's belief in God and in a future life. He accepts all of life's events with submission as a divine appointment and will not gamble with eternity.

The teaching of the Bible in the Old and New Testaments leaves no doubt that all murder is sin and he who sheds his own blood is as guilty as he who sheds the blood of another. Only five cases of suicide are mentioned in the Bible. The story of poor, deluded King Saul and his armor-bearer on the field of battle; of Ahithophel, the traitor; of Zimri, the usurping King of Israel who reigned for seven days; and Judas Iscariot, the son of perdition who betrayed our Savior with a kiss. Who would care to be numbered in their company? Read the account so tragic and you have the verdict of God's Word on this act so contrary to nature:

"Then said Saul to his armourbearer, Draw thy sword and thrust me through therewith; lest these un-circumcised come and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his

armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died" (I Chron. 10:4).

"And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father" (II Sam. 17:23).

"Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself" (Matt. 27:3-5).

Job and Jeremiah despaired of life and were sorely tempted but never thought of taking their own lives. It was the enemy of souls the devil, who tempted our Lord to suicide when he put Him on a pinnacle of the Temple; and Christ's answer to this challenge for spectacular display was, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." When the Philippian jailer drew a sword, during the earthquake, to put an end to his own life for fear of the Roman law of execution, Paul dissuaded him, saying, "Do thyself no harm." Both Christianity and Judaism have always denounced suicide as a sin against one's own soul. The Rabbis and the church Fathers are at one in condemning it. St. Augustine, during the dreadful days of the Hun and Goth invasions told Christian women not to commit suicide, although they

feared violation, because the latter was only the unwilling pollution of a body, but the former was the death of the soul. St. Thomas Aquinas denounced suicide as unnatural, contrary to charity, an offense against the community and a usurpation of God's power to kill and make alive.

Suicide is not only presumptuous, it is cowardly. The one who commits suicide refuses to play the game of life to the end. John Stuart Mill says that every suicide betrays lack of moral fiber. What right has a man who is losing the game to blow out the candle or brush the chess-men off the board? Why not take defeat honorably? Why not endure to the end and wrest victory from the very jaws of defeat? The alternative to suicide is to gain new desire to live from the source of all life, God—to lay hold of Christ, who was tempted in all points like as we are but without sin, and find in Him comfort, strength, hope and forgiveness. Suicide is possible only when a man fails to think the matter through. It is always a half-measure and settles no problem for anyone. Shakespeare, the great interpreter of life puts it all on the lips of Hamlet in his soliloquy:

*“To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?—To die,—to sleep,—
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;*

*To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause:*

*. . . the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of!
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all."*

Statistics regarding the present-day methods of suicide show that thirty-three percent of the victims try to end their lives by the use of gas—to sleep and die. Twenty percent do so by hanging themselves, following the method of Judas the Traitor; sixteen percent by leaping from high buildings or bridges; eleven percent by the use of poison; twelve percent by the use of firearms. Of those who took their own lives fifty-nine percent were married, the remainder single, widowed or divorced. There were twice as many men as women who committed suicide. These statistics cover the period of 1932-1936 and relate to 95,574 cases.

The National Save-a-Life League of New York is perhaps the leading Christian agency to study and to combat this problem by sympathy and personal work. Religion seems to have a modifying influence on suicide, according to statistics gathered by S. De Jastrzebski (Encyclopedia Britannica). Jews are less prone to it than Roman Catholics, and the latter than Protestants living under similar conditions. The variation is great in different countries for which statistics are available.

Among the lowest rate he lists Chile, Spain, the Netherlands and Italy. Among the lands where the highest rate prevails are France, Austria, Germany and Hungary. Japan has a notoriously high rate of suicide while California ranks highest among the states of the U. S. A. "A careful investigation gives the impression that from a variety of causes the number of actual suicides is understated to a greater or less extent." Everywhere the rate seems to be in an upward direction!

With these facts before us we may well ponder and broadcast Hamlet's soliloquy. It is a problem for society as well as for the individual. Human life is not cheap. Christ died for us all. We are therefore His possession.

Suicide is sin because it betrays a trust. The greatest gift anyone has is life. Who would spill it on the ground, and not rather treasure its every drop in the chalice God has given us? Suicide is sin because it seeks to usurp the function of the angel of death. He will come soon enough and without being summoned. Suicide is sin because it betrays impatience with men and with God. Those who possess their souls in patience and have learned to wait on God and rest in Him are never tempted to put an end to their existence. Suicide is the coward's exit from the stage of life. It is heroic to face every kind of difficulty and to meet every obstacle with unruffled spirit, to fight the good fight until the end and to keep faith with our friends and with God.

Suicide is sin because it dishonors God. He is the giver of life and the upholder of life. To commit suicide is to push your way into the very presence of

the Judge of all men, of the King of kings, before you are summoned. Suicide is a sin against our own conscience; to think twice is to avoid it. Suicide is supreme folly and such foolishness is sin. "Whoso findeth me findeth life and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: All they that hate me love death." "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of the deeds done in the body."

VI

PERPETUATING OUR HERITAGE

VI

PERPETUATING OUR HERITAGE*

THE Pilgrim Fathers of New England left a large legacy of high ideals, noble vision, and of bed-rock principles which are our common heritage. On our library shelves there are five little books published by the Oxford University Press, all of high value. They are entitled: *The Legacy of Greece*, *The Legacy of Rome*, *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, *The Legacy of Israel*, and *The Legacy of Islam*. They seek to give an illuminating account, from every angle, of the debt we owe to these great races and cultures of the distant past. One could compile a sixth volume: *The Legacy of the Dutch*.

Greece, Rome and the Middle Ages have come to an end but what they wrought for humanity and the rich Legacy of Israel in the Old Testament are still with us. The legacy of which I speak, however, is not that of brave little Holland, her literature, her traditions of democracy, her glorious history, her priceless contribution to the fine arts and the foundation of inter-

* This chapter is based on an address delivered on Tuesday, February 9, 1937, in Hope College Chapel, Holland, Michigan, on the Ninetieth Anniversary of the Colonization of Western Michigan by the peoples of the Netherlands.

national law. Every cultured man knows of these. The heritage that holds our attention at this hour, more especially, is the heritage of the Pilgrim Fathers of the West—our forefathers in Michigan.

The most colossal figure in the Old Testament is Abraham. By faith he became the father of all the Pilgrim fathers of history. "For he looked for the city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God." He had a wealthy home at Ur of the Chaldees, but became an exile for the sake of founding a nation and inheriting a land of promise.

There have been such pilgrims in every age and nation. Pioneer spirits who heard the call of the inaudible voices, who saw the gleam of the invisible, who had so deep a sense of vocation that they welcomed hardship and rebuff, whose eyes were ever on the intangible realities of the distant horizon of their dreams. They traveled unbeaten tracks, bridged rivers, crossed seas, and then (like Isaac of old) fulfilled the threefold destiny of true colonizers. We read: "*He pitched his tent He dug a well He builded an altar*"—the trinity of true civilization. The home, public service, and worship. At long last, from that tent our Savior came; from that well He drank, and that altar-worship He fulfilled. What more does the abundant life offer than these three?

When Dr. Isaac N. Wyckoff, in 1847, met the Dutch immigrants at Albany he said: "They are the most lovely and noble Christians I have ever seen. They remind me of the patriarchs, their faith is like Abraham's." His judgment may have been over-

friendly, but it was not superficial. Those who came to Michigan in 1847 had spent forty-nine days on the voyage, facing hardship, sickness, and death. Yet Van Raalte, their leader, tarried but one day in New York City, and then pressed on by river steamer to Albany, then by train to Buffalo, by boat to Detroit, and on, westward, to Kalamazoo and Allegan. What was their urgent quest? Why did they leave their fatherland and make the venture of faith?

One of their own number gave answer in a letter, written December, 1847: "I have found here those things for which I journeyed and which I expected: absolute freedom of worship and education, without any severe laws against the Word of God, and opportunity on every side."

Here, in a sentence, we have their motives, their ideals, and their glory. Civil and religious liberty, instead of the regimentation of the State Church of the Netherlands; education that was Christian in its broadest sense and aims; finally, economic opportunity for a rugged individualism that, for lack of social freedom, was facing cruel poverty and starvation. Read the records of the successive groups that came from 1847 to 1857, and you will find these three motives and ideals prominent and persistent.

These dour Calvinists were not perfect. They had their faults and their limitations; their Puritan prejudices against music and their sad tendencies to fissiparous ecclesiastical division. Their views were at times narrow but their horizon was large. Their ideals were high and their convictions went down to bed-rock. As

Bancroft says, "A Calvinist and a coward never went together." Calvin believed in democracy and therefore we note that their first ideal was:

I. CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY. They sought in America what they had not found in the Netherlands of their day. Many of them had been imprisoned or fined for public preaching or for private worship. One of the Zeeland company had, among other books for the long voyage, a copy of "Benjamin Franklin's *Constitution of the United States*, translated into Dutch." They were American citizens at heart before they reached Castle Garden! They were the true spiritual descendants of William the Silent in their hatred of tyranny; and of Groen van Prinsterer and Bilderdijk in their outspoken plea for liberty of conscience.

James Bryce, in his great study on the American Commonwealth, pays high tribute to our national government and gives a hint of its foundations.

"All the main features of the government may be deduced" (he says) "from two principles. One is the sovereignty of the people who alone can amend the Constitution. The second is that of distrust of the various organs and agents of government. Each organ of government, the executive, the legislative, the judiciary, is made a jealous observer and restrainer of the others."

And then he goes on to say:

"The American Constitution is based on the theology of Calvin and the philosophy of Hobbes. It contains a hearty Puritanism. It is the work of men who believed in original sin and were resolved to leave open for

transgressors no door which they could possibly shut."

Presbyterian Church government and American democracy are twin sisters in believing with Chief Justice Marshall that "because power may be abused is a conclusive reason why it should not be *unconditionally* confirmed."

The Pilgrim Fathers of Michigan were loyal Americans from the day when Van Raalte met Judge Kellogg of Allegan. De Volksvergadering which they held on arrival, corresponded to the New England town-meeting and included all the adult male members of the community. In 1851 Henry Griffin came from Grand Haven and made out wholesale naturalization papers for three hundred men in Holland, one hundred in Zeeland, and forty in Vriesland! The Hollanders of Michigan were never hyphenated-Americans, but loyal citizens with only one flag—the Stars and Stripes.

When the Civil War broke out, no section of Michigan was more loyal to the Union and laid a larger offering of life on the altar of patriotism than the Dutch colony. The preachers were first in their call to arms, and more than four hundred of the young men volunteered for the army, including Dirk, the son of Van Raalte. They knew the price once paid for civil and religious liberty in the war against Spain by their forefathers, and would pay it again.

Democratic government, free institutions and popular education are traceable to Geneva and John Calvin. No less an authority than Green in his *Short History of the English People*, says:

“Grave as we may count the faults of Calvinism, alien as its temper may be in many ways from the temper of the modern world, it is in Calvinism that the modern world strikes its roots, for it was Calvinism that first revealed the worth and dignity of man. Called of God and heir of heaven the trader at his counter and the digger of the field suddenly rose into equality with the noble and the king.”

But this plant of true democracy is heaven-born and will never flourish in any other atmosphere. As Daniel Webster said:

“If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instruction and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity.”

The Dutch settlers came here because they sought liberty. They knew that the great structure of our Federal and State governments was not put up by jerry-builders who sought office, nor was it built at haphazard. The ship of state had a Master builder and God’s providence had raised up men for the hour and the task: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton and their colleagues. They have indeed had successors but no equals. Such a galaxy of stars came into conjunction only once under the blue dome of our national existence.

Groen van Prinsterer and Bilderdijk, two of the Dutch classical writers known to all the emigrants, were not ignorant of these American institutions.

They knew that the ship of state was indeed launched in dark days and had passed through stormy seas, and the Hollanders of the West sang with Longfellow:

*“We know what Master laid thy keel,
What workman wrought thy ribs of steel;
Who made each mast and sail and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge, and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope.”*

Do we still believe, as they did, that there is nothing wrong with America that cannot be made right by the orderly processes of constitutional democracy? In an hour of dictatorships, when in Germany and Italy, in Japan and the Soviet states, civil and religious liberty are disappearing, we must remember that against such tyranny was framed the barrier of a Constitution which separates the local and the state governments from the national governments, and which built the federal union like an ocean liner with water-tight compartments.

The very genius of the American Constitution is the clear-cut division between the Legislative, Judicial and Executive functions of good government. Each is independent of the other and all are mutually united to a common end—liberty and opportunity for all.

II. THEIR SECOND AIM WAS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR THEIR OWN CHILDREN and to give light for those “who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide their footsteps into the way of peace.” It was in the consciousness of the Lordship of Christ that our forefathers sacrificed their all in the cause of Christian edu-

cation and to send the good news to other lands. They believed in higher education and they believed in missions.

An institution is the lengthened shadow of a man. Hope College is the lengthened shadow of Van Raalte. Long before 1847 the Netherlands held preëminence in popular education. "It was a land," says Motley, "where every child went to school, where almost every individual inhabitant could read and write; where even the middle classes were proficient in mathematics and the classics and could speak two or more modern languages." Among the first free schools in our country were those established by the Dutch settlers of New York. The pioneers of education in this colony lived before the horse-and- buggy age. They had only oxen and uncovered wagons. But the hardships of life and its utter simplicity only stimulated their desire for education.

There was no James Farley in those days to issue commemorative stamps (the nearest postoffice was Allegan). But had there been, the stamp would have shown Van Raalte superintending the building of Van Vleck Hall, or the little company in prayer at the laying of the keel of a missionary ship! In 1850, they had purchased a sailboat and called it the Knickerbocker. They secured an appropriation from Congress for their harbor. And then their missionary enthusiasm suggested the building of a ship to carry the Gospel beyond the seas! As early as 1851 they had resolved "to use fifteen percent of their church money for Foreign Missions and fifty percent for Home missions," and this while they were also establishing a college for the training of preachers!

The outreach of such benevolence was perhaps typified by the collection-bag with its ten-foot pole!

The London Missionary Society had its *Morning Star* carrying good tidings to the South Seas, and the American Board also used this agency. The idea, therefore, of the immigrants, among whom were artisans and sailors, to build a ship was not unique. Their faith was. They planned the very route for the ship that was to carry missionaries and missionary supplies to all parts of the world.

Such gigantic faith seems to us and today almost grotesque, but they had the courage of their convictions and although the keel rotted away and the ship never sailed, Hope College sent out a larger number of missionaries than any other institution of its size in North America.

The rich heritage of such consecration of childhood to the ministry and such a glorious company of the apostles who, today and here, are like a cloud of witnesses, should make us ashamed of any lower ideals and of all selfish living. The Pilgrim fathers also sought:

III. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR THEIR RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM. These were not timid souls nor soft seekers of ease and pleasure that came to find a balmy climate and an Arcadia or Eldorado. No. They were, all of them, men and women of iron soul and rugged determination. They bade

“ . . . welcome each rebuff
That turned earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand,
but go.”

Pioneers who blazed new trails; road-builders through the forest-wilderness. Van Raalte deserved the very title the Pope has appropriated, *Pontifex Maximus* — Chief Bridge-builder. He bridged the gulfs of nationality and language and ecclesiastical difference and landed his colonists into a new spiritual climate, a new patriotism and a new economic order.

To read the story of the sea-voyage in that day is to realize the sharp contrast between their daily distress and their ghastly primitive hardship, and our ease and comfort in what we are pleased to call tourist-class. Listen to my own father's story of his forty days' voyage:

“On the fifth of July, 1849,” he wrote in his diary, “everything was ready and we went on board. Everything included boxes and bundles and food enough for sixty days if need be. A committee had been appointed and their restrictions regarding food supply were strictly followed. A sort of cabin and kitchen had been arranged on the poop deck where the immigrants cooked their food and every day they received an allowance of fire-wood; water was handed out to each passenger by measure. By patiently waiting and standing in line, everybody received his share, and the work in the kitchen went forward, but the water supply was very meager, and everyone carefully husbanded his store. There were one hundred twenty-eight Hollanders in our party, all from the Island of Zeeland, and fifty Germans.”

Trouble began early when they discovered a thief among their company, who had been robbing his fellow passengers until he was discovered and placed in confinement for the rest of the voyage. After four weeks of

calm weather a storm broke loose which lasted for many days. Waves dashed over the ship and carried away the open hearth, scattered firebrands which caused an alarm of fire. "The ship continued to toss from side to side on the waves. Although we were below deck, the water leaked in profusely. There was no danger, but it was disagreeable. When night came we were forbidden to light the four or five lanterns which were under the poop decks. This was to prevent the danger of fire. Most of the immigrants spent the night in prayer. When morning came we had only the light through one of the portholes near the gangway. So much water leaked through the portholes that on the lee side of the ship, in the hold, the water stood as high as the lower bunks. Some said the ship was sinking." Storm at sea, however, was not the only hardship. "It was easy for us to put a guard against thieves, but not against death. Seven little children of the Dutch emigrants died during the very long voyage and were buried at sea."

When the immigrants arrived, their troubles were not over—they only began. Their grit and dogged determination overcame cold, hunger, peril, disease and disaster. The women of the colony deserve double praise. They bore all the hardships of the Pilgrim Fathers, and besides that, they had to get along with the fathers themselves, also.

No self-indulgence was possible in such environment. Each contributed his talents for the common good, yet each stood on his own feet and worked out his own economic salvation without fear or trembling.

They had learned in the school of life what *Poor Richard's Almanac* taught the New Englanders, namely, that two plus two equals four, and that economy and thrift are the very basis of individual and social security. No one received government aid or pension. There was no bread-line. Each baked his own bread in the sweat of his own brow.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke, in his *Spirit of America*, calls attention to this trait of the pioneers of the West. The cheerful optimism which attempts the impossible and glories in the attempt.

"The typical American," says he, "is a person who likes to take care of himself, to have his own way, to manage his own affairs. He is not inclined to rely upon the State for aid and comfort. He wants not as much government as possible but as little. He dislikes interference. Sometimes he resents control. He is an individual, a person, and he feels very strongly that personal freedom is what he most needs, and that he is able to make good use of a large amount of it.

This rugged individual self-reliance made some mistakes—Van Raalte did—but it shunned delays, evasions, despair. It was the spirit that begat explorers, missionaries, inventors, masters of industry. It delivered the poor man from the fetters of poverty and the lowly from obscurity by opening doors of opportunity to all.

The people of Michigan in those days believed what President Grover Cleveland said long years afterward: "Though the people should support the government, the government should not support the people." Van Raalte's whole policy in the new colony was based on thrift and

industry, on education and self-reliance, on a home and a church and a state where true liberty was enthroned.

Now we need not be philosophers or historians to realize that there never was a time when such ideals were demanded more than at the present hour. Dictatorships and the regimentation of the totalitarian states across the seas are challenging the very Preamble to the Constitution and the foundations of democracy. Van Raalte and his little band of Calvinistic folk, who prized liberty of person and of conscience, went to prison, were buffeted and ostracized by the state church because they refused to submit to spiritual and intellectual regimentation. No one can read the story of the days in Holland before the emigration to 1847 and fail to admire their heroism.

They passed through water and through fire in their struggle for freedom. On one occasion when forbidden to hold service in their homes, and driven from the churches they came by boats and skiffs to meet on a small schooner out at sea. Even here they were molested, wounded and rudely dispersed by military police. But as they scattered in their boats to reach home, Dominie Brummelkamp announced Psalm 68:1 and they sang the Marseillaise of Calvinism, *De Heer zal opstaan tot den strijd*, in defiance of their foes! These heroes of the faith, these men of prayer, considered life a moral battlefield. They spoke of it as *strijdperk van dit leven*, and being engaged in conflict with supernatural foes and supernatural allies, they put on the whole panoply of God. They were not ashamed of the source of their strength. They believed in God and sought His face.

