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## BULLETIN

# Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in the United States

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## SEMINARY NEWS ITEMS

The Society of Inquiry had three meetings which it desires especially to report for the fall term. The first was the annual reception given to the new students. Each incoming student was introduced by an old student. Interspersed with these introductions and responses were short talks by the professors. The speech-making in due time gave way to refreshments and these in turn to a song-fest in which all present joined heartily. Another meeting of the Society was given over to a report by Mr. Strauch upon his experiences during the past summer as a student-in-training under the Council for the Clinical Training of Theological Students. (The work of this Council was described in the last issue of the *Bulletin*.) At yet another meeting brief reports were heard from each of the six students who attended the Interseminary Conference at Pittsburgh. The six students were Messrs. Schaeffer and Kosower of the Senior Class, Mr. Smith of the