Their whole creed could be summed up in the lines so often sung in the log-church and at their public gatherings—lines which embody at once belief in the divinity of man and the sovereignty of God, in human destiny and human achievement. (It is the Dutch rhymed version of Psalm 89:16-18):

*Gij toch, Gij zijt hun roem, de kracht van hunne kracht;
Uw vrije gunst alleen wordt d' eere toegebracht;
Wij steken 't hoofd omhoog, en zullen d' eerkroon
dragen,*

*Door U, door U alleen, om't eeuwig welbehagen;
Want God is ons ten schild in 't strijdperk van dit leven,
En onze Koning is van Israels God gegeven.*

Shall we not remain loyal to such a priceless heritage of ideals, the symbol of which is not tulips and wind-mills and wooden shoes, but an open Bible, a family altar and faith in God? These are the ideals which this great gathering recalls and commemorates.

May we not borrow the words of one, among the earliest of those who left their own land and kin for another people, and whose name is enshrined in the genealogy of our Lord—the Pilgrim saint of Moab:

“Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Jehovah do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.”

*“Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to thee till death.”*

VII
EVOLUTION OR REVELATION

VII

EVOLUTION OR REVELATION*

IN the sixteenth edition of a popular account of the great religions of mankind, Lewis Browne relates in the prologue how he thinks it all began:

“In the beginning there was fear and fear was in the heart of man; and fear controlled man. At every turn it whelmed over him, leaving him no moment of ease. With the wild southing of the wind it swept through him; with the crashing of the thunder and the growling of lurking beasts. All the days of man were gray with fear, because all his universe seemed charged with danger. . . . And he, poor gibbering half-ape, nursing his wound in some draughty cave, could only tremble with fear.”¹

The evolutionary hypothesis seems to have the right-of-way not only in such popular works by non-Christians but with Christian writers as well. We quote from two recent works on the study of the history of religion: “There was a belief once that religion began with a full knowledge of one true God and that thereafter through

* A portion of this chapter is taken from *The Origin of Religion*, copyright 1935, and is used by permission of the publishers, Cokesbury Press.

¹ *This Believing World*, 16th Edition, p. 26.

human fault and disobedience the light of the first splendid vision was clouded or lost. But this is not the story told by the assembled records. The story of religion is not a recessional. The worship of sticks and stones is not religion fallen into dark, it is religion rising out of the dark. The procession of the gods has been an advance and not a retreat. The faiths of the dark and the dawn are not 'a sleep and a forgetting'; they are man's religious awakening and his first suppliant gesture toward the unseen. Why did he make the gesture?"² While Professor E. D. Soper in his *Religions of Mankind* puts it even more frankly:

"Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans alike assumed a primitive divine revelation, and that settled the whole question. They conceived that in the beginning—that means when the first man was created and placed in the Garden of Eden—God revealed to him in some manner the essential truths of religion, such as the existence of one God, the obligation to obey Him, and the hope of immortality. Thus furnished, he began his career, but when sin emerged the revelation became hazy and indistinct and finally was well-nigh if not completely lost. The difficulty with this exceedingly fascinating picture is that it rests on no solid foundation of fact. The Bible makes no clear statement which would lead to this conclusion. When man began to play his part he performed religious acts and engaged at times in a religious ritual; so much is evident, but nothing is said as to origins. That man received his religious nature from God is very plausible, but that differs widely from the state-

² G. S. Atkins, *Procession of the Gods*, p. 5.

ment that he came into life furnished with a full set of religious ideas. The theory of evolution presents us with a very different account of early man, an account which makes belief in a more or less complete revelation incongruous.”³

According to writers of the same school, the Hebrew religion itself is entirely due to a process of evolution. Yahweh was from time immemorial the tribal god of the Midianites and his abode was Mount Sinai. From the Kenite priest, Jethro, Moses gained the knowledge of Yahweh. So the later covenant at Sinai is presented in the form that Israel chose Yahweh, not that Yahweh chose Israel. Volcanic phenomena account for the terrors at the giving of the Law. There was an ancient pastoral feast called Passover, and it is not impossible that a form of the seventh-day Sabbath was imposed. “Beyond these points it is hardly possible even to hazard conjecture.” Later on, much later on, the prophets proclaimed a higher conception of deity as Lord of all and a universal morality.⁴ Here again we have the hypothesis of evolution applied to the documents and teaching of the Old Testament, and the argument has become familiar.

But the verdict is not unanimous. In an important work by Dr. Israel Rabin, entitled *Studien zur Vormossaischen Gottesvortellung*, this orthodox Jew protests against the view that monotheism was a later development in Israel and that it was preceded by polytheism and animism. Not only Moses, he says, but the Patri-

³ E. D. Soper, *Religions of Mankind*, pp. 29-30.

⁴ W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore Robinson, *Hebrew Religion, Its Origin and Development*, pp. 4-16, 22, 23, 175, etc.

archs were already monotheists. "The Covenant idea is as old as Abraham, and the Covenant at Sinai is history, not fiction. The God of Sinai is no mere mountain-god nor local Kenite god. Monotheism is not the result of an evolutionary process, it rests upon revelation and existed from the beginning of Israel's history as portrayed in Genesis; there is no bridge from polytheism to monotheism." There is no bridge from polytheism to monotheism unless it be for one-way traffic across the chasm in the other direction. For those who accept the Old Testament and the New Testament as the Word of God the idea of primitive monotheism seems self-evident. On the first page of Genesis we have the self-revelation of God, and the New Testament takes for granted the genuineness of this revelation. Those who reject the story of man's Creation and Fall with the promise of Redemption can no longer take seriously the argument of the Apostle Paul in his epistles to the Romans and to the Corinthians.

In the history of religion and in the study of the origin of the idea of God, the neglected factors are coming to their own. Entirely apart from the teaching of the early chapters in Genesis and Paul's statement in the first chapter of Romans, the evidence for primitive high gods and for early monotheism in the ethnic religions cannot be longer ignored. Recent scholarship on both sides of the Atlantic agrees that not evolution but innate knowledge, or revelation, is the key to the origin of the idea of God, of immortality and of the rites of prayer and sacrifice.

The first modern writer to emphasize the fact that

monotheistic ideas were found among the primitive races and must be taken into account was Andrew Lang in his book, *The Making of Religion*.⁵ In 1924 Redan delivered an address before the Jewish Historical Society on monotheism among primitive peoples, in which he also rejected the evolutionary hypothesis. "Most of us," said he, "have been brought up in or influenced by the tenets of orthodox ethnology and this was largely an enthusiastic and quite uncritical attempt to apply the Darwinian theory of evolution to the facts of social experience. Many ethnologists, sociologists, and psychologists still persist in this endeavor. No progress will ever be achieved, however, until scholars rid themselves, once and for all, of the curious notion that everything possesses an evolutionary history; until they realize that certain ideas and certain concepts are as ultimate for man as a social being, as specific physiological reactions are for him as a biological entity."

It is encouraging to note that the tide has turned and that we have, especially on the European continent, outstanding scholars in this field who hold fast to supernaturalism and are opposed to the evolutionary hypothesis as the sole key to the history of religion. Among them we may mention the late Archbishop Söderblom, of Sweden, Alfred Bertholet and Edward Lehman, Alfred Blum-Ernst, Le Roy, Albert C. Kruijt, but especially P. Wilhelm Schmidt, founder of the anthropological review, *Anthropos*, and Professor of Ethnology and Philology in the University of Vienna. The exhaustive work of this Roman Catholic savant on

⁵ London, 1898.

the Origin of the Idea of God, *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee*, is now completed in eight massive volumes. In the six which have already appeared, he weighs in the balance the various theories of Lubbock, Spencer, Tylor, Andrew Lang, Frazer, and others, and finds them all wanting. The idea of God, he concludes, did not come by evolution but by revelation, and the evidence massed together, analyzed and sifted with scholarly acumen, is altogether convincing.

Anthropology and ethnology are also swinging away from the old evolutionary concept as regards primitive races. Dr. Robert H. Lowie of the American Museum of Natural History, in his recent important study on Primitive Society, says, "The time has come for eschewing the all-embracing and baseless theories of yore and to settle down to sober historical research. The Africans did not pass from a Stone Age to an Age of Copper and Bronze and then to an Iron age. . . . they passed directly from stone tools to the manufacture of iron tools."⁶

He concludes "that neither morphologically nor dynamically can social life be said to have progressed from a state of savagery to a stage of enlightenment." The American public is to be congratulated that the exhaustive work of Wilhelm Schmidt has now appeared in a greatly abbreviated form,⁷ and translated from the original German, is available as a study text-book on

⁶ Dr. Robert H. Lowie, *Primitive Society* (13th Edition, N. Y., pp. 436, 437).

⁷ *The Origin and Growth of Religion: Facts and Theories*, by W. Schmidt. Translated by H. J. Rose. The Dial Press, N. Y., 1931, p. 297.

the History of Religion. Whatever may be the reaction of students of anthropology to a doctrine alien to the tradition still prevailing among many scholars, it will do no harm to face the arguments here presented with such force and apparently so well documented. The *London Times Literary Supplement*, in reviewing the book at considerable length, did so under the title, "Evolution or Eden." It is inevitable that Dr. Schmidt divides investigators of the history of religion into two classes—the believing and the unbelieving. By the latter he means those scholars who have themselves repudiated all faith in the supernatural, and "will talk of religion as a blind man might of colors, or one totally devoid of hearing of a beautiful musical composition."

Dr. Schmidt follows the historical method, and traces the belief in a supreme God across wide areas where primitive culture prevails; for example, among the Pygmies of Africa, the Indians of North America, and certain tribes in Australia. The last chapter of this epoch-making book is entitled, "The Origin and History of the Primitive High God," in which we have the summary of the argument:

"That the Supreme Being of the primitive culture is really the god of monotheism, and that the religion which includes him is genuinely monotheistic—this is the position which is most attacked by a number of authors. To this attack we may reply that there is a sufficient number of tribes among whom the really monotheistic character of their Supreme Being is clear even to a cursory examination. This is true of the Supreme Being of most Pygmy tribes, so far as

we know them; also of the Tierra del Fuegians, the primitive Bushmen, the Kurnai, Kulin and Yuin of South-East Australia, the peoples of the Arctic culture, except the Koryaks, and well-nigh all the primitives of North America.”

Again in massing the evidence for the character of this Supreme Being, he says:

“The name ‘father’ is applied to the Supreme Being in every single area of the primitive culture when He is addressed or appealed to. It seems, therefore, that we may consider it primeval and proper to the oldest primitive culture. We find it in the form ‘father’ simple, also in the individual form (‘my father’) and the collective (‘our father’). So far, this name has not been discovered among the Central African Pygmies, but it exists among the Bushmen and the Mountain Dama. It is lacking also among the Andamanese and the Philippine Negritos, but is found, although not commonly, among the Semang. Among the Samoyeds we find the formula ‘my Num-father,’ *i.e.*, sky-father. In North Central California, the name occurs among the Pomo and the Patwin; all three forms of it are widely distributed among the Algonkins. It is also widely current among the two oldest Tierra del Fuegian tribes, the Yamanan and the Halakwulup who use the form ‘my father.’ Among all the tribes of South-East Australia it is in common use, in the form of ‘our father.’ There it is the oldest name of all, and even the women and children know it; the oldest of the tribes, the Kurnai, have no other name for Him. There is no doubt possible that the name ‘father’ is intended in this connection to denote,

not physiological paternity (save in cases where the figures of the Supreme Being and of the First Father have coalesced) but an attitude of the greatest reverence, of tender affection and steadfast trust on the part of man toward his God."

The evidence for these astonishing statements is abundantly given in the larger eight-volume work to which we have already referred. Incidentally he proves that this pure religious faith comes *before* fetishism, animism, ghost-worship, totemism, or magism, from one or other of which evolution theories had derived the origin of religion. The Professor claims to have made it clear by his discoveries that "progressive evolution is not the key which opens the door to a true history of humanity, and consequently of man's religion." The peoples ethnologically oldest know nothing of totemism or any similar phenomena, but emphasize in their religion the creative power of the Supreme Being. Not evolution, but deterioration, is found in the history of religion among primitive tribes and the higher cultures that followed after their migration. As Dr. Schmidt expresses it in the concluding paragraphs of his earlier volume:

"Thereafter, as external civilization increased in splendor and wealth, so religion came to be expressed in forms of ever-increasing magnificence and opulence. Images of gods and daimones multiplied to an extent which defies all classification. Wealthy temples, shrines and groves arose; more priests and servants, more sacrifices and ceremonies were instituted. But all this cannot blind us to the fact that despite the glory and wealth of the outward form,

the inner kernel of religion often disappeared and its essential strength was weakened. The results of this, both moral and social, were anything but desirable, leading to extreme degradation and even to the deification of the immoral and anti-social. The principal cause of this corruption was that the figure of the Supreme Being was sinking further and further into the background, hidden beneath the impenetrable phalanx of the thousand new gods and daimones.

“But all the while, the ancient primitive religion still continued among the few remainders of the primitive culture, preserved by fragmentary peoples driven into the most distant regions. Yet in their condition of stagnation, poverty and insignificance, even there it must necessarily have lost much of its power and greatness, so that even among such peoples it is much too late to find a true image of the faith of really primitive men.”

In *Africa*, a journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (July, 1931), London, Professor Dr. K. T. Preuss, of the University of Berlin, had a striking article on the conceptions of a Supreme Deity among primitive peoples, and his conclusions corroborate those of Dr. Schmidt. The reader may, however, ask whether Dr. Schmidt speaks with authority in this realm of knowledge or whether he is merely voicing the old orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic Church and, in this case, of evangelical Christianity. The answer is that Dr. Schmidt makes no appeal to the Scriptures and (writing from the standpoint of anthropological science) gives no Scriptural references. He bases his whole argument on the data gathered by scores of observers

and scholars who lived among Primitives. Father Wilhelm Schmidt is the most renowned of the group of scholars resident at St. Gabriel Scientific Institute in the suburbs of Vienna.

But Dr. Schmidt is not the first or only authority on primitive monotheism over against other theories for the origin of religion. Over fifty years ago Dr. Francis L. Patton summed up the argument for his day ("The Origin of Theism," *Presbyterian Review*, October, 1882):

"It is more important to note the fact that, aside from the declarations of Scripture upon the subject, there is good reason to believe that Monotheism was the primitive religion. And it is certainly true that polytheism, fetishism, and idolatry are corruptions of an earlier and purer faith. 'Five thousand years ago the Chinese were monotheists—not henotheists, but monotheists; and this monotheism was in danger of being corrupted, as we have seen, by a nature-worship on the one hand and by a system of superstitious divination on the other.' So says Dr. Legge. And says M. Emmanuel Rouge: 'The first characteristic of the religion of ancient Egypt is the unity of God, most energetically expressed.' Says Le Page Ranouf: 'The gods of the Egyptian as well as those of the Indian, Greek, or Teutonic mythologies, were the "powers" of nature, the "strong ones," whose might was seen and felt to be irresistible, yet so constant, unchanging, and orderly in its operations as to leave no doubt as to the presence of an ever-living and active intelligence.' Says Professor Grimm: 'The monotheistic form appears to be the more ancient,

and that out of which antiquity in its infancy formed polytheism. . . . All mythologies lead us to this conclusion.' This, too, was once the belief of Max Müller, though, as has been shown, his opinions seem to have undergone a change under the pressure of a demand that religion shall be accounted for as a product of man's five senses. "The more we go back, the more we examine the earliest germs of any religion, the purer, I believe, we shall find the conceptions of the Deity, the nobler the purposes of each founder of a new worship.' "

Stephen H. Langdon of Oxford, comes to the same conclusion in a recent book dealing with the whole question of the origin of Semitic mythology. His conclusions are the more worthy of note because they represent the result of thorough investigation and are a complete denial of the earlier theories of W. Robertson Smith.

"After long study of the Semitic and Sumerian sources, I have become convinced that totemism and demonology have nothing to do with the origins of Sumerian or Semitic religions. The former cannot be proved at all; the latter is a secondary aspect of them. I may fail to carry conviction in concluding that, both in Sumerian and Semitic religions, monotheism preceded polytheism and belief in good and evil spirits. The evidence and reasons for the conclusion, so contrary to accepted and current views, have been set down with care and with the perception of adverse criticism. It is, I trust, the conclusion of knowledge and not of audacious preconception.

"The Semitic word for 'god' meant originally, 'he who is high,' a sky-god; and here also I believe that

their religion began with monotheism; they probably worshiped El, Ilāh, as their first deity, a sky-god, corresponding to the Babylonian Anu, and the Greek Zeus. . . . In the minds of the earliest Sumerians *dingir* Enlil, *dingir* Enki, etc., really mean An-Enlil, An-Enki, etc., that is, Enil, Enki, etc., are only aspects of the father Anu. On seals of the pictographic tablets and on painted pots of that prehistoric period, the picture of a star constantly occurs. This star sign is almost the only religious symbol in this primitive age. *These facts cannot be explained without assuming monotheism in the beginning.*"⁸

The fact is that the evolutionary theory as an explanation of early history is more or less being abandoned. It has raised more difficulties than it has explained. Professor Dr. J. Huizenga, of Utrecht University, gave an address on the history of human culture in which he actually defended this thesis: "The evolutionary theory has been a liability and not an asset in the scientific treatment of the history of civilization."⁹

The degeneration theory (that is, in Scriptural language, the fall of man) is gaining adherents among ethnologists who are not theologians. Among them is R. R. Marett, who speaks of ups and downs in the history of religion and whose recent lectures on "Faith, Hope and Charity in Primitive Religion" are the very opposite of proof for the evolution of the religious idea. Not only was incest a crime but monogamy was the

⁸ Cf. *Mythology of all Races*, Vol. V, *Semitic*, Stephen Herbert Langdon, M.A. (pp. xviii, 93). (London, 1931).

⁹ Quoted in Alkema and Bezemer's *Volkenkunde van Nederlands Indie* (Haarlem, 1927), p. 134.

earliest form of marriage among the most primitive tribes. Primitive man believed in immortality and after a fashion, in a world beyond.

“Neanderthal man, to whom we grudge the name of *Homo sapiens*,” says Marett, “achieved a future life. There can be no question, I think, that the experts are right in attributing to him deliberate burials with due provision for a hereafter. It is even noticeable that funeral custom is already beyond its earliest stage. At La Chapelle-aux-Saints, for instance, not only is the grave neatly dug and food laid by conveniently but a cave too small for habitation has evidently been selected for a purely sepulchral purpose. If there was a time when the dead man was simply left lying by himself within his own cave-home, or when, perhaps, the dying man was prematurely abandoned we are well past it.”

Dr. Carl Clemen also finds evidence for religion during the palaeolithic period, such as belief in a future life, sacrifice, etc.,¹⁰ while in his latest book on the “Fear of the Dead in Primitive Religion,” Sir James G. Frazer uses these remarkable words:

“Men commonly believe that their conscious being will not end at death, but that it will be continued for an indefinite time or forever, long after the frail corporeal envelope which lodged it for a time has mouldered in the dust. This belief in the immortality of the soul, as we call it, is by no means confined to the adherents of those great historical religions which are now professed by the most civilized nations of the world; it is held with at least equal confidence by

¹⁰ *Urgeschichtliche Religion*. Bonn, 1932.

most, if not all, of those peoples of lower culture whom we call savages or barbarians, and there is every reason to think that among them the belief is native; in other words, that it originated among them in a stage of savagery at least as low as that which they now occupy, and that it has been handed down among them from generation to generation without being materially modified by contact with races at higher levels of culture. It is therefore a mistake to suppose that the hope of immortality after death was first revealed to mankind by the founders of the great historical religions, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam; to all appearance, it was cherished by men all over the world thousands of years before Buddha, Jesus Christ and Mohammed were born."

If we have belief in immortality, faith, hope and love, knowledge of a High-god or Sky-god and conscience with its taboos and dread of judgment (and all this anthropology now admits in primitive religion), how does that primitive man of ethnology psychologically differ from Adam in the Garden of Eden as portrayed in the Book of Genesis?

Le Roy, after twenty years among the tribes of Africa, states that

"When you have lived with primitives a long time, when you have come to be accepted as one of them, entered into their life and mentality, and are acquainted with their language, practices and beliefs, you reach the conclusion that behind what is called their naturism, animism or fetishism, everywhere there rises up real and living, though often more or less veiled, the notion of a higher God, above men,

names, spirits and all the forces of nature. Other beliefs are variable, like the ceremonies attached to them, but this one is universal and fundamental.”¹¹

The religion of primitive tribes in West Africa always includes five elements, all of which are impossible to explain without accepting the fact that *God has spoken* (Heb. 1:1). These five elements are: An organized family life; a name for a supreme, unseen Power, sovereign and benevolent; a moral sense, namely, of truth, justice, shame and a knowledge that there is good and evil; the idea of “soul” in every African language and the universal belief that this soul does not die with the death of the body; and, finally, communion with the unseen Supreme Power by prayer and sacrificial rites. Before such facts the hypothesis of a primitive revelation takes on every appearance of truth.

The evolution hypothesis in religion has been overworked, and has seriously embarrassed students of religion who have grappled with the problem of sin, its universality, and the universality of its correlative, namely, *conscience*, that is, a sense of sin as a subjective reality. In the history of religion and in the study of the origin of the idea of God, scientists may no longer neglect the early chapters of Genesis and the statement of the Apostle Paul in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. Revelation, and not evolution, is the key to the origin of the idea of God, of prayer, of sacrifice and of conscience.

In this connection we recall words of the late Alexander Whyte. In his interesting series of studies in Bible

¹¹ Religion of the Primitives.

characters in the first volume, speaking of Adam, he takes up the question of evolution and makes a clear distinction between biological evolution in the realm of biology and evolution as an attempt to explain origins in religion. We believe that this distinction should be carefully observed. *The two problems in anthropology to which evolution has no solution are those of the origin of sin and the conscience on the one hand, and the other the origin of the Sinless One and redemption.* Here follow the weighty words of Dr. Whyte:

“As we are carried away by the spell of the great writers on evolution, we feel all the time that, after all has been told, there is still something unrecognized and undescribed from which we suffer the most disturbing and injurious influences. All the time we feel in ourselves a backward, sideward, downward, perverse pull under which we reel and stagger continually; it is an experience that makes us wiser than our teachers in some of the most obscure, but at the same time some of the most certain matters of mankind and their spiritual history. Speaking for myself, as I read the great books of our modern scientific men with a delight and an advantage I cannot put enough words upon, I always miss in them—in them all and in the best of them all—a matter of more importance to me than all else they tell me. For, all the time I am reading their fascinating discoveries and speculations I still feel in myself a disturbance, a disorder, a disharmony, and a positive dislocation from the moral, and even from the material, order of the universe around me and above me: a disorder and a dislocation that my scientific teachers neither ac-

knowledge nor leave room for its acknowledgment or redress. That is magnificent! That is noble! That is divine! I exclaim as I read. But when I come to the end of my reading—Is that all? I ask. I am compelled by all my experience and all my observation to ask, is that all? Is that your very last word to me? Then, if that is all, I must go still in search of a philosophy of nature and of man that understands me, and accounts for me, and has, if so be, a more comprehensive, a more scientific, a more profound, and a more consoling message to me. In one word, and to speak out of the whole of my disappointment and complaint in one word, What about *sin*? What is *sin*? When and where did *sin* enter in the evolution of the human race and seize in this deadly way on the human heart? Why do you all so avoid and shut your eyes to Sin? And, still more, what about JESUS CHRIST? Why do I find nothing in your best text-books about HIM who was WITHOUT SIN? About Him who is more to me, and to so many more of your best readers, than all Nature, and all her suns, and systems, and laws, and processes put together? Far more. For He has carried both our understanding and our imagination and our heart so absolutely captive that we cannot read with our whole heart the best book you have written because His name is not in it. WHO and WHAT is HE, we insist, who has leapt at a bound above all law and all order of matter and of mind, and of cosmic and ethic evolution, and has taken His stand of holiness at the head of the human race?"

VIII

THE CHOIR-LOFT AND THE PULPIT

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AS we all know, Jubal Cain was from the beginning “the father of all such as handle the harp and the organ.” His descendants are as the stars of heaven and the sands of the seashore for multitude. The history of music is the fascinating story of the progeny of Jubal Cain and there is no nation or tribe or kindred, no theater, music hall, church or chapel which is not indebted to their genius. A crude sketch of a woman twanging the strings of a harp has been found in the pavement at Megiddo, dating before 3,000 B.C. The history of the modern pipe organ leads us back to the Pan-pipe, the syrinx, and the hydraulic organ of the Greeks. “In former centuries,” says D. Batigan-Verne, “pipe organs were seldom to be found outside places of worship, but at the present day they are built for use in concert halls, cinematograph theaters, and in many playhouses of the United States and Canada. On a theater instrument one may expect to find chimes, bird-whistle, xylophone, marimba, drums, triangle, castanets and many other ‘traps’ as they are called for the greater delectation of King Demos.”

Jubal Cain has conquered both the secular and sacred spheres. One has only to read the church notices in the metropolitan press or listen to the radio to realize how music monopolizes the sanctuary at Advent or Easter. And the worshiper finds a musical festival of many symphonies where he expected to hear of the significance of the Incarnation or the glorious hope of the Resurrection.

Dr. Alexander Whyte, in a pungent sermon on the rightful place of the organ and the choir in public worship, says:

“The experts in that kind of history tell us that all the evidence that is forthcoming goes to prove that the apostolic and post-apostolic churches did not make much use of musical instruments in public worship. And the reasons they give for that state of things—a state of things so unlike the Church in Israel in ancient times, and the Church Catholic in modern times—are such as these: The poverty of the people; their persecuted and unsettled condition; and the fact that all the musical instruments then attainable had become incurably tainted with the theatrical and other immoral associations of that dissolute day. But it is pointed out that as time went on, and when the Christian faith and the Christian worship became the faith and the worship of the empire, then Jubal came back again; till, as we know, in some parts of Christendom today he takes up the whole time and performs the whole service.”

That is the very difficulty some of us old-fashioned folk have today. We love the Psalms and the hymns of the ages and to the extent of our very limited ability

we appreciate good music. But when the music director and the choir take up most of the time and dictate a tune even to the Creed and the Lord's prayer-with-a-sevenfold-Amen, we lose patience. For everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven. A time to sing and a time to refrain. A time "to make a joyful noise unto the Lord" with all the stops open, and a time for "all the earth to keep silence before Him." A time (even in a Presbyterian church it seems) for processions, interludes, responses, solos, quartets, and recessionals; but also a time for hearing God's Word read and expounded in a language understood by the people who are not musical.

No one desires a return to the barren and bald Puritanism of our forefathers which was perhaps a revolt against the ornate service of the Mass or the High Anglican ritual. Yet there is surely a golden mean, and the pastor who has not abdicated the holy function of directing public worship to others, not ordained to the office, may welcome four suggestions.

1. Music and singing should not usurp the sermon and occupy a disproportionate part of the brief period allotted for worship. Count the items on some Orders of Service and use a stop-watch if necessary. The result is indeed surprising if fifteen minutes of the hour are left for the preaching of the Word. "The use of musical instruments," wrote Jeremy Taylor (Volume XIV of his Works, pages 115-117), "may also add some little advantage to singing; but such instruments are more apt to change religion into airs and fancies, and to take off some of its simplicity. Organs are not so

fitted as sermons and Psalms are for edification. The music of instruments of itself does not make a man wiser; it does not instruct him in anything. At the same time, I cannot condemn it if it be employed as an aid to true psalmody. And yet, at its best, music must not be called so much as a circumstance of divine service, for that is the best that can be said even of the voice itself." And then he goes on to fortify his argument by quoting from Aristotle, Justin Martyr, Aquinas, Chrysostom and Basil.

2. The words used by choirs or soloists should be understood by the listeners. Endless repetition does not atone for indistinct enunciation. One is reminded of the sailor's definition of an anthem, to his ignorant comrade: "An anthem is like this. If I were to say to you, Bill, give me that handspike—that would *not* be an anthem. But if I sang out, Bill, Bill, Bill, give me, give me, that handspike, spike, Amen, Amen—that would be an anthem." "So likewise ye," said Paul, "except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air." Five words with the understanding are worth ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. Yet we have heard Latin chorals, German lullabies, and French pastorals from Presbyterian choir-lofts. What, then? "I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding, also." Else how shall he who occupieth the pew of the unlearned say Amen (or listen to a seven-fold Amen), seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? "All wise and sober persons," says Jeremy Taylor, "do find fault, when the psalmody, which is

recommended to us by the practice of Christ and His apostles, does sensibly pass further into art than into religion, and serves pleasure more than devotion; when it recedes from the native simplicity and gravity, which served the affections and holy aspirations of so many ages of the Church; when it is so conducted that it shall not be for edification, that is, when it is made so accurate and curious that none can join in it but musicians."

3. There should be an inner unity in public worship. Therefore irrelevance or incongruity in the selection of music mars the service and jars the spiritual sense of the worshiper. But we can expect nothing else when the organist and choir operate independently, without knowledge of the preacher. In a church at Albany, New York, and by request, I sent in my subject, "Missions a Warfare," with suggestion of appropriate hymns. Neither pew nor pulpit could resist a smile when they read that Sunday on the bulletin the two additional selections before and after the sermon: "Peace, Perfect Peace," and "Crossing the Bar"! Pulpit supplies, doubtless, suffer the most from this particular evil and the stories told are as numerous and humorous as they are unedifying. An electric push-button is not at all sufficient provision to connect choir and pulpit for true edification and inspiration in worship, if we seek the unity of the Spirit.

4. The technique and mechanisms of musical training should not be in evidence on the Lord's Day save as a result. Real art is to conceal art. When the painting is finished we do not expect to see palette and brushes

suspended from the canvas. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work to train a choir if need be; but on the Sabbath one likes to see not the process, but the accomplishment. As when the angels sang at creation and it was all very good. Vestments, rhythmic-march, reverence, posture, all these are impressive and have their place. But why the podium, the baton, the gesticulations and the interchange of facial grimace to inform the tenor or contralto of some technical faux-pas? It seems to me we Presbyterians can learn much from our Episcopalian brethren in this matter of concealed technique and reverential self-effacement in the choir stalls. But the pastor must exercise his rightful authority. Be a leader and do not be led. Several members of a catechumen class in one of our largest Chicago parishes, it is reported, when asked what is the ruling body of a Presbyterian Church? wrote as their reply—the choir! Remember the Arab proverb about the camel who got his nose in the tent, and assign Jubal Cain his proper place when he enters the sanctuary.

IX

“NOW CONCERNING THE COLLECTION”

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IN ALL the Greek manuscripts of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians there is not even a semicolon to divide the glorious fifteenth chapter on the Resurrection from the statement at the beginning of the sixteenth chapter: "*Now Concerning the Collection.*" For a Christian to believe in the living Redeemer and to abound in the work of the Lord implies regular offerings, gifts and self-denial to support this work. Paul was an example and an inspiration to all missionaries and to all Christians—he was not ashamed of the "collection plate." He wrote elsewhere very plainly "concerning giving and receiving." He raised money for missions and for the poor of the church. He himself was generously supported by the Church at Philippi. To the same Corinthian church he wrote in his second epistle: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." There is no moral duty more clearly taught in the Bible than the duty of benevolence and the blessing of beneficence. It is a mark of saint-

hood. He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." These words of Jesus occur in each of the synoptic gospels—thrice repeated for us, they emphasize the truth, "how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God" (Matt. 19:24).

In the Acts of the Apostles we have many instances of the social applications of the Gospel. The early church had learned benevolence and systematic giving (I Cor. 16: 1-3; II Cor. 8: 7; Rom. 15: 27; II Cor. 9: 1-7). Many of our churches today are burdened with mortgages and debts; but these are not an excuse for holding back our gifts to missions. They are rather an incentive to do so. Dr. Ross W. Sanderson, the executive secretary of the Council of Churches of Buffalo, New York, wrote in the *Buffalo Evening News* (November 18, 1939):

"I have a simple formula for the more rapid canceling of many of these church debts. It is so simple that many will regard it as only a wild idea. Yet it is the sort of idea that God blesses. If I were the minister of a parish church faced with a troublesome church debt, the first thing I would try to do would be to lift the level of the church's giving to foreign missions. There are more non-Christians in the world now than there were ten years ago. Money and workers from the 'sending countries' are relatively considerably less than they were a generation ago. Instead of evangelizing the world we are luxuriating in church debts. These debts must be paid. I am just old-fashioned enough to believe that the church which

increases its missionary giving will be able to solve the problem of its own finances more quickly. In worldly finance, what you spend for one thing you can't use for another. Spiritual arithmetic is different. Jesus' word to the individual is true for churches also: 'Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.' This is not merely a matter of my private opinion. There are plenty of statistics and experiences to prove it, especially among churches whose members are in the lowest income bracket."

A careful study of New Testament teaching in regard to regular gifts for the spread of the gospel and of Paul's own experience in the churches of the Philippians will prove the truth of the words quoted from Dr. Sanderson. Let me recount some of my own experience in this matter. The modern missionary, like Paul, still carries the bag and makes appeal for benevolence to missions. It is not surprising that he must give of his time and strength when on furlough to secure from the Church at home money for the enterprise. All missionaries at some time or other try it. Some succeed, and some fail. But the experiences one has in being God's beggar on the doorsteps of Dives and the company of his poorer brethren are priceless, whether one meets with liberal gifts or niggardly refusals. The same plea meets with varied response. My experience (in this sheaf of stories) is like that of the American soldier in the World War, who was successively billeted in an Irish, an English and a Scotch home. In each place he asked for more sugar in his tea. The Irish woman said,

“Here’s the bowl, help yourself”; the English lady said, “Pass your cup and I’ll give you a second lump”; while the Scotch housewife looked dour while asking, “Mon, have you stirred it?” However, I have met Scotch givers who were Irish in passing the bowl of sugar. It is not a matter of nationality but of education and consecration.

The acid test of our love to Christ and His kingdom is stewardship. The Master still sits before the treasury and weighs our contributions as He did those of the rich Pharisees and the poor widow. It is not an easy task to raise money for missions, and I have often comforted myself by the words of Dr. Arthur T. Pierson: “We know that the rich man opened his eyes on a different scene, but the beggar landed in Abraham’s bosom.” I have met with rebuff on several occasions during the past fifty years, but the recollections of those who gave hilariously (II Cor. 9:7) and liberally stand out in my memory.

There was a Sioux County farmer in Iowa who heard of Arabia when I was ordained as missionary. His own pioneer experience responded to such an appeal and I recall how he supported our first native evangelist. His letters in Dutch, and those from Kamil Abdul Messih in Arabic, crossed the seas and, after translation, joined hearts in prayer for several years.

Another wealthy farmer was the greatest hog-raiser in his county and his state. His hogs took the blue-ribbon prizes but his heart was that of the Gadarenes. One day, as he himself told me, he received an impudent and threatening letter from gangsters in the

county-seat. It was signed with skull and cross-bones and spoke of murder unless "you skinflint, you put two thousand dollars in a cigar box under a stone at the crossroads." In great fear he spread the letter before the Lord, as did Hezekiah of old. He prayed that God would deliver him from the gang, who apparently meant business, and vowed to make restitution to God. He paid his vow over and over again to the cause of Christian education and missions; nor was he ever molested. His children, I believe, have followed the good example of their father and the whole community is still noted for liberality in missionary gifts.

The largest gift I ever received for missions was from a godly and wealthy lady in Chicago. At that time I was making an effort to raise ten thousand dollars for the Nile Mission Press in Cairo. Dr. John Timothy Stone, pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church, generously gave me five minutes at the close of the morning service, to present the need of Christian literature in the world of Islam. No one else responded to the appeal at this service, but this lady invited us to luncheon and to my amazement gave her check for the whole amount. There had been prayer in Cairo and in Chicago. When there is prayer the windows of heaven are often opened and God pours out a blessing far beyond our expectation.

In sharp contrast to such beneficence was an experience in Philadelphia where, at the close of a service (more than twenty years ago) in which I had spoken of medical missions in Arabia, two ladies dressed in fine sealskin coats tarried to meet the preacher. They said: "We really could not go without giving you some token

of our interest in your great work . . .” and, believe it or not, when I had thanked them warmly and opened my closed hand in the vestry, the image and superscription was that of an American twenty-five-cent piece.

The following week I was in Rochester, New York. It was a very cold day; I called on an old friend who sold automobile accessories. He remarked that my light overcoat was unsuited except for Arabia, took down an expensive fur-lined overcoat, and insisted that I pay for it and wear it. He looked at the sales tag and said, “The price of this to you is twenty-five cents—no, I am not joking—pay me the sum and then we’ll go to lunch together.” I told him the Philadelphia story, and paid the quarter. Later, the coat was bequeathed to a Dakota missionary who used it for many years. This Rochester friend kept a tithing account in his bankbook (as I learned after his death). His son showed the account to me and at the top of each page of benevolences were the words: “W. R., in account with his Redeemer.” This man knew the real meaning of stewardship and his life was a benediction to all who knew him.

It is a spiritual tonic to meet such business men. He was like the Philadelphia lawyer to whose office the late Fennell P. Turner and I went to solicit a gift for the Student Volunteer Movement. “Gentlemen,” he said, “you need not waste your time or mine by long speeches. I know your cause and believe in it. If my funds allow, I shall give you a check.” Then he rang for his secretary.

“Can the tithing account stand another hundred?”

“No, it is overdrawn.”

"The special account?"

"No."

"Well, then, draw a check on the special, special account."

He explained that this account consisted of receipts from debts unexpectedly repaid after long standing!

"I owe my Lord more than these debtors owe me," he said with a smile. The whole transaction took less than five minutes.

The secret of the willing mind and the liberal hand is to realize the Lordship of Christ over our lives and His constant presence with us. In July, 1918, we were soliciting gifts for missions among the farmers of Sioux County, Iowa. An earnest deacon drove me from farm to farm and nearly everywhere in that prosperous year the farmers gave liberally. We came one day at the breakfast hour to the home of one of the wealthiest farmers, but my guide said there was no use going in to ask this man. "He is very close-fisted, although his wife is a liberal soul."

I responded we would better try, since he could not do more than say no. As my guide had expected, the farmer refused bluntly. His wife entered a plea but he would not yield an inch. As they were disputing whether to give or not to give, I asked playfully, "Who is the head of this house, you or your wife?" Both deferred to the other. Then to my delight I saw a wall-motto hanging over the living-room table: *Jesus Christ is the Head of this house; the unseen guest at every meal; the silent listener to every conversation.* I pointed to it as the answer to my question. Without another

word, the farmer took a check-book from his overall pocket and wrote a larger sum than any of us had expected. The deacon was most of all surprised and led in a prayer of thanksgiving.

If Jesus Christ is our personal Savior, He will, as D. L. Moody once said, make us understand that "salvation is purse-and-all."

Time would fail to tell of other experiences and of the joy that comes to those at the battle-front when reinforcements of men and money are forthcoming. The Philippian Church was Paul's joy and crown. How often they cheered him by their freewill offerings, so that even in prison he was "their own missionary" and they became an example to all the churches of Asia Minor, even to the Corinthians (Philippians 4: 15, 16).

"Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Now concerning the collection."

In the program of missions the local church is naturally interested in the question of per capita gifts. Whether there is a budget that includes all the benevolences of the Church, or whether the church membership is allowed to contribute as they think best to the various Church agencies, the reports that are prepared always designate how much each local church, and therefore how much each member, gives on an average for the extension of God's Kingdom at home and abroad.

A simple division of the enrolled membership into the total contributions gives the result *per capita*.

Our difficulty “concerning the collection” is that we have lost the significance of the words *per capita*. When we count only the heads of the congregation, we somehow miss the faces that stand out in the great cloud of witnesses—the apostles, pioneers, and martyrs. We also fail to measure our *per capita* by that of the missionaries who are sent to the foreign field to represent us. A study in this respect would yield larger benefit than other surveys and estimates and would answer the question, Are we doing what we should do for the cause of missions?

When an expert stenographer leaves a New York office, where she can command fourteen hundred dollars a year, to become a missionary in Arabia, in charge of educational work, at a salary of nine hundred dollars, as one did, what is her *per capita* for missions? When a graduate of a state university and of a medical school of international renown, a surgeon who has made his mark, serves on the border marches of civilization at less per year than he would receive for the performance of one major operation in New York City—how much is his *per capita* for the Kingdom of God? When a teacher, for the sake of the love she bears to the wounded Christ, accepts a position in one of our colleges in India at a salary far smaller than she would receive elsewhere, and bears the heat and burden patiently and bravely, what is her *per capita* for missions? How much was the widow’s mite *per capita* in the records of the Jerusalem Temple service?

We shall never understand the real significance of *per capita* until we stop counting heads in the congregation, and gaze upward to see the Head of our Lord.

*“O sacred Head, now wounded,
 With grief and shame weighed down,
 O kingly Head, surrounded
 With thorns, Thine only crown!
 O sacred Head, what glory,
 What bliss, till now was Thine;
 Yet, though despised and gory,
 I joy to call Thee mine.*

*“What language shall I borrow
 To thank Thee, dearest Friend,
 For this, Thy dying sorrow,
 Thy pity without end?
 Oh, make me Thine forever;
 Oh, may I faithful be;
 Lord, let me never, never,
 Outlive my love to Thee.”*

We may well remember that these words go back to Bernard of Clairvaux and the days of the Crusades, when men sacrificed all to win an empty sepulchre. How much do *we* sacrifice to proclaim a living Savior? Or is it possible that some of us have “outlived” our love for Him? If so, and we regain our first love, there is still the golden opportunity to show it by sacrificial giving and sacrificial prayer.

X

CHURCH UNION PLANS

X

CHURCH UNION PLANS

THE word Church appears nowhere in the Old Testament, although Stephen in his defense refers to the church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38). It occurs only thrice in the Gospel of Matthew and nowhere in Mark, Luke or John. But when we open the epistles we find the word and the idea everywhere. The Church is the spiritual body of Christ. When He ascended it became manifest to the world. Paul himself gives the word a Catholic definition: "The church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, . . . with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's" (I Cor. 1:2). This is a fit interpretation of the words of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." All true believers in Jesus Christ are Christians, churchmen, and Catholics—Christians because of their discipleship, churchmen, because they belong to the mystical body of Christ, and Catholics because they belong to the ecumenical community of One Lord, one faith, and one baptism. These terms are all-inclusive, comprehensive, and unifying.

At the basis of all discussions and disputes regarding church union, therefore, we find this fundamental fact. There *is* a vital, historical and world-wide unity of the church and there always has been and will be such a spiritual unity. Christ alone is the Vine, we are the branches. He is the Head over all and every church-group or individual is only a member of the one body which is Christ.

The world-wide unity of the church was symbolized in the ecumenical councils, from that of Nicea to that held at Tambaram, near Madras, in 1939. Not uniform nor equipment, but blood and sinews unite the body. If one member suffers, all suffer with it. It is a corporate unity.

*“I love Thy Church, O God;
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
Engraven on Thy hands.”*

I shall never forget the vivid impression I received of the essential unity of the church at the Herrnhut meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1932. That seems long ago and much has happened in Europe since, but the deep impression remains as an anchor for undiscourageable hope.

Most of the delegates arrived by way of Dresden, in a great German omnibus which drew up in the beautiful little square called Zinzendorf-Platz, after a seventy-mile drive southward through the rolling corn-fields and forests of Saxony. We were within sight of the mountains of Czecho-Slovakia, at the center of a Europe

that is passing through one of the major changes of history. As the men and women stepped out from the omnibus, the hospitable and kindly eyes of our Moravian hosts and hostesses looked into the faces of men and women, Indian, Chinese and Korean, Japanese, Belgian and American, Filipino and French, leaders of the Christian forces of every country in Scandinavia from Finland to Denmark, Dutch and Scottish, Canadian and Afrikaner, Mexican and English. They came also from the banks of the Nile, the Congo and the Yangtze rivers. These men and women had come across oceans and continents, drawn from absorbing tasks at great cost of time, to this little tranquil town of sixteen hundred inhabitants, hidden among quiet hills, remote from the roar of cities and the turmoil of industries. We belonged to many denominations, cultures, races, and, doubtless, had diverse prejudices. Yet we were all conscious of an inner unity in diversity.

There was outspoken reality and no shrinking from the issues that were at stake; no deferred hope made hearts weak but courage rose with danger. Again and again, in single sentences, a window was opened into dramatic new situations that startle and challenge. What a world of suffering and gallant courage is, for instance, revealed in the simple statement that "forty-nine churches of Korean Christians have recently been closed in Siberia by the Soviet Government, many of the Koreans taking refuge in Manchuria, and that in response the Korean Church itself is carrying out a special evangelistic forward movement among those people in Manchuria."

Similar heroic advances in face of humanly impossible conditions of chaos and economic terror in China, in face of terrible distraction in Japan, in the midst of national unrest in India, were reported. A stirring picture of the apostolic travels of a pastor touring the villages of Siam, and the wonderful work of a group largely of young folk bearing their witness, brought thrill and cheer from an unexpected quarter. From the Philippine Islands came a picture of a Youth Movement based on the three principles of reaching youth through youth, of moral and social as well as spiritual uplift, and of the union of all the churches, in face of the vast multitudes of youth detached by modern secular materialism from all Christian loyalties, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant.

These great spiritual movements, the growing self-consciousness of the indigenous churches and the present financial stringency at home, all united to summon us to closer and wider coöperation. This was evident in all the discussions at Herrnhut. Problems that are common, face every missionary society in the world today; no one society can possibly grapple with them, for they need the mobilizing of the wisdom, the experience, the leadership and influence of all in the light of God's leading. We are bound in practice of coöperation to find ourselves face to face with the tremendous questions of Faith and Order. Unless we are ready to go further, we have already gone too far. Is it not time, representing the missionary forces facing heathendom, to say to the churches in the home land, "It is your duty to come together, for divided you make it more difficult

to win the world for Christ?" Variety in unity is in accord with the will of God. The real breach is made by exclusiveness. Since then we have had the great ecumenical Conferences at Oxford and Edinburgh, as well as the proposed plan of a world unity of all Protestant Christendom, made at Utrecht. We may thank God that there is a growing sense of this corporate spiritual unity and that on both sides of the Atlantic there have been successful efforts to heal the unhappy historic divisions of Protestantism.

Thoughtful Christians in all lands are somewhat ashamed to sing: "We are not divided, all one body we, one in faith and doctrine, one in charity." Our multitudinous divisions are all too evident; also in many cases unexplainable and indefensible. As someone remarked: "So long as there is the heat of denominationalism or sectarianism in men's blood, they will block the manifestation of the unity for which Christ prayed. God never made Protestants, nor Episcopalians, nor Presbyterians, nor Congregationalists, nor any of sectarian name. He made Christians, and they chose to call themselves by less lovely names."

Yet when we look back to the glorious history of the church universal, what impresses us is not its weakness but its power; not its unhappy divisions but its essential unity. All human institutions have decayed or perished down the ages, save the Church of Jesus Christ. As Dr. Henry B. Smith put it:

"This is the only form of human society that has existed in the world from the beginning: it has seen the downfall of the hoary despotisms of the East; it

witnessed the youthful glories of Greece and also its decline; it was in being when Romulus built the walls of Rome, and was mightier still when the last Roman Emperor was driven from the eternal city; it assisted in the formation and also in the destruction of the Germanic Empire; it laid the foundations of the civilization of France, England, Russia, and America; it has given all the strength they have to all these nations; they have prospered in proportion as they have served Christ's kingdom."

The question of our day, however, is that of restoring the visible unity of the Church; of re-uniting that which was torn asunder during the Reformation days and the succeeding centuries. Our brethren in Canada and the various branches of the Methodist church have succeeded in binding together that which was broken. In the foreign field, especially in China, Japan and India, are outstanding examples of a re-united Church which are a reproach to Western Christendom.

Nevertheless, in this matter of church-union, which is very much in the air today, we need to remember the landmarks of our historic divisions and *first* bring together that which was lost in the breaking away. This seems self-evident and yet needs practical illustration. I call to mind a porcelain-mender whom I once saw at his work in Nanking, China. If Churchmen were as practical and manner-of-fact in their thinking as the Chinese artisan we would save ourselves much needless discussion. The porcelain-mender shows marvelous ingenuity and the practical common sense of the Chinese race. We cast away broken Chinaware; they mend it. The mender

crouches on his mat in a street corner; his only tools a keen eye, a clever hand and a small drill. He looks at the broken pieces. He says, "Can do." He fits each piece to its jagged fellow. He bores microscopic holes halfway into the broken edges, but the holes do not perforate even the most delicate porcelain. Then he fits small brass or silver-wire staples to each pair of holes. Presto, he returns the cup. And it will not only hold water, but shows scarcely a trace of being broken save on the outside!

Jeremiah was sent to the house of the potter to hear the word of Jehovah. Let us go to the pottery-mender of China and learn a practical lesson. The multiplicity and multitude of our sad sectarian divisions are so patent and painful that they recall Jeremiah's broken potter's vessel "that cannot be made whole again." God alone is able to restore our broken unity in all its apostolic glory. But we must face realities and learn from our Chinese mender-of-broken-porcelain. *We must first fit together the pieces where the original break occurred.* That's what the Methodists did at Kansas City and apparently succeeded. When men have tried to force jagged edges together, which never belonged to the same side of the chalice, by uniformity, instead of restoring union, the results have again and again been disastrous and often led to new breaks and leaks. The cup would not hold water.

It must be admitted, that in the realms of Faith and Order many past discussions have been far too academic, even at Edinburgh and Oxford. We have, in Western Christendom, many separations which are the

result of the divided secular history of Europe during the last four hundred years. Even in churches which already enjoy substantial agreement upon matters of Faith and Order, and which may be said to stand upon common ground as representatives of one or the other of the two contrasted types of Church, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, the prospect of corporate union is by no means clear or assured, for historic reasons.

Anglo-Catholics are always concerned about the question of orders, and will often have nothing to do with reunion except on their own terms. The Baptists and other Independents stress their own peculiar beliefs regarding the Church and its real membership to such an extent that the Evangelical mind cannot follow them. Very relevant, it seems to me, is the statement of the Friends in their Book of Discipline:

“We find the true bond of Christianity not in any statement of our common faith, not in any uniform system of church organization, not in any rite of which we all partake. We find it rather in the participation in a common inner life springing out of communion between the human soul and God, and expressing itself in the daily life of those who experience it.”

While we therefore look sorrowfully at the broken pieces in that great segment of the costly vase of the Apostolic Catholic Church (broken in Scotland and in the Netherlands and by the Mason and Dixon Line)—the Reformed-Presbyterian Churches, *let us first fit them together*. Church union, like charity, should begin at

home. Birds of a different feather flock together only by constraint, as in a tempest, and will not build their nests or rear their young in the same steeple-loft.

High idealism is good in its place and can be expressed by word and life and prayer in the language of the Society of Friends already quoted. But in the question of union with the Protestant Episcopal Church we Presbyterians will do well to be realists, to keep sober judgment and see if the pieces fit before we start riveting them together. Robert Browning shows us even a better way by reminding us what, after all, is the chief end of the chalice:

*“Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp’s flash and trumpet’s peal,
The new wine’s foaming flow,
The Master’s lips a-glow!
Thou, heaven’s consummate cup, what needst thou
with earth’s wheel?”*

*“But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moulded men;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake Thy
thirst:*

*“So, take and use Thy work!
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o’ the stuff, what warpings past
the aim!”*

*My times be in Thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete
the same!*

The chief end of the Church is to slake the thirst of the nations. To pour out Life to a dying world. All plans for union that will increase and not diminish the missionary efficiency of the various branches of the Christian Church are therefore to be heartily welcomed. But mere external union of pieces of the porcelain chalice that do not belong together will not make it hold water.

XI

MAHATMA GANDHI'S RELIGION

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MAHATMA GANDHI'S RELIGION

TO those outside of India it is increasingly difficult in these days to define the religion of this great soul whose name and title, whose fastings and political views have occupied so large a place in the press and on the platform. In June, 1931, Dr. Nicol Macnicol, writing in *The British Weekly*, said:

“The personality of Mr. Gandhi is at the present time a center around which fierce passions gather. To one group of extremists he is just a half-naked fanatic and a virulent anti-British agitator; to another he is a saint who can do no wrong, a semi-divine avatar. To others again, who try to see him with honest and unprejudiced eyes, he seems a man of true sincerity and great courage, deeply concerned for the poor and oppressed. At the same time he seems to them far from being perfectly wise, far from being wholly impartial, and indeed, in recent years, as Swami Vivekananda used to say of himself, to have ‘become entangled.’ His religion might be described, somewhat paradoxically, as that of a devout agnostic theist. He believes in, and practices, prayer, and certainly to him life is more than meat, and the body than raiment.”

Some years ago Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick spoke of half-hearted Protestants who have lost the inner experience of God and continued:

“The only religion that amounts to much exists in people in whose lives the divine is thus real. From men like Gandhi in India to men like Phillips Brooks in our own tradition, these are the flaming spirits who, amid the dust and ashes of conventionality, make genuine religion yet a living fire.”

It is a long, long spiritual trail from the sainted Bishop Phillips Brooks to Mr. Gandhi, “the devout, agnostic theist,” and if genuine Christianity embraces both in its living fire baptism, we surely need a new Christology. Everything is possible, however, in days of religious syncretism, especially if we believe with the late Bishop Frederick B. Fisher, another ardent admirer of the Great Soul of India, that it was fortunate that Gandhi read the Bhagavad Gita for the first time simultaneously with the New Testament, “which thus impressed the coming statesman-of-peace with the essential unity and idealism of all men and all religions.”

Gandhi is, however, a Hindu. He himself says so. All India knows it. And yet he writes to an American friend: “True, I am a Hindu and not a Christian, but there is more love in my heart for your Christ than there is in the hearts of many who have the audacity to call themselves Christians.”

The Christian contacts of Mr. Gandhi were early and many, but most of them were rather unfortunate, as Mr. C. F. Andrews shows in his illuminating chapter on the

subject. The tragic result of all these contacts with Christians and with the Bible has been a turning away from the Christ to other sources of light and truth and consolation.

“Today,” said Gandhi to Mr. Andrews, “my position is that, though I admire much in Christianity, I am unable to identify myself with orthodox Christianity. I must tell you in all humility that Hinduism as I know it entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being, and I find a solace in the Bhagavad Gita, and Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. Not that I do not prize the ideal presented therein; not that some of the precious teachings in the Sermon on the Mount have not left a deep impression upon me; but I must confess to you that when doubt haunts me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies, and if they have not left any visible and indelible effects on me, I owe it to the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita.”¹

We are not dealing here with Mr. Gandhi as politician, statesman, or leader of the National Congress of India; nor with his attitude toward Western civilization and our economic system. In every one of these aspects of his character and career there are glaring inconsistencies of statement and conduct. Reviling our machine-civilization in unmistakable terms and calling

¹ C. F. Andrews, *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*, p. 73.

India back to the spinning-wheel, he himself goes under the skilled surgeon's knife, speaks over the radio, travels by steamships, writes with a fountain pen, and has his messages recorded by gramophone.²

He is a combination of many characters and creeds and quirks. He writes:

"I do not disbelieve in idol worship. . . . An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol worship is part of human nature. I do not consider idol worship a sin." (See "Young India" by Mahatma Gandhi, published by S. Ganesan, Madras, pp. 801, 806-7.) "I know the vice that is going on today in all the great Hindu shrines, but I love them in spite of their unspeakable failings." (Quoted by C. F. Andrews in "Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas.")

The ascetic saint, the strenuous reformer, the polemical politician and the voluminous writer, all seem to combine in one indivisible personality. "His mind travels," as Arthur Duncan affirms, "in directions that are unknown even to Einstein." Those who care to study the mistakes of his political program and the tragedy of his failure in that self-chosen realm of achievement can read the story recorded by men of undoubted sympathy and love for India.

The distinguished Indian Christian lawyer, Cornelia Sorabji, had a long interview with Mr. Gandhi and came away with the impression of "a man exploited by others." A man undoubtedly vain, shrewd as a lawyer,

² Kenneth Saunders, *Whither Asia*, p. 217.

and clear-sighted to win over popular support. "To his shrewdness he adds an effective effrontery, waving paradoxes in the face of a world hypnotized by his oratory." Whether "this puzzling man, the great spiritual world leader and Messiah," is sincere, Miss Sorabji leaves in doubt. Even if the tumult and shouting of the Nationalist party should die and their former hero be himself aging and feeble in health, the opinion still persists among many well-informed people that Mahatma Gandhi is the greatest spiritual power in India today, and that he holds in his hands the destiny of all India. It is true that many missionaries also seem to have been carried away by what can only be styled the syncretism of Gandhi worship. Some hold that Mr. Gandhi is essentially a Christian. Some say that he is in some respects a truer exponent of vital Christianity than the great majority of those who call themselves Christ-followers. A leading missionary actually characterized him as "the greatest Christian yet produced by India." One prominent missionary, once pastor of a Christian church in America, actually said that if Christ were again incarnated, He would come just as Gandhi had come!

The late S. Khuda Bukhsh, one of the leading Moham-medan barristers of Calcutta, wrote:

"In this age of prattling politicians, cheap patriots, seekers after notoriety and place-hunters, it is an inestimable delight to hear the voice of one burning with truth and righteousness, and firm in his determination to uphold them, cost what it may. Such a voice heartens and braces us, and inspires in us a

conviction,—so sorely needed now,—that, even in modern India, there are men who will not be bought and sold—to whom the truth is the very breath of life, and service in the cause of their country the sole object of existence. Of this type are and have been the prophets who have led humanity through the wilderness to the promised land, standing four-square to all the winds that blow. And in India today, whose is such a voice? None other than Mahatma Gandhi's—a man who may be called the highest spiritual peak of his country—shining in radiant splendor, helping, uplifting, beckoning his countrymen to the heights whereon he himself stands.”

But there are Moslem voices which express a more sober and accurate judgment on this outstanding Nationalist leader. And Christian voices, too. The manager of one of the high schools in the Madura districts writes:

“Every letter I receive has questions about Gandhi. In my opinion he is a much over-rated man, and this is especially noticeable in a number of our American periodicals. I certainly do not agree with what Sherwood Eddy, Kirby Page, C. F. Andrews, and several others have to say about him and about the political situation in India. I think they greatly over-rate Gandhi and over-estimate his power in India, and certainly are quite unfair to the British Government.

“It is true that no one man in India has so large a following as Gandhi. India has always idealized the ascetic and the yellow robe, and many feel that Gandhi is saintly in character. One may grant that he

is sincere, while at the same time feeling that he is thoroughly impractical, and that his program of civil disobedience accomplishes little or nothing towards securing for India dominion status and a larger measure of independence.”

The very important pamphlet by Bishop B. T. Badley, of the Methodist Church, entitled, “The Solitary Throne,” ought to leave no doubt in the minds of anyone that Mahatma Gandhi cannot be considered a Christian in the true sense of the word. The Bishop writes in his preface:

“The religious beliefs of Gandhi, as set forth in his own words in this booklet, make it perfectly clear that the Mahatma is more nearly a Hindu than anything else, though he is, strictly, an eclectic. His most characteristic statement is, ‘In my religion there is room for Krishna, for Buddha, for Christ and Mohammed.’ He definitely states that he ‘cannot set Christ on a solitary throne,’ because he ‘believes that God has been incarnate again and again.’ His position is clear from his statement: ‘I felt that to me salvation was possible only through the Hindu religion.’ He has been a great admirer of the ‘Sermon on the Mount,’ but he says, ‘I find a solace in the Bhagavad Gita and Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount.’ In refusing to hold that Mahatma Gandhi is a Christian, the author does not deny that Mahatma Gandhi is a great soul, a remarkable character, a wonderful religious leader, a true patriot. Indeed, it is generally conceded that he is the most potent personality in India,

and probably wields a greater influence in the political world today than any other man. All this is something entirely different from saying that he is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ or one who may be considered His follower."

It is, however, to the Moslem press that we desire to call attention. The Mohammedans of North India, at least the majority of all the Progressives, have completely lost faith in Mr. Gandhi. This is due not only to his pronouncements against propaganda and proselyting, both of which are naturally fundamental to a religion like Islam, but also to the fact that Mr. Gandhi more and more has ignored the rights of the great Moslem minority.

When we remember that there are more than eighty million Mohammedans in India, and that they represent some of the most virile and warlike races, it is not surprising that the Moslem press has taken up the question of Mr. Gandhi's sincerity. Letters have appeared in such journals as *The Statesman* and *The Pioneer*, in which the Moslem correspondents write contemptuously and even sneeringly of Gandhi's attitude and conduct. Take this as a specimen:

"One really wonders how it is possible for the saint to overlook the effect of his teachings. The fracas at Benares was not the first of its kind. Communal quarrels, bloodshed, and murder have been the principal features of the movement inaugurated by the Saint of Sabarmati since 1921, and he has deplored them—how many times it is difficult to recall. Yet he

expects that his sentimental appeal will bring heaven on earth. It is said that to rouse a man from deep slumber is easy, but it is impossible to rouse one who *feigns* sleep.”

When Mr. C. F. Andrews wrote a defense of Mr. Gandhi in the controversy that followed his statements regarding the right of propagandism, he is reported to have said that he “was convinced Mr. Gandhi had been misunderstood since he exemplified in his life the Christ spirit.”

The editor of the Moslem weekly, *The Light*, (Lahore), makes some observations on this statement which are very significant:

“We are rather surprised to have a loose statement like that from one who as a missionary of Christ and a close associate of Gandhi should have known better than anyone else that the spirit of Gandhi is different from that of Christ. Christ lived a life of unquestioning surrender [*sic*] to evil, of absolute non-resistance. Rather than offer any resistance to evil, in any shape or form, Christ inculcated turning the other cheek in return for a blow on [the] one. This is quite different from Gandhi’s civil disobedience creed, which seeks to eradicate evil, not by the force of love, but by pressure. No doubt that pressure is non-violent, but that should make no difference. It is pressure just the same, though in keeping with the conditions of the times it has got to be non-violent. . . . Between non-violent pressure and violent pressure the difference is one of degree, not of kind. Both seek to achieve the end by the method of coercion. This creed is more in keeping with the spirit of Islam than of Christianity.

“Mr. Andrews must indeed be over-credulous if he thinks that Gandhi would be prepared to permit such an anti-nationalistic thing as the conversion of a Hindu to the foreign culture of Christianity or Islam.”

One of the latest and distinguished admirers of Gandhi’s religious views is Dr. Rudolf Otto, who contributed a preface to a story of the Saint and Statesman published at München.³

The great Sanscrit scholar, Jarl Charpentier, noting this book in the *Oriental Review* of Uppsala University (January, 1936) gives his opinion of the Gandhi-craze and, incidentally, of the sacred book which Gandhi prefers to the Scriptures:

“Although the present writer has only read a rather microscopic part of the enormous bulk of books and pamphlets turned out by the admirers and devotees of the Mahatma, he still feels an ever-increasing astonishment at the way in which this extremely tedious literature seems to appeal to an increasing multitude of people. It is perhaps not at all curious that any religious or quasi-religious preaching should appeal to a generation that has lost nearly all the previous ideals of mankind. And when we take into consideration the apparent and mighty influence which endless repetitions of even nonsensical things have upon the brains of man, it is perhaps not very marvelous that the well-nigh endless iterations of the duty of passive obstruction *ahimsa*, etc., should also exercise a steadily more powerful influence.

“Not that I consider the sayings and speeches of

³ Gandhi, *der Heilige und der Staatsman in Eigenen Ausspruchen*.—B. P. L. Bedi and Freda M. Houlston, 1933.

the Mahatma in any way nonsensical. On the contrary—they betray a terse and pointed way of speaking which well fits the shrewd politician who is but indifferently concealed by the cloak—or rather the scant dhoti and blanket—of the saint. For, according to my somewhat unholy opinion, never could the famous tale of Anderson about the Emperor's new suit be more fitly quoted than in this case. Not that I accuse Mr. Gandhi of being a swindler or a cheat—be such sacrilegious thoughts very far from me. I rather feel convinced that he believes himself to be a saint, still more convinced than the innumerable adorers—from Professor Rudolf Otto down to the meanest Pariah—assembling around this modern *Rishi* believe him to be one. The Bhagavada Gita, this queer jumble of misunderstood sublimities and admired quasi-philosophical tomfooleries, is his Gospel; his fasts, which like the sitting-*dhurna* spring from extremely primitive conceptions, are numerous and more and more prolonged—what more could be expected from a saint who is striving successfully for those magic powers that will coerce a Government, which is handicapped already because it cannot well be called saintly. So far there is nothing much to be said against Mr. Gandhi and his movement; for if millions prefer to accept his lead, and if the Government prefers to be intimidated by him, that, after all, is their own business.”

We learn from the *United Church Review* that in the recent discussion regarding the future religious home of the Untouchables, Mr. Gandhi has entered the lists in defense of Hinduism, rather than of Christianity. He does not often make statements as to his personal

religion; but in a recent number of *Harijan*, he makes a noteworthy statement, in reply to a letter from a Christian friend, arguing that the sins of his early life, his "self-denials, fastings, prayer and good deeds cannot blot out"; that God's forgiveness can only be given through the sacrifice of Christ on behalf of mankind, and praying that "Christ may grant you a revelation of Himself as He did to Saul of Tarsus." Mr. Gandhi answers by saying that his correspondent, who is only one of several who write in similar strain, is a "literalist," giving "literal meaning to every text of the Bible." For himself, he would be "repelled" by many things in the Bible if he took them literally. The "immaculate conception" (which he confuses with the virgin birth of Jesus), he interprets "mystically." Miracles of Jesus would not convince him of the truth of His teachings. Jesus "atoned for the sins of those who accepted His teachings by being an infallible example to them. But the example was worth nothing to those who never troubled to change their lives." For himself, he declares:

"I have made the frankest admission of my many sins. But I do not carry their burden on my shoulders. If I am journeying Godward, as I believe I am, it is safe with me. For I feel the warmth of the sunshine of His presence. My austerities, fastings and prayers are, I know, of no value if I rely upon them for reforming me. But they have an inestimable value if they represent, as I hope they do, the yearnings of a soul striving to lay his weary head on the lap of his Maker. The *Gita* has become for me the key to the

scriptures of the world. It unravels for me the deepest mysteries to be found in them.”

After this frank statement, we know that the center of his thought and inspiration is still the Gita and not the Gospel.

It is our business as Christians to have clear ideas as to what constitutes Christianity and sainthood; and to warn the Indian Church against the peril of syncretism and the Western churches against the danger of sentimentalism. Already there is talk of a Gandhian Christ, who appeals to the Indian mind more than the Christ of the Gospels:

“Today the Christ has come to us walking over the troubled waters of Indian politics, as He walked over the waters of Galilee. There is a howling wind, the waves are high and the spray is on His face. We see Him therefore dimly and not quite in the right perspective. It is the Gandhian and Apocalyptic Christ that beckons us today. But when the storm has subsided, we shall know Him as He is and find rest for our problems and our souls. Then the Apocalyptic Christ will grow into the Christ of the Church’s faith. May that day come to us soon! Meantime as Christians we salute the Gandhian Christ’s great soldier as a sister-spirit whose rightful place is alongside the great martyrs and confessors of the Early Church.”⁴

If such words can be soberly penned while the Great Soul is alive, what will happen when he dies a martyr

⁴ N. C. Mukerji, Lecturer in Philosophy at Allahabad University, in *The Gandhian Christ, or the Appeal of the Apocalyptic Christ to the Indian Mind Today*, 1931, p. 12.

to nationalism? We need clear thinking in these days of syncretism, especially when we seek to know the real content and significance of Mahatma Gandhi's religion. On the one hand it would be a mistake to deny that there are points of contact between higher Hinduism and Christianity. Here Calvin's doctrine of common grace is safer ground than the Barthian denial of any real value in all non-Christian systems of thought as point of contact. On the other hand we must guard against syncretism. Christ alone is sufficient and in Him all fullness dwells.

XII

MOHAMMED AND CALVIN

XII

MOHAMMED AND CALVIN

ONE of the most interesting developments in the religious thought of Europe and America is the revival of Calvinism and a renewed interest in its historic significance. Whatever we may think of Kierkegaard, Barth and Brunner, their writings have had an enormous effect in calling attention to the system of theology known as Calvinism. His *Institutes of the Christian Religion* has had a remarkable sale in recent years both in America and Great Britain. In 1928 Pastor Daniel Couve, the secretary of the Evangelical Missionary Society in Paris, in a public address after the Jerusalem Council meeting, used the argument, "We believe in Missions and world evangelism not only because we are Frenchmen and because we are Christians, but more especially *because we are Calvinists.*" "It is not a mere coincidence," writes a French historian, "that the French Reformer, Calvin, is considered the most faithful interpreter of the spirit of Paul's Gospel and that St. Paul has always been held up as the very incarnation of the spirit of missions." Doumergue in his life of John Calvin exclaims, "Who first penetrated the virgin

forests of the new world to carry the Gospel to the savages, was it not Brainerd and Elliott, both Calvinists? All the heroes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of Protestant Missions were disciples of the same Calvin—Carey and Martyn in India, Moffat and Livingstone in Africa, Morrison in China, and Paton in the South Seas.”¹ Calvinism, then, was not static but kinetic—it had not only a creed but a missionary program.

Now it is remarkable that as far back as 1871, in an address on Calvinism delivered as Rector of St. Andrews, the historian James Anthony Froude called attention to the strange parallel between the Reformation in Europe under Calvin and that in Arabia under Mohammed. Islam, indeed, as Bancroft remarks, is the Calvinism of the Orient. It, too, was a call to acknowledge the sovereignty of God’s will. “There is no god but Allah.” It, too, saw in nature and sought in revelation the majesty of God’s presence and power, the manifestation of His glory, transcendent and omnipotent. “God,” said Mohammed, “there is no god but He, the living, the self-subsistent, slumber seizeth Him not, nor sleep—His throne embraces the heavens and the earth and none can intercede with Him save by His permission. He alone is exalted and great.” It is this vital, theistic principle that explains the victory of Islam over the weak, divided, and idolatrous Christendom of the Orient in the sixth century. “As the Greek theology,” so Froude remarks, “was one of the most complicated accounts ever offered of the nature of God and His relation to man, so the message of Mahomet, when

¹ Doumergue, *Jean Calvin*, iv, p. 454.

he first unfolded the green banner, was one of the most simple: There is no god but God; God is King, and you must and shall obey His will. This was Islam, as it was first offered at the sword's point to people who had lost the power of understanding any other argument; your images are wood and stone; your metaphysics are words without understanding; the world lies in wickedness and wretchedness because you have forgotten the statutes of your Master, and you shall go back to those; you shall fulfill the purpose for which you were set to live upon the earth, or you shall not live at all."²

And then he goes on to say, by way of correction:

"I am not upholding Mahomet as if he had been a perfect man, or the Koran as a second Bible. The Crescent was no Sun, nor even a complete moon, reigning full-orbed in the night heaven. The light there was in it was but reflected from the sacred books of the Jews and the Arab traditions. The morality of it was defective. The detailed conception of man's duties inferior, far inferior, to what St. Martin and St. Patrick, St. Columbo and St. Augustine were teaching or had taught in Western Europe. Mahometanism rapidly degenerated. The first caliphs stood far above Saladin. The descent from Saladin to a modern Moslem despot is like a fall over a precipice. But the light which there was in the Moslem creed was real and taught the omnipotence and omnipresence of one eternal Spirit, the Maker and Ruler of all things, by whose everlasting purpose all things were, and whose *will* all things must obey."³

² Froude, *Calvinism*, p. 36.

³ *Idem*, pp. 37-38.

The Reformers themselves felt that Islam with all its errors and its Arabian fanaticism was closer to the truth than the Medieval Papacy. The Dutch in their struggle with Spain chose for their motto, "Liever Turksch dan Paapsch" — Rather the Turk than the Pope! You may still read these words and the symbols that accompany them on the carved pillars of a church at Middelburg. Islam was long considered a Christian heresy, and so, some think, should be our approach.

In one of his letters Erasmus actually proposed that—

"The best and most effectual way to overcome and win the Turks would be if they shall perceive that things which Christ taught and expressed in His life shine in us. For truly, it is not meet nor convenient to declare ourselves Christian men by this proof or token if we kill very many, but rather if we save very many. Nor if we send thousands of heathen people to hell, but if we make many infidels faithful. In my mind it were the best before we should try with them in battle, to attempt them with epistles and some little books. . . ."

Calvinism and Islam have indeed much in common. Both are opposed to compromise and all half-measures. Both were a trumpet-call in hard times for hard men, for "intellects that could pierce to the roots of things where truth and lies part company."

Intolerance is sometimes a virtue. The very essence and life of all great religious movements is the sense of authority; of an external, supernatural framework or pattern to which all must be made conformable.

Calvinism and Islam were neither of them systems

of opinion but both were attempts to make the will of God as revealed (in the Bible or in the Koran) an authoritative guide for social as well as personal affairs, for Church not only, but for State. They both believed in election and reprobation, dependent on God's will.

Calvinism and Islam have at their very core the principle of a claim of finality and universality, and it is this principle that is the very basis of a missionary religion. Paul's theology and soteriology made him a missionary—drove him across all racial barriers and compelled him to set forth Christianity as final and triumphant. The strongest plea for missions is the will of God for the whole world. We can only have a passion for the glory of God when we acknowledge His sovereignty in every realm of life.

Again, singleness of aim is a mark of leadership, and in this respect Calvin and Mohammed were born leaders. As Barth expresses it: "Calvin first had a theme and then thought of its variation; first knew what he willed and then willed what he knew." The same might be said of Mohammed. The genius of spiritual conquest is the consciousness that God is commanding the battalions, that the issue is not uncertain, and that the goal is God's eternal glory. More than a century ago, James Montgomery, a true Calvinist, closed his great missionary hymn, beginning, "O Spirit of the Living God," with the stanza:

*"God from eternity hath willed
All flesh shall His salvation see;
So be the Father's love fulfilled,
The Savior's sufferings crowned through thee."*

Our American statesman, John Hay, a century later, interpreted in true Calvinistic fashion the prayer, "Thy will be done," in his great hymn, beginning, "Not in dumb resignation we lift our hands on high."

With God's sovereignty as basis, God's glory as goal and God's will as motive, the missionary enterprise today can face the most difficult of all missionary tasks—the evangelization of the Moslem world. The survival of the *unfittest* by election and by grace. It is in this arena that "Greek meets Greek," and then comes the "tug of war."

God in His sovereign Providence and by His Holy Spirit has led the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches geographically to the very heart of the Moslem world. For more than one hundred years they, and they alone, have challenged Islam in the very lands of its birth—in its cradle and strongholds. They, more than other branches of the Church, were pioneers in the world of Islam. Jessup, Van Dyck, Dennis in Syria, Shedd and his colleagues in Persia, Lansing, Hogg, Watson in Egypt, Forman, Wherry, Ewing in North India, Keith Falconer, John Young, Peter Zwemer, Henry Bilkert in Arabia—to mention only a few who have passed on to their reward.

It is still true (as Professor Lindsay stated at the meeting of the Reformed and Presbyterian Alliance in Glasgow), that "the Presbyterian churches do more than a fourth of the whole mission work abroad done by all the Protestant churches together." The Calvinistic churches entered the world of Islam earlier and more vigorously than any other group of churches. The

first missionary to the Turks was a Reformed preacher, Venceslaus Budovetz of Budapest. He was born in the year 1551, and belonged by his religion to the *Unitas Fratrum*, which was a branch of the Hussite Church in Bohemia. He was very faithful and a zealous member of that Church. Having spent more than ten years in Western Europe either at Protestant universities, especially Reformed, or in travels, he became a very strong and convinced Calvinist, and became acquainted with some of the most renowned evangelical scholars and religious leaders of his time. (See *The Moslem World*, Vol. XVII, p. 401 ff., where we have a sketch of his life and influence by Professor Josef Soucek of Prague.)

Among these friends were Theodore Beza of Geneva, the French Reformed lawyer Philip Mornay du Plessis, the Basel Reformed theological Professor Crynaeus, and also one of the Lutheran theologians, David Chytraeus, who had part in composing the famous Lutheran book of symbols, *Formula Concordiae*.

Vaclav Budovec lived in Constantinople from 1577 to 1581. He sought opportunity to win back apostates and to preach to the Turks; but he was staggered by the power of Islam. "I have been not a little in temptation," he wrote, "seeing how these ungodly Turks prosper and that the noblest parts of the earth where God Himself walked in human body . . . have been conquered by them in an incredibly short time."

In one of his letters sent to his son in later years, he mentions the fact that he actually did win one Turk for Christ. Budovec wrote a number of books in the Czech

language, one of them being called "Anti-al-Koran." It is a defense of the Christian faith and a refutation of Islam. This book is very rare, but copies are found in the University and other (private) libraries in Prague. Here we have the first Christian apology written by the Reformation Church for Moslems.

Nor can we forget that the Reformed Churches of South-Eastern Europe were the bulwark against the invasion of Islam for centuries. Again, we note that in Java and Sumatra the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands have had more converts from Islam than any other Mission in any part of the world. Over 76,000 living converts from Islam are connected with the various missions in Java alone. These missions cover territory which has a population (almost solidly Mohammedan) of nearly forty-five million souls.

As regards America, it is not without providential significance that when the world of Islam faces a crisis and affords the Church a new opportunity, Reformed and Presbyterian bodies together have the strongest and widest work in four of the great lands of the Moslem world: Egypt, Syria, Persia, and Arabia. "The union of the United Presbyterian, the Reformed, and the Presbyterian Church," says Dr. Robert E. Speer, "would bring a new joy and faith to the Church which today has responsibility for the strongest mission work in the world for the evangelization of Mohammedans."

God's providence has indeed led the children of the Covenanters, of the Huguenots, of the Dutch into the very heart of the world of Islam. Its old historic cities are mission stations of our churches: Alexandria, Cairo,

Khartum, Beirut, Damascus, Aleppo, Bagdad, Busrah, Mosul, Teheran, and Tabriz. The Arabian mission of the Reformed Church and the South Arabian Mission of the Scotch Church have marched around Islam's Jericho and their trumpet gives no uncertain sound. The walls of Arabian intolerance and fanaticism have already fallen before the medical missionary pioneers of these Churches. But there are whole provinces of Arabia still unoccupied and vast areas in Africa and Asia where the missionary has never entered. This is the missionary challenge to the Calvinists of today. A challenge to dauntless faith and undiscourageable hope and a love that will not let go. Think of Afghanistan and western Arabia; of Russian Turkestan, parts of Siberia, Bokhara, and the Crimea! Of Tripoli in Africa, the French Sudan, which fields together have a population of nearly forty-five millions—all these are a call for those who have Paul's ambition and Calvin's courage to preach the Gospel, "not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation; but, as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand." But we need men of blood and iron for this spiritual warfare, true disciples of John Calvin. We need men who believe in the glory of the impossible. Men and women who will venture all for Christ. Calvinists not only in faith but in faithfulness and zeal.

It stirs our spirit of heroism to read of scientists, explorers, and warriors who one and all experienced the glory of the impossible. The spirit of man is the candle of Jehovah. "Thou hast made him a little lower

than the angels crowned him with glory and honor thou hast put all things under his feet.”

It is, however, in the realms of the spiritual that we see the real glory of the impossible. Eleven disciples on Mount Olivet—ignorant, unlearned, feeble in faith, faltering in trust. In less than half a century Paul had drawn the great ellipse of a new kingdom across the old Roman Empire with its foci at Antioch and Rome. It is in the spiritual realm of Missions that we see the glory of the impossible, century after century, in every continent and island. They remembered Christ’s words: “All things are possible to him that believeth.”

The most impossible of missionary problems is the evangelization of the world of Islam. Re-think its colossal dimensions and ever-expanding area; the baffling fact that Islam is the only religion that has defeated Christianity and eclipsed it; its categorical denial of all that makes Christianity Christian; its arrogant defiance of Christ’s messengers and disciples by closing doors once opened, and by doors barred and bolted for thirteen centuries. Think of the hope deferred and the hearts made sick by massacres, martyrdoms, and deportations.

What are the actual dimensions of this problem? It is no longer confined to the Mediterranean basin or to three continents. It has crossed all the seven seas and invaded five. And this great system of Arabian monotheism eclipsed Christianity in Asia from the seventh until the fourteenth century. The story of this conquest was recently told by Laurence E. Browne. Islam is the only great religion that came after Christianity and yet

defeated and destroyed it in Central Asia, in Arabia, Persia, Syria, Egypt, North Africa—even in Palestine, the land of its birth. Churches became mosques. Bishoprics became provinces and paid tribute. The Arab civilization wrote its Mohammedan palimpsest over the Christian traditions. Mohammed's name was exalted above every name. Armenians, Nestorians, Syrians, Copts, and Berbers were persecuted, and, century after century, passed over to Islam until the remnant of the faithful became like Samson, with eyes blinded, grinding in the prison house of the Philistines! This is the tragic history of Oriental churches.

The impossibility of this problem appears also when we ask what Islam really is. A colossal system of anti-Christian theism; a threefold cord not easily broken. It has in it Arabian pagan pride of language, race, and culture; a strand of Jewish fanaticism, of Semitic intolerance; and it also has a Christian universalism that seeks world dominion.

Consider again other elements in this faith. The strength of its short creed; the very words sound like a defiant battle cry. The solidarity of its fellowship in the pilgrimage to Mecca every year. Yes, in spite of all diversity, Islam is marked by a strange solidarity in its denials and defiance of Christianity in every land where they come in contact. It has meant, therefore, not only the eclipse of the churches but of the Christ. His incarnation, His atonement, His resurrection, His finality as Lord and Savior are contradicted by the Koran; and His character and ethics, by the life and

character of Mohammed. Such a missionary problem, as we said, demands men of blood and iron.

This has always been true, but needs reassertion in our day for there are those who seriously question the necessity and validity of carrying the Gospel to Mohammedans. The reasons given for this attitude are discussed and answered in the chapter that follows. Here we have tried to do justice to the historic value and vitality of Islamic theism. But theism is not Christianity.

XIII

WHY PREACH CHRIST TO MOSLEMS ?

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“IF you will only organize Christian missions to the heathen in my province, instead of attempting to convert Mohammedans, I will do everything in my power to further and support them, but I cannot approve or allow, at any rate at present, the opening of a mission to the Mohammedans.” So said the governor of Nigeria, about thirty years ago. This policy was that of Lord Kitchener in the Sudan, of the British in the Malay States, and is not yet abandoned everywhere.

The validity and the necessity of carrying the Gospel message to Mohammedans have been questioned in times past and are being questioned today! The late Professor G. Kampffmeyer of the University of Berlin in “Whither Islam?” deals with the subject in the same attitude; his conclusion is that missions in the Near East among Moslems are as dangerous as they are futile, and for the good of humanity should be discontinued.

Dr. Hugh Vernon White, a secretary of the American Board, in the magazine called *Christendom*, plainly stated that—

“Christian efforts to evangelize the Moslem have met with signal and consistent failure. The response to such efforts, today, is negligible and there is little likelihood of any marked change in the near future. . . . The Christian Church ought to quit trying to make proselytes of Mohammedans. It should bring the best works of Christian service to the Moslem world in a spirit of ecclesiastical and theological disinterestedness.”

Father T. Bennerth, writing in a Roman Catholic missionary magazine for April, 1930, says:

“As the conversion of the great bloc of Islamic nations to the Christian faith is not to be expected in our century . . . it is of the highest value that Islam at least maintains the belief in God in purified forms. If this refuge of belief in God should vanish, then Western Christianity will be threatened by a new seat of danger.”

When we compare these statements with the verdict of the Roman Catholic Conference, held in Louvain in 1930, we find that there also the entire world of Islam is labeled “*le bloc inconvertisable*.” In view of such opinions and statements, what satisfactory reasons can be advanced for the validity and necessity of Christian missions to Moslems?

1. If the Gospel of Christ in its simplest form (which is also its deepest mystery) includes the Incarnation, the Atonement and the Resurrection, then the world of Islam certainly needs our message for it is *news* and offers good news to every Moslem. Islam is not a Christian sect or a Christian heresy. It is an eclipse of

the Christ as revealed in the Gospel. It is an Arabian palimpsest superinscribed over the message of Jesus by another hand. Its categorical denial of the deity of Christ, of the crucifixion, of the finality of Jesus Christ as God's messenger and of His way of life through regeneration is evident from the Koran itself.

The analogy of Paul's attitude toward Jew and Gentile holds today as regards missions to Moslems and to other non-Christians. It was because the Jew had so much that was true and noble and yet needed the Gospel that Paul preached everywhere to the Jew first. Their theism, their knowledge of the Old Testament, their zeal for God, their passion for the Law did not invalidate their need of the Gospel, but emphasized it. This implication would hold also for those Moslems of China, Africa and India who live in the midst of paganism or polytheistic ethnic faiths.

In the Near East and North Africa, we have an additional argument. *There* we are not merely trying to lead Moslems to Christ, but rather to *lead them back to Christ*. Here we have the argument of church history; the inspiration of the cloud of witnesses, the apostles and martyrs of the faith; and the very stones of ruined churches and monasteries would cry out if we were silent.

2. The missionary forces have hitherto moved across or around this great Moslem bloc. The following areas, or countries in which the population is wholly or predominantly Moslem, are still practically unoccupied. The missionary conferences of Cairo, Edinburgh, Lucknow, and Jerusalem successively laid them all before

the Church, but with little result — Afghanistan; the provinces of Hejaz, Asir, Nejd, and Hadramaut in Arabia; Russian Turkestan; parts of Siberia; Bokhara; the eastern part of the Malay Peninsula; Socotra and the Moslem populations of Madagascar, Russia in Europe, British and French Somaliland, Tripoli in North Africa, the French Sudan; the Great Aures Mountains, the Saharan Atlas ranges, the central populous mountain regions of Morocco, and the vast Sahara itself. These unoccupied fields have a total population of approximately thirty-six millions. How can we speak or sing of evangelizing the whole world and leave all this outside of the program of occupation for Christ?

3. A religion that once was the hope and glory of millions shows signs of breaking up. Old sanctions are disappearing. Their anchor-ground has proved insufficient in the rising tide of materialism and atheism. Some tell us that there are signs of a resurgent Islam and of revival of faith in Mohammed. But all signs point in the opposite direction. This year's report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church states: "There is now abundant evidence that the religion of Islam is slowly disintegrating."

The collapse of the caliphate, and the failure of all attempts to revive it, would lead to the conclusion that Pan-Islamism is dead. The policy of the new government in Turkey and the complete secularization of that republic points in the same direction. The Turkish press utters severe judgment on Islam and its Prophet, while one by one the old sanctions and customs of religion

are publicly discarded. A few years ago a British official of high standing actually wrote to me:

“Islam as we once knew it is dead in Turkey; it is dying in Persia; it has ceased to carry real weight in Egypt; it may survive some generations in Arabia; but the basic truths of Christianity will in the long run even there prevail.”

Such a judgment is undoubtedly somewhat premature but it is prophetic.

Islam faces a crisis in the lands where once it was dominant. Its efforts at propagandism in India and Africa “remind one of those sparse green twigs sometimes still appearing at the extreme ends of half-dried-up boughs in trees whose core has for long been decaying from old age.” Islam suffers because it feels itself under the tutelage of the West. In Turkey it suffers by being violated in its own bosom; in Russia from Soviet persecution; and in Persia from a revolt against the Arabic language and tradition. Mustapha Kemal Atatürk of Turkey raised great expectations, but he has turned out a bitter disappointment for all Moslems. The disenchantment was cruel but complete. The high hopes fixed on Ibn Saoud of Arabia to revive the caliphate were blasted. The Moslem World Conference held at Mecca, and afterwards in Europe, proved a failure; none of the resolutions was carried out.

The Dutch Orientalist, Dr. Van der Meulen, who spent many years in the diplomatic service at Jiddah, asks, “Are we standing at the eve of a revival, a renaissance of Islam? No, the phenomena do not point that

way. Except for the Wahhabi movement in Central Arabia, it has all been a question of self-defense and resistance."¹

Regarding the enormous area and population of Indonesia, Professor C. C. Berg speaks of "destructive forces that are at work against Islam all over the world." Of the favorable factors he says that they "might possibly result only in the long run in a decrease in the rate of decay."²

The geographical expansion of Islam in Africa has often been exaggerated. The latest statistical survey shows a smaller proportion of Moslems in nearly every area in North-central Africa.³ Dr. Deaville Walker wrote a few years ago:

"Within a comparatively short time, we pictured great pagan populations being rapidly Islamised. I am convinced that the position is wholly different today. Careful personal investigation in Sierra Leone and Mendeland, the Gold Coast and Ashanti, Nigeria, and in the French colonies and protectorates of Dahomey, Togo, and the Ivory Coast, have made it very clear to me that the advance of Islam is being definitely checked, and that today we are winning far more Africans to the faith of Christ than the Moslems are winning for their Prophet. Startling as this may sound, I believe it to be absolutely true."

What elements in Islam are today resurgent? Does the old Mohammedan law or jurisprudence any longer prevail under the new nationalism and the new state?

¹ *Moslem World*, October, 1936.

² *Whither Islam?* pp. 306-311.

³ *Moslem World*, April, 1936.

Or has the purely Islamic-governed state disappeared even in Arabia and Afghanistan?

Has the social structure of Islam withstood the feminist movement and female education anywhere? Can we seriously speak of "resurgent forces" as regards polygamy, slavery, concubinage, and the seclusion of womanhood? Was the suppression of the age-old Moharram celebrations in Persia a sign of vitality in Islam? Is the religion of Islam showing a new vitality when three of its "five pillars" are crumbling? The daily prayers are no longer observed as they were ten years ago. The number of pilgrims to Mecca, in spite of new facilities by motorbus and steamships, has dwindled from 250,000 to 80,000. Mecca is losing its importance. Are the uniting forces that remain, the Arabic language and culture, the sense of brotherhood, the press and Al Azhar of Egypt—are these forces strong enough to counteract the disintegrating factors? Or will the progressive secularization of Moslem life rob *all life* from the religion of Islam? Will the waning of the Dervish orders and their suppression, as in Turkey, continue?

The fact is that Islam has been severely wounded in the house of its friends. The younger Egyptian modernists, instead of building carefully on the foundations of reform laid by Jamil-al-Din-al-Afghani and the great Mohammed Abdu, have ruthlessly undermined what remained intact. Mansur Fahmi, in his doctor's thesis, proved that Islam was progressively responsible for the degradation of womanhood. Dr. Taha Husain raised a storm of hostility by a book proving that much of early Islamic literature was a forgery, fabricated to

prop up the Koran and tradition. "The story of Abraham and Ishmael building the Kaaba is all fiction." Ali Abd al Razik went even further, and in his book, "Islam and the Fundamentals of Authority," advocated the abolition of the caliphate, "which has always been a misfortune." Moreover, he proposed the complete separation of Church and State, and the abandonment of the vast body of canon law.⁴

When the best thinkers of Islam accept an honest historical inventory of all this spiritual property, it will mean a revelation of bankruptcy. When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? Only the real gold, the theistic spiritual values of Islam, will be able to withstand the heat of this inevitable furnace. A careful study of the whole question leads to the conclusion that as a cultural and even as a political force there is yet a future for Islam, but as a religious force the future does not look promising.

4. The great response which we see today to the Gospel message should not surprise those who believe in God's promises and who have experienced the final fruitage that follows the "patience of unanswered prayer." Others have labored, since the days of Henry Martyn, and now we are entered into their labors. Others have knocked long and loud and waited patiently before locked doors—now those very doors are nailed open. Eastern Arabia, Hadramaut, and the cities of Meshed, Iran, and Riadh in Central Arabia, are outstanding examples.

The Bible has been translated into *all* the great lan-

⁴ Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, pp. 254-265.

guages of the world of Islam. It is the best printed of all the books and has an ever-increasing circulation. One has only to read the annual reports of the two great Bible societies to realize the miracles of grace accomplished every year by the printed Word.

Every hospital and dispensary across the map from Tangier, Morocco, to the Borden Memorial Hospital in Northwest China, reports that Moslem patients crowd the doors, kiss the hands of the Christian physicians, listen eagerly to the message, and that some at least find new life in Christ.

More and more thousands of Moslem youth are sitting at the feet of Christian teachers in every land. Day schools, boarding schools, colleges, and universities tell of an increasing number of Moslem pupils and of the leavening power of Christian education that reaches far beyond the curriculum and the campus area. Everyone should know that the emancipation of Moslem girlhood and womanhood began in mission schools. It is not only unkind but ungrateful and unhistoric to trace these modern movements to hybrid sources. Christ alone removes the veil because He demands and imparts purity of heart. Moslems themselves have testified to this fact.

The great Christian literature societies and committees in Cairo, Constantinople, Teheran, Shanghai, across India, and in the Dutch East Indies are producing and distributing ten times as much literature as they did a decade ago. Illiteracy is decreasing. Education is becoming compulsory. The stigma of disapproval now rests on old superstitions that once had religious sanction.

There are public baptisms in places where formerly

the "law of apostasy" would have administered public ostracism or private vengeance. In Java alone there are 76,000 Moslem converts gathered into Christian churches. In North India there are other thousands and in Persia we can truly speak of an indigenous church—weak still in numbers, but strong in the spirit of sacrifice and boldness of witness.

Those who challenge the validity and success of work among Moslems need to remember the lines of Arthur H. Clough:

*"For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.
For not by eastern windows only
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
But westward, look, the land is bright."*

XIV

**A PLEA FOR MEDICAL MISSIONS
TO MOSLEMS**

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A PLEA FOR MEDICAL MISSIONS TO MOSLEMS

THE validity and the effectiveness of medical missionary work among Mohammedans can be urged for three reasons which, in a sense, are especially applicable to the world of Islam. That world, as we all know, presents a solidarity and a complex of difficulties which are at once a challenge to faith and the despair of hope when long deferred. After twenty-three years' experience in Arabia and seventeen in Egypt, together with visits to many other Moslem lands, I am convinced that the golden key to closed doors, or sealed minds and hearts, in the villages and cities of North Africa, the Near East, and India is found in the Christian hospital and the dispensary.

I. The first and primary reason is compassion on the multitudes. Every chapter of the Koran (save one) begins with the statement that Allah is merciful and compassionate. Every beggar and every sufferer, from Morocco to Western China, knows that word and uses

it to appeal for help: *Ya Rahim* (O Merciful One). Now for us it is Jesus Christ Who is the revelation of God's mercy and compassion, and we are His disciples. We all love Mark's Gospel because of the direct manner in which he brings Christ into close contact with a suffering world. He pictures Him as surrounded from morn till eve with the direst aspects of human suffering; the maimed, the halt, the blind, lepers, and the violently insane. Christ came that men might have life, and have it abundantly. His life brought health to the sick, burst the shackles of narrow prejudice in their minds, and made men conscious that "we are now the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." All this we see in the one short chapter from the life of Jesus, as recorded on the first page of the shortest, the most succinct, of the four Gospels. What a day it was in the life of our Lord which Mark puts into such a small compass! It is a commentary on that remarkable saying of Jesus, "Are there not *twelve* hours in the day?" Twelve long hours of self-denying service and then a night in prayer! When the Word of God became flesh to dwell among men He came as close as possible to the heart of humanity. The outcast and the leper recognized Him as a friend. Jesus did not wear gloves. He laid His hands on the sick, touched the unclean, and did not shrink from the most hideous forms of insanity. Recall the man with wild eyes, matted hair, and bleeding in naked terror, who made his dwelling in the tombs, who broke his iron fetters and roamed on

the outskirts of the village of the Gadarenes, cutting himself with stones and crying out his agony. No man could bind him nor tame him. Jesus did.

Wherever Jesus came the crowds gathered. An oriental crowd today, around a medical missionary, is a true picture of similar scenes in the life of our Lord; their numbers, their clamorous impatience, their public exhibition of hideous skin diseases, of open sores, pitiful dislocations and malformations, and, most of all, their compelling trustfulness in the abandonment of hope long deferred. Dr. W. H. Storm, medical missionary in Oman, writes of a visit to one of the villages on the South Arabian coast.

“We had not even taken our goods out of the native boat, when the crowds, hearing that we had arrived, began to gather and bring the lame and the blind. We were eight days in all in Sur before Kumbar and the messenger returned with the caravan to take us inland. Such work as we were able to do during those eight days is hard to describe. I know figures mean nothing, but they give some idea of the crowd and our reception, even though we had not come primarily for the people of Sur. During the eight days (two of which were Sunday, when we treated only in the mornings) we dealt with 1,950 patients, having as our high-water mark 366 in one day! Not once were we able to finish all who were waiting, and add one more and treat myself—for I had an attack of serum-sickness from a prophylactic dose of tetanus antitoxin. On the day we left Ja’alan I

could hardly take one step, but we went on, and all turned out well. Work began with such force that before we knew it we had a hospital with about one hundred in-patients. This hospital was an interesting sight, for it was all made by patients and their friends. They built small *barusti* (date stick) rooms all over the courtyard and outside on the street. In each room they put two or three beds, made of date-sticks—about three feet from the ground. In two weeks we did about 114 operations, some days operating from three o'clock, Arabic time, till after sunset, making in all nine or ten hours of straight operating."

"Are there not twelve hours in the day?" said the first medical missionary. It is a false antithesis when men speak of a social gospel and an evangelistic gospel. In the life and teaching of Jesus this antithesis does not occur. He was the incarnation of His message, and not only spoke it with His lips but with His life as He went about doing good. Every act was an interpretation of God's redeeming love. He laid down His life for us and we must lay down our lives for the brethren. Where they took up stones to stone Him, Jesus went on with His miracles of healing. His last miracle was the healing of Malchus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

II. All Moslems are persuaded that Jesus was primarily a medical missionary. This belief is based on the teaching of the Koran and of Tradition. Moses worked miracles of magic, they say, to convince the skilful magicians of Egypt. David was adept in softening the heart by music. Mohammed was the most

eloquent of all the Apostles, and the Koran is a miracle of matchless style. But Jesus came in the days of Roman and Greek medicine as the Divine Healer whose touch worked miracles. In the Traditions we read: "Men loved *Isa* and turned to him and were pleased with him. His reputation became great and perchance there collected around him of the sick and the palsied in one hour fifty thousand and he healed them by prayer" (*Qissas al Anbiya*). His miracles of healing are the only miracles on which the Koran lays stress.¹

The history of Arabian medicine is full of tributes to the skill of Christian physicians at the courts of the Caliphs. Mohammed himself consulted a Christian doctor, and in his last sickness it was his Christian wife that prescribed medicine for him.² It was Ibn Masawaih, the Christian physician to Harun al Rashid, who was given the task of procuring Arabic translations of Greek and Latin medical works. The Christian physician is a frequent and familiar figure in the *Arabian Nights*; why should he not be a familiar figure in Arabia of today? The Hejaz, Hadramaut, Afghanistan, Somaliland, and Central Asia await the arrival of medical missionaries to open the door for the Gospel. No other messenger of Christ will have easier access or a more hearty welcome. The unoccupied areas in the world of Islam are a challenge to the medical students of our great universities. The end of the geographical feat should be the beginning of the missionary enterprise.

¹ Surah, iii, 43-45.

² Muir, vol. iv. p. 269.

III. Finally, there is the pragmatic reason. It is not theory. It works. What man has done, man can do. Is there a single mission station in all North Africa, in Arabia, Persia, Turkey, Northern India, or Central Asia, where medical missionaries have not been the pioneers, and where the daily clinic or the hospital have not proved the opening wedge to disarm prejudice and fanaticism?

On May 9, 1865, Dr. Elmslie of the C. M. S. wrote: "Today is memorable in the history of the Kashmir Medical Mission, from the fact that I opened my dispensary this morning." He writes again on the last day of the same month: "Opened my small hospital today. It accommodates from four to five patients." How that mustard seed has grown! Today Kashmir is one of the largest and most important hospital centers of India.

And what is true of Northwest India and the frontiers of Afghanistan is also true of Eastern Arabia. The medical work begun at Busrah fifty years ago, in a small dispensary, has grown so that there are now seven mission hospitals in Eastern Arabia extending their influence farther into the interior every year. Medical missionaries are welcomed in Hail and Riadh while the whole province of Oman is friendly to the Christian physician.

In many Mohammedan lands, over which the spirit of fatalism has long brooded, the scientific practice of medicine has revolutionized the attitude of the people toward public calamities and proved a death-blow to ancient superstitions. Egypt and Syria are striking ex-

amples. The work of Dr. J. C. Young at Aden, Dr. Sharon J. Thoms at Muscat, Dr. Joseph P. Cochran at Urumiah, Dr. Holmes at Hamadan, Dr. Carr at Isfahan, Dr. Pennell at the Afghan frontier, and Dr. Harpur in Cairo—to name only a few of the long roll—is proof that when “mercy and truth meet together” in a mission hospital, “righteousness and peace kiss each other” on the streets of Mohammedan cities. The bicentenary of Moravian Missions recalls the fact that their pioneer missionaries went to the hardest fields—even Egypt and Persia in those early days—and also used the key of medical skill. This key should not hang idle on our girdle where we possess it. It is indeed the golden key. Always and everywhere the witness of the art of healing in the name and in the spirit of Jesus is irresistible. At the Gate Beautiful, and at every other gate, when men see this miracle they take knowledge of Peter and John “that they have been with Jesus.” His spirit is not taught but caught. It is contagious by contact. If we abide in Him and He abides in us, we too shall recognize human need and strive to meet it. “Safety first” is not a good signboard on the Royal Road of discipleship—unless it means safety for others. Christ did not seek to please Himself. His body was broken for us and His life-blood poured out. Our bodies are to be machines kept for His service. It was a medical missionary in Kashmir, I believe, who wrote this collect on the human body wholly surrendered to Christ. Can we make the prayer our own?

“Master, here for Thy service we render to Thee, flesh, bone and sinew, the physical frame Thou hast given. Teach us to use it aright for Thy glory; teach us to treat it for Thee as a good machine which we hold in trust to be tended and kept for Thy purpose. Teach us to use it remorselessly, sternly, yet never misuse, and as it slowly or swiftly wears out, grant us the joy of the knowledge that it wears out for Thee. Amen.”

XV

THE PRIORITY AND PRESTIGE OF ISRAEL

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THE record of the missionary enterprise in all its world-wide character and its age-long history, and its apostolic succession of heroes and heroines ever leads back to the tent of Abraham and Sarah—Sarah, the mother of a nation, and Abraham, the friend of God. Not without reason, Dr. George Smith has put the call of Abraham as the title of the first chapter in his *History of Christian Missions*.

Christendom, Jewry, and Islam, all regard the grave of the patriarch at Hebron as the shrine of their historic origin. In him all the families of the earth have been blessed. And Abraham looms large in Paul's Epistle to the Romans. It is Abraham's faith and Abraham's righteousness that is the type of all the righteousness of faith. To the Jew first and to the first Jew, Paul pays tribute as the great apostle to the Gentiles.

It would not be difficult to prove this by a chain of texts. In the first verse of the Epistle to the Romans we have it: *The gospel was promised aforetime by the Old Testament prophets*. The gospel is for all, on the same terms, but without prejudice to the historical prerogative

of the Jew. The advantage, the prestige of the Jew, are admitted (chap. iii), because they were custodians of the oracles of God. It is their unique place and privilege, the splendor of their inheritance that make their unbelief so pitiful, perplexing, and tragic in the ninth chapter. Paul's passion for their salvation is because of their prestige. The eleventh chapter again puts the Jew first. Of them, after the flesh, salvation came through Christ, and by them will come the great ingathering of all the Gentiles. Providence has not preserved them to no purpose—but for the salvation of the world. We owe the gospel to the Jew today for four reasons:

I. The Jewish race has yet to fulfill a great destiny. That is the witness of the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments. It is an undying race.

“Der Ewige Jude” of Eugene Sue's greatest novel lives on. Nothing is more astonishing than the virility, the solidarity, the talents, and triumphs of Israel. Who can describe their legacy to civilization? It is a race that has been persecuted and hounded as no other race, in Europe and America as well as in Asia; in spite of this, their numbers today challenge attention. God promised Abraham that his seed would be multiplied and scattered, and would become a blessing to all the nations. A marvelous multiplication, a strategic concentration and repeated dispersions have been the history of Judaism.

Today there are over 10,000,000 Jews in Europe, 5,000,000 in America, 745,000 in Asia, 457,000 in Africa, and 25,000 in Australasia, while in Palestine,

the land of their origin, nearly 400,000 find a home. The increase of the Jews on this side of the Atlantic is one of the outstanding facts in the migration of this race. A hundred years ago there were only 45,000 Jews in America. Now in New York City alone there are over 2,000,000.

Like the ancient forests of Lebanon, the trees of the Lord have been full of sap. The Jewish race is immortal; its history displays, someone has said, the strength of the oak, the fragrance of the fir, the longevity of the cedar, the tragedy of the willow, the fruitfulness of the mulberry, and so one might go on through the palm and the other trees of the forest. The trees of the Lord, in this case, were full of sap, and the Jewish race was immortal after God gave His promise to Abraham. The Jewish race has always been a race of giants, — from Abraham and Moses to Einstein and Madame Curie.

In spite of an age-long persecution, the extent and the strength of the Jewish people today are astounding. Take, for example, the promise of God to Abraham, *In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed, and Thy seed shall be as the sand and the stars.* Think of the multiplication of this people, think of their concentration in great world centers, and think of their dispersion. Across the seven seas and in all of the six continents we find the Jew. Whether you consider them as a people who are scattered everywhere, or as a people who are turning towards the Land of Promise, they are the miracle of history.

II. This world of Jewry is stirred today by great

movements. It is remarkable that four of the great non-Christian religions exhibit today currents and tendencies away from the old moorings, which are characteristically similar in origin and character. Whether you speak of Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, or Hindus, you find everywhere three currents coursing all through their social, intellectual, and religious life. First, the current of an idealization of the old religion; second, the growing revolt against the idea of God and against all religion, and lastly, the current which exalts politics and patriotism into a religion.

First, you have the idealization of the old Judaism by breaking away from old sanctions and explaining away ancient rites. This is evident in the writings of men like Rabbi Montefiore of London. In chapter xx of his book on *Liberal Judaism*, he says that Liberal Judaism is not different from Christianity; Chapter xxi on the New Testament, is a striking testimony to this effort of idealizing Judaism. He writes:

“I cannot conceive that a time will come when the figure of Jesus will no longer be a star of the first magnitude in the spiritual heavens, when He will no longer be regarded as one of the greatest religious heroes and teachers whom the world has seen. I cannot conceive that a time will come when ‘the Bible,’ in the eyes of Europe, will no longer be composed of the Old Testament and the New, or when the Gospels will be less prized than the Pentateuch, or the books of Chronicles preferred to the Epistles of Paul. The religion of the future will be, as I believe, a developed and purified Judaism, but from that developed and purified Judaism the records which tell,

however imperfectly, of perhaps its greatest, as certainly of its most potent teacher (Jesus), will not be excluded."

Rabbi Klausner, of the University of Jerusalem, a Jewish University, pays a similar tribute to Jesus of Nazareth:

"He is indeed not yet the Messiah, He is not the Son of God, He did not rise from the dead; but His parables are without any equal, His ethical teaching rises high, even above that of Isaiah, His name will endure as long as human history."

That is the first tendency, the tendency to idealize Judaism and make it appear as a form of present-day Christianity. The second tendency is quite the opposite; it is a revolt—a bitter revolt—against all religion, against the idea of God; it is the spread of atheism among Jews not only in Europe and America, but in England, and Egypt, and practically wherever the modern Jew lives.

Humanism finds its strongest advocates among Jews of this school. Secularism is their philosophy, and, in the words of the apostle: "Whose god is their belly, and whose glory in their shame who mind earthly things." That is why some of the worst forms of modern literature and the drama in our country, at least, are by this type of Jew, who has thrown all religion on the scrap-heap.

The third current is the exaltation of politics and patriotism into a new religion or cult. Many Jews seem to have lost all consciousness of the old religion, and their only faith is Zionism, an extreme form of national-

istic propaganda. It is these Jews in Palestine who are causing the chief difficulty amongst their neighbors, the Mohammedans and the Christians, rather than those who still hold fast to their ancestral faith.

In the task of Jewish evangelism we are bound to reckon with these new currents; in the preparation of a new literature, in the approach to the Jewish family, and in all we can do to help our Jewish neighbors, we need to remember the movements among them.

III. There is a new astonishing attitude toward Jesus Christ. We have already quoted from Rabbi Klausner and Rabbi Montefiore. The Christ who was cast out of the Ghetto for centuries as "an unclean bastard" is now taken into the pulpits of leading synagogues. The Jewish press and Jewish literature pay high honor to our Saviour. Rabbi Solomon B. Freehof, in his remarkable book, "The Stormers of Heaven," uses words that have deep significance.

"The personality of Jesus was such that his sonship to God was magnificently evident. The divine spirit seemed manifest in his words and deeds. He impressed himself upon the world, perhaps more so than other prophets or saints, as a 'child of the living God.' Be that as it may, the consciousness of the presence of God has come to millions of men and women through Jesus.

"That it is personality which is the essence of his power should be evident to every objective student of Christian literature."

In another place, he says:

"It is not merely that legends have been woven around Jesus' name. Every great religious genius

has been en-haloed with loving legend. The significant fact is that time has not faded the vividness of his image. Poetry still sings his praise. He is still the living comrade of countless lives. No Moslem ever sings, Mohammed, lover of my soul, nor does any Jew say of Moses, the Teacher, I need thee every hour."

These are startling words, are they not? And what a remarkable tribute to the eminence and messianic character of Jesus is the recent novel by Sholem Asch, *The Nazarene*. It is a reverent, brilliant and courageous effort to call attention to the fact of the Christ, although it falls short of the reality.

We must add another fact when we think of Paul's challenge. "*To the Jew first.*" The ingathering has already begun. If we look into their long, past history, truly God has given us a record of what the gospel was as the power of salvation among the Jews. The first fourteen Bishops of the Jerusalem Church were all converted Jews. Hegesippus, the historian of the second century, was a converted Jew. Nicholas de Lyra, in the fifteenth century, was a converted Jew. Cardinal Ximenes, compiler of the Complutensian Polyglot in 1517, was a converted Jew. Neander, the Church historian, in 1813, was a converted Jew. Bishop Helmuth, of Huron, son of a rich banker who endowed Christian education, was a converted Jew. Bishop Schereschewsky, a most distinguished missionary, in China, of the American Episcopal Church, a translator, and the inventor of a Chinese typewriter, was a converted Jew. Ginsberg, the great Hebraist; Edersheim and Adolph

Saphir, commentators; DeCosta and Capadose of Amsterdam, the one a poet, the other a physician; Moses Margoliouth, one of the great founders of the British Museum, all were converted Jews; Mendelssohn, Halevey, Mayerbeer, Offenbach, Rubinstein, were all musicians who bowed their knees before the Lord Jesus Christ, and were all converted Jews; the Herschells, astronomers; Emir Pascha, explorer and naturalist; Rosa Bonheur, the painter; Sarah Bernhardt, the actress; Pauline Lucca, the singer; Sir Richard Solomon, statesman in South Africa; Lord Beaconfield and Lord Herschel, Prime Minister and Chancellor, respectively; Baron Reuter, the pioneer of news agency; Joseph Pulitzer, editor of the "New York World"; Blowitz, correspondent and diplomat,—these all were (at least nominally) converted Jews. Time would fail us to complete the record of men and women in every walk of life who would themselves rebuke us if we do not carry the Jews the gospel, and show us that their talents and their attainments should be laid at the feet of Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.

Titus, after he took Jerusalem captive, is portrayed on the Arch at Rome in his wonderful triumph. Rome's legions are marching, carrying the trophies of Judaism. The city is wasted and destroyed; not one stone remained on another stone. But as you look at those trophies, there are three: the golden table for the shewbread, the seven-branched golden candlestick, and the silver trumpet. Three great custodies of the Jewish people — God's Bread, God's Light, God's Trumpet. God's Bread for the whole world, God's Light for the

whole world, God's Message for the whole world. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." He said, "Jerusalem . . . Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." But Christianity is now carrying that Bread of God to the world, and through the Cross that Light, and in Christ's name that Triumph is sounding. If that is true, if leadership has passed from Judaism to Christianity in the plan of God, we need to ask ourselves, How can we raise up a new leadership among the Jews for this problem of Missions?

IV. There is today a call for a new leadership. If missions to the Jews are a mistake, then the mistake and the folly rest on the shoulders of our Lord and of His Apostles. They went first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. That such work for our Jewish neighbors is difficult is no excuse for neglect. The more difficult the problem, the greater the need for power; the more baffling the problem, the greater the need for patience and love.

In fact, we need two kinds of leadership. First, leadership in the Christian Churches to raise up people who believe in missions to the Jews. Alas, we have in our country distinguished Christians who repudiate the whole idea of Christian missions to the Jews: They advise a new approach without the offense of the cross—without making proselytes.

We need trained leadership to go out from the Church into this field and win the Jewish people. The character of the Jewish race demands that the quality of Jewish missionaries who are to win them for Christ must be exceedingly high. Who can estimate the cost of such

spiritual leadership? We need men of spiritual vision, power, and love.

Some people have no vision of what is possible in missions among the Jews. The New Testament speaks of men who could see the invisible by faith. There are those who only see statistics, and cannot see behind the statistics the living, throbbing needs of our common humanity. "Seeing the multitudes, Jesus was moved with compassion."

When Christ saw the man by the wayside and touched his eyes, He said, "What can you see?" "I can see men as trees walking." A wooden world, a world of statistics! But when Christ touched his eyes the second time, the man said, "I see all things clearly."

There are too many missionaries and ministers in the churches who can see men and women as trees walking: they are bewildered by the forest and cannot see the individual. They lack vision. To see things clearly, we need the second touch. We also need patience.

When Paul spoke of preaching to the Jews first, he was ever mindful of the infinite patience of God. His plans are age-long; a thousand years are as one day on His calendar. The history of Israel is the history of God's long-suffering—the patience of Him who inhabits eternity.

XVI

THE OTHER-WORLDLINESS OF MISSIONS

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THE OTHER-WORLDLINESS OF MISSIONS*

SOME years ago an article appeared in the *Hibbert Journal*, by a mathematician, who was also somewhat of a philosopher, on the subject of "The Infinite." He pointed out that every man finds the idea of the infinite and of the eternal in space, time, matter and number. The atom and the starry nebulae proclaim the infinitesimal and the infinite. We lift up our eyes to the everlasting hills and drink from the river that flows on forever. Man is conscious not of his greatness but of his insignificance when he studies nature. "He who proclaims the existence of the infinite," said Louis Pasteur, "and none can avoid it, accumulates in that affirmation more of the supernatural than is to be found in all of the miracles of all the religions; for the notion of the Infinite presents that double character that it forces itself upon us and yet is incomprehensible. When this notion seizes upon our understanding, we can but kneel. . . ." God has put eternity in the human heart. (Eccles. 3:11. Heb. text.)

The Bible is a book that has wide horizons, infinite

* This appeared in *World Dominion*, January, 1933.

stretches of space and time. It deals primarily, not with this life, but with a life yet to be. The great pessimist of the Old Testament and the great optimist Apostle of the New offer a sharp contrast in their personalities, environment and message. But the writer of Ecclesiastes and Paul both insist that the present life is only vanity of vanities when compared with the life beyond. There is a time for everything and God has made everything beautiful in its time. Yet all man's work and man himself must face a final judgment. The things that are seen are temporal, secular, only age-long; the things that are not seen are enduring, everlasting and eternal.

This conception is not limited to one favored religion or race. It is universal. To the sages and philosophers of the past, eternity does not hover over time as an abstraction; it underlies time as a reality. This conception, says Henry Bergson, "establishes between eternity and time the same relation as between a piece of gold and the small change—change so small that payment goes on forever without the debt being paid off. The debt could be paid at once with the piece of gold. It is this that Plato expresses in his magnificent language when he says that God, unable to make the world eternal, gave it Time as 'a moving image of eternity.'" ¹

In this connection Barth has some penetrating words: "Eternity is not the prolongation of time. Eternity is the Quite Other, the Unknown, which in Jesus Christ has broken into our world." According to this conception time is not eternity, and eternity is not time, but eternity is, as it were, the hidden, the other side of

¹ Henry Bergson: *Creative Evolution*, page 335.

time. Time is empty, impoverished eternity. Eternity is time that is filled. In the life of the individual there may be long intervals which can only be described as empty times, times of sleep. And then, perhaps, there comes a year, or an hour, when things grow earnest, when some crisis comes. It means that eternity is flooding into time, as a mountain freshet after a storm floods the dry bed of a stream. Therefore, "the fulness of time" is the crisis for man and for God. Death opens the door to the flood of the eternity; the eternal joy or the eternal woe of Scripture.

It was pointed out at the Jerusalem Council Meeting that the present-day terminology of the Church and of missions lays such great emphasis on social service and the present life that we are in grave danger of losing the sense of the eternal. Our own worldliness blinds us to the other-worldliness of those whom we call heathen. Our vocabulary is too secular. Our horizon is too earthly. Our outlook is too much the realm of Time. Secular movements rivet our attention. But the sincere and devout Moslem, Hindu, or Buddhist, has *always* faced an eternal future with an anxious heart. To them Eternity is the home that calls; time is the present station which they have reached, and which they are soon leaving. So eternity has the greater claim upon them. Eternity is above, time is underneath. Therefore, the light of eternity falls continually into time, while time itself has no light of its own.

1. What happens after death is of supreme importance in all the non-Christian religions. None of them teaches annihilation; none of them believes that death ends all.

The fact is that most of the non-Christian religions, with the possible exception of one form of Buddhism, emphasize the other world as a most important fact in religion. A recent editorial appeared in the Persian paper *Rahnama*, of Teheran, on the real importance of not neglecting the life that now is!

“We Persians always think of life as something very temporary. Since we are living in this world only for a short period of time and eternal life is in the other world, we do not take proper care of ourselves in this life. We build houses out of mud and brick just to last a few years. We make doors, tables and chairs out of thin wood. We even borrow some of our household goods from our neighbors when we have guests. Nothing is made durable and the very foundations we build are not solid.”

Men believe in the immortality of the soul because of the intrinsic incompleteness of the present life. Death closes the door, but we believe it leads to another room because we see that character grows even after the faculties begin to decline. And among all races there have been those who believed in life eternal because of the imperative clamor of the affections.

Not only in Christian lands, but among all races, love is stronger than death. Think of the burial rites of the animist in the deepest forests of Africa or in the isles of the South Seas. In ancient Greece, to men like Homer, Cicero and Plato, there was no question of man's immortality—they believed it. The religion of Ancient Egypt proclaims it in tombs of kings and the witness of monuments. What is the Book of the Dead

or Tutankhamen's tomb and treasure house save an abiding witness that these ancients lived for eternity. It is one unbroken testimony from Mexico, Rome, Greece, India, and Africa.

Or, take a modern instance. Writing on *Jainism* in the *Review of Nations* (January, 1927), a Hindu, Champat Rai Jain, says, "Happiness is not possible for him who has constantly the fear of death gnawing at his heart. In short, we want immortality, all-embracing knowledge and uninterrupted bliss, and will not be satisfied with anything less. Now, *Jainism* discovers that the soul is by its very nature a simple substance as distinguished from a compound thing, endowed with the capacity for infinite all-embracing knowledge, and blissful. The space at my disposal will not admit of my enlarging on any of these essential potentialities of the soul substance, or to undertake their proof. But very strict logical proof is available to prove the *Jaina* claim in this respect. Modern experimental psychology is generally coming round to the view that the soul is a simple substance, and, as such, deathless and immortal. The significance of the simple nature of the soul is that it is incapable of disintegration or of being destroyed, because what is not made up of parts cannot be pulled to pieces in any way. The soul, then, is immortal in its own nature."

No religion lays larger emphasis on Eternity than Islam. Mohammed preached judgment to come and the great alternatives of the Day of Doom. The Koran teaches the literal resurrection of the body and a life everlasting in endless tortures or eternal pleasures.

Migual Asin's recent work, *Islam and the Divine Comedy*, even shows how the eschatology of Dante was borrowed from Ibn 'Arabi.

To sum it all up, is it not true that the best and noblest men in all the non-Christian world through all the centuries have had faith in the immortality of the soul, the certainty of reward and punishment, the supreme value of the present life because of the terror of its possibilities hereafter, the vengeance of the gods, or the demons of the spirit world, not to speak of the dread of ancestral shades and their power to help or to hurt? The hell of Buddhism and of Islam is painted in lurid colors. To such a world, where men through fear of death and the hereafter were subject to bondage, Christ came. He abolished death and brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel. It is a Gospel of eternal life and eternal joy and peace through repentance and faith in His atoning death.

2. Again, we cannot forget that Jesus Christ in His teaching and Paul in his epistles continually lay emphasis on the *eternal* aspects of the present life, of the Church and of the missionary enterprise. Christ's parables have the background of the great day of judgment and deal with eternity. The parable of the Talents, of the Pounds, of the Ten Virgins, of the Wheat and the Tares, of Lazarus and Dives, of the Net, of the Great Supper—all are eschatological and refer to the life after death. Read His last discourse in John's Gospel or His words on the end of the age in the Synoptics and you realize that His horizon was distant and "beyond the river that has no bridge." Eternal life and eternal

punishment cannot be eliminated from the teaching of Jesus. His Gospel of the resurrection at the grave of Lazarus rises far above the present earthly life. "What shall it profit a man," He said, on another occasion, "if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" To eat, to drink, to be merry, to forget the other world is the life of a fool. Here we sow, but "the harvest is the end of the world" for every one of us.

Paul's missionary message and passion were due to this vision of the eternal. "We look not at the things which are seen." "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable." Not only at Damascus, but all through Paul's life, "he could not see (earthly things) for the glory of that light"—which shone from the heavenly world. "Our citizenship," he said, "is in heaven." Here we are only pilgrims and sojourners to dwell in tents. We must not be entangled with the things of this world if we would be Christ's ambassadors.

The Apostle preached Christ *and the resurrection* because he saw the invisible world, heard the inaudible voices and himself laid hold of the intangible realities. His fires of passion were unquenchable because he lived *sub specie eternitatis*.

At the Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order, Dr. Adolf Deismann said:

"For the past thirty years or so the discernment of the eschatological character of the Gospel of Jesus has more and more come to the front in international

Christian theology. I regard this as one of the greatest steps forward that theological enquiry has ever achieved. We, today, must lay the strongest possible stress upon the eschatological character of that Gospel which it is the practical business of the Church to proclaim. Namely, that we must daily focus our minds upon the fact that the Kingdom of God is near, that God with His unconditional sovereignty comes through judgment and redemption, and that we have to prepare ourselves inwardly for the *maranatha*—the Lord cometh.”

3. If this be true, then our missionary message and methods need nothing so much as the searchlight of eternity. Our message concerns One who came from the eternal, Who died, Who rose, and Who is coming again to judge the world. Our Gospel has eternal values, and places everyone who hears it before eternal issues—eternal life, or eternal death. In this connection we recall Dr. Harnack’s famous definition of the Christian religion:

“It is something at once simple and sublime; it means one thing and one thing only—eternal life in the midst of time by the strength and under the eye of God.”

That is not *all* of Christianity, but it is a most important part. The Cross is our glory because it “towers o’er the wrecks of time.” Amid the chaos of political confusion in the Far East, in the welter of the fanatic nationalism of India, in the midst of cynical secularism and communistic atheism, when humanity is uprooted and institutions are adrift, when the torrents descend,

the floods rise high and the whirlwinds blow—the Rock of Ages stands, our only refuge.

The mission fields need a Gospel message which is timeless, because it is eternal, and boundless as the horizon of heaven. All the older missionary heroes, Judson, Carey, Martyn, Hudson Taylor, lived for eternity and preached eternity, a Gospel that was other-worldly. They went out to save the lost. Their social Gospel included works of mercy to all with whom they came in contact. They had their schools, hospitals, and asylums for lepers. But we, as they, should consider all these institutions as means to an end. They are only the scaffolding of the eternal palace. *That* consists of living stones, lives redeemed, character built up, souls won for glory. The aim and goal of the missionary enterprise is not of the earth and earthly. John saw it on lonely Patmos, the great multitude which no man could number “every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people” before the throne in white robes, giving glory to the Lamb for ever and ever. I received a long letter from a Moslem convert in the Punjab, in which is this significant passage:

“Our citizenship, St. Paul says, is in heaven. We are citizens of no mean kingdom. The first mark of a citizen is that he love his country, that he be proud of belonging to his country, that he be a patriot. In the Christian Church this sense is largely lacking. We are enthusiastic for our particular nations, we are swept off our feet by the interplay of imperial and racial movements, and we even identify the Kingdom of Heaven with a national cause. But in the Biblical sense we cease thereby to be Christian.”

Our methods and our program may need revision when we think as clearly and as deeply as this convert did. In the light of eternity, salvation becomes a matter of great urgency, and opportunity is of infinite value. All our possessions are temporal. We are only stewards for a little while. Why pull down our barns to build greater? Why lay up so much treasure on earth? Why worry about a financial depression if our kingdom is not of this world? The camel finds it no easier to go through the eye of a needle in Wall Street than in Capernaum or Jerusalem. I learned my lesson in Sumatra in 1922. At Sibolga, on the west coast, I visited a station of the Rhenish mission and saw their spiritual work being quietly and triumphantly carried on after the World War, and in the midst of great commercial rivalries in tin, tobacco, rubber and oil. Over the dressing table in the guest room of the mission house were some lines by Maria Schwallenbach which riveted my attention and which I translated. They sum up the other-worldly character of missions:

*“Light of eternity, light divine,
Into my darkness shine,
That the small may appear small
And the great, greatest of all:
O light of eternity, shine.”*

XVII

THE COST OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

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THE resolutions of the International Missionary Council meeting held near Madras last year revealed facts that are solemn and sobering. We are told, "The Church is faced with a situation in its missionary task where areas are closing to the Gospel and where many of the peoples have become less open-minded to Christian influences. In this connection we note revivals within Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Shinto. There is more organized opposition to the Christian Church than at any time within the past hundred years. There is a real danger that if the work of the Church is not intensified the adverse movement will become so strong as seriously to threaten the whole work of the Church in the world. The world is in a ferment, nations are seeking substitutes for God, and nationalisms are replacing old religious loyalties. There are more non-Christians in the world now than there were ten years ago. The increase in membership of the Christian Church has not yet overtaken the increase in population. The resources in missionaries and funds from the sending countries are relatively considerably less than they were a generation ago and in consequence there has been a

curtailment of evangelistic effort and reduction in the number of missionaries in many fields, and the abandonment of some rural areas.”

The fact is therefore obvious that no generation of Christians has faced a larger or a harder task at home or abroad than the present one. The world was never larger in area and population. It was never so small in diameter because of rapid communications and all the facilities of human intercourse. And the world was never so restless as it is today. The call of the hour for this new day is for a new missionary leadership. We need larger faith, a more undiscourageable hope and a love that will prevail over all hatred and persecution.

Those who are to lead the Church in its future missionary program must, however, pay the cost of spiritual leadership. In the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews we have a list of the heroes in the past, and we may read between the lines at what a terrible cost they led the Old Testament Church from darkness into light, and were bold witnesses in their generation. There is a great inspiration in our predecessors. There are voices behind us that whisper: “This is the way, walk ye in it; when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left” (Isaiah 30: 21). So John on Patmos in the spirit on the Lord’s Day heard a great voice *behind* him. The voices are behind us, but their inspiration leads forward by faith on a pathway that for us, as for them, is long and steep and difficult. The great cloud of witnesses should enable us the better to run our race. Lord Morley has a sentence in his *Life of*

Gladstone: "If a man is despondent about his work, the best remedy I can prescribe for him is to turn to a good biography." And there are no better biographies than those given in the Old Testament of the heroes of faith. Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, and the unknown warriors celebrated in the conclusion of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews—what a compendium on the true qualifications for spiritual leadership. What is a leader? A spiritual leader is one who knows the road, who can keep ahead and get others to follow him. And the cost of leadership is to possess the virtues of the pioneer, of those who saw the invisible, heard the inaudible, and laid hold of the intangible realities. There are seven qualities in the exercise and discipline of leadership which are essential: vision, decision, knowledge, passion, sacrifice, self-effacement, and to endure loneliness.

1. *Vision* is the primary quality of all leadership. The patriarchs, prophets and apostles, the missionary pioneers, were all men of vision. When the blind lead the blind both fall into the ditch. Our first need is to have our eyes opened and to see things clearly. We need the second touch as we said before. At first we only see men "as trees walking," a wooden world of statistics. The second touch gives us knowledge of human needs. Vision is more than sight, more than insight, more than outlook. It is to see the invisible! Of St. Paul, we read: "I could not see for the glory of that light." He was blind to all else except the heavenly vision. John Wesley had a vision of a world and the needs of his day and generation. Unless the pulpit has

a wider outlook and a larger horizon than the pew, it is vain to look for spiritual leadership in the clergy.

We have had a surplus of surveys and conferences and reports and resolutions. If they could have been printed in *spiritual* Braille, the spiritually blind might have benefited. Now, alas, so much of this excellent printed material stands unread on the shelf. There are graveyards of Christian literature and Conference reports enough. On the desert road to Jericho our one petition should be "Lord, that our eyes may be opened." To catch the vision is to read the message.

2. *Decision* is equally essential for leadership.

This is the power of the single motive, a single aim, for decision of character is a condition of spiritual leadership. Noah's obedience to the divine commission, Abraham's call, and Moses forsaking Egypt are vivid illustrations. What we need today is to burn our bridges behind us, to set our faces like a flint, and to try, after we have the vision, to realize its implications by the surrender of life. The whole foreign missionary enterprise is the history of personal decisions. What did it mean for all Africa when David Livingstone decided to cross the Zambezi?

He did so, conscious that the step would arouse criticism in London and by his own colleagues at the Cape. But his eyes were on the far-horizons and he had an imperial mind. Hudson Taylor (considered by Dr. Latourette of Yale as one of the greatest missionaries of China) decided that not one station or one province was his parish. China's millions were on his heart and on his program. He walked by faith, after his great de-

cision, and the story of the China Inland Mission is the occupation of eighteen provinces by hundreds of missionaries and thousands of praying supporters at home.

3. *Knowledge* of the task is also an essential for leadership.

Vision without knowledge creates visionaries, and they are not leaders; but knowledge is power and creates seers. Like our predecessors, the missionary leaders of today must learn the length and breadth and height and depth of the problem of world-evangelism. William Carey's earliest survey of the non-Christian world was faulty in its statistics but has never been excelled in its dynamics. He himself implemented that survey, made in a cobbler's shop, when he went out to India as the first missionary of the Baptist Society. He mastered Latin, Greek, French, Dutch and Hebrew, with plodding perseverance, before he sailed in 1792. Before he died at the age of seventy-three, he became a master of Bengalee, learned Sanskrit with other Indian languages, and established the Serampore Mission which printed Bible translations into forty languages and dialects. He was a great missionary leader because of his wide knowledge of India, its religions and its peoples. The spiritual leader must know the heart of man and the heart of God. These are the two foci of the great ellipse that covers the study of anthropology, sociology, the history of religions and, far more important, the revelation of God in the Bible, in Nature and in man's conscience.

The human heart everywhere is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." The world everywhere

is “without Christ, without hope, without God”—but for the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In the Bible we have the complete revelation of the greatness of God’s loving heart. There is no other guide.

4. *Passion* is knowledge and vision and decision set on fire.

Knowledge without passion is cold and unfruitful. And there is no substitute for the missionary passion. We need it in our churches everywhere. “Facts are the fuel of missions,” but all the facts in the world will not fire human hearts until they are kindled by a spark from above. We need a burning love for the lost. First, there is ignition, then combustion, then light and power. “John was a burning and a shining light.” The burning must come before the shining, and the only spirit of missions is the Holy Spirit. That Spirit is a Spirit of fire. Those whose hearts become an altar where God’s love is the flame have already been baptized into leadership.

The words of a great missionary leader now gone to his reward, Frank Mason North, deserve repetition and meditation:

“Here and there men act as though our Leader had left the field, or that what He did nineteen hundred years ago ended His part of it, and that the rest is our overwhelming task with Him away and not caring. Is the Gospel of a Living Christ a new Gospel in our generation? Does the motive which moved the missionary heroes of the early days—the constraining love of Christ—seem too personal, too inti-

mate, for a highly organized Christianity? Would the effort once again to fan into flame the missionary passion serve a purpose which the cultivation of a missionary intelligence and missionary conscience leaves incomplete? Frankly, 'out of the depths,' and out of the buffetings of the cross currents of modern experience, many in America are crying unto Him—this Living Lord. They believe that 'there is no other name.' They discredit no organization, they decry no program, they would honor and arouse the Church, but just now, with breaking hearts, they are asking for the vision of Him—the Christ who *lives*. They believe in the throb as well as in the science of missions. They urge for themselves and for others that the warmth of a fervent spirit may go with the cool thinking of a clear brain.

"There is no substitute for the Missionary Passion. The burning heart of our compassion for the multitudes must be our Passion for Jesus Christ. It was the compelling power in the first century. The twentieth has found for it no substitute."

5. And there can be no passion without *sacrifice*. Self-sacrifice is essential to spiritual power. But what do we mean by sacrifice?

Alas for the deterioration of noble words! The word "sacrifice" has almost lost its meaning. Abraham knew what it meant on Mount Moriah, and every one of the heroes of the faith was called to sacrifice before he was called to service. The great renunciation of Gautama Buddha was the beginning of a great religion. The whole enterprise of Christian missions is based on that one Sacrifice which we commemorate in the Holy Com-

munion, and which is the heart of Christianity. The true minister of Christ at home or abroad is known by "the print of the nails and the mark of the spear." This is the test of sincerity which no one can gainsay. That test unites all the churches and all the ages into one fellowship of those who follow the Crucified. I think of my colleagues in Arabia, of Toyohiko Kagawa in Japan, of Albert Schweitzer in Africa, and of the missionaries of the China Inland Mission whom I met in northwest China. The one thing that stands out in all of their lives is sacrifice without complaint and without consciousness of sacrifice. When we read the story of such lives we are reminded of John Bunyan's pen portrait of a true preacher: "His back to the world, his face toward heaven, and a book in his hand" (and it was not a bank-book!)

Mr. J. I. MacNair of the Livingstone Memorial Trust, reproduced recently in a magazine a facsimile of the receipt of David Livingstone's first salary payment. It is dated April 8, 1841, and reads: "Received from Mrs. J. Phillip the sum of eighteen pounds, fifteen shillings sterling, being the salary for one-quarter from the London Missionary Society."

The small amount of the payment will be noted with surprise—less than thirty shillings a week! Of course the purchasing power of the pound was much greater then than now, and Livingstone was then a bachelor, but when later, in addition to the support of his family, he attempted to finance his exploring expeditions, all on a hundred pounds per annum, it is not to be wondered at that his income was frequently mortgaged long ahead.

6. *Self-effacement* may not be necessary in military leadership or in that of politics and finance. In spiritual leadership it is a prime requisite.

This is Christ's definition of leadership: "He who would be great among you, let him be the servant of all." Even as no great architect blazons his name on the door of the cathedral which he builds, and as nature bears no labels, although the heavens declare God's glory, we must be willing to remain unknown. St. Paul's estimate of his own work and worth grew smaller as he grew older and greater. At first he says: "I am not worthy to be called an apostle," but at the end he said: "I am the chief of sinners." The true missionary builders of the past have been men and women who forgot themselves in the task. There is something sublime in the common level and monotony of the gravestones of Herrnhut, and at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, recording the corporate service of the great army of Moravian missionaries. They represent not great personal achievement or distinction, but corporate sacrifice. The simple inscription on Moody's lowly grave at Northfield is also eloquent: "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever." All desire for publicity, for bigness, and popular applause or approval are not of God but of the world. The only missionary appraisal that is worth while is Christ's at the end. Not the gilded prow, but the submerged oak rudder guided the sailing ships across the mighty deep. It is a new day in foreign missions. We must meet the leaders of the new Indigenous and national churches not as their superiors,

but as servants. They must daily increase, and we of the Western churches decrease.

7. The last element and the final cost of leadership is *loneliness*.

There is a loneliness of the great city, of the vast desert, of the boundless sea, but these are nothing compared with the loneliness of a great idea or ideal in the heart of a forlorn hope. The loneliest preacher is he who has a new message of advance and a new vision of what needs to be done. In the missionary enterprise at home and abroad the great leaders of the past have suffered the loneliness of which we speak: Alexander Duff before the Assembly of the Church of Scotland pleading for higher education in India; David Livingstone in his correspondence with the London Missionary Society; Temple Gairdner in his attempt to use new methods of reaching the Moslem heart in Cairo. These are only illustrations of the loneliness of leadership. Lonely Raymund Lull in the thirteenth century stood between the fires of the Inquisition in Spain and the Crusaders in Palestine, pleading for a new method with the Saracens. He said: "We must win them by love and tears and sacrifice, and not with worldly weapons." St. Paul's epistles from the Mamertine prison at Rome told the same story. All these were pioneers of the faith, spiritual leaders, and all of them followed the Master by treading the winepress alone, misunderstood by their contemporaries, deserted by their friends, sometimes betrayed by their enemies. *Gethsemane, Gabbatha, and Golgotha were their portion, but they shared the abiding presence of Christ.* His promise: "Lo, I am with you

always," is the promise to those who pay the cost of missionary leadership. If we hold back part of the price, as Ananias did, we may after all be "carried out dead."

*"O Master of the waking world,
Who hast the nations in Thy heart,—
The heart that bled and broke to send
God's love to earth's remotest part,—
Show us anew in Calvary
The wondrous power that makes men free.*

*"O Church of God! Awake! Awake!
The waking world is calling thee.
Lift up thine eyes! Hear thou once more
The challenge of humanity!
O Christ, we come! Our all we bring,
To serve our world and Thee, our King."*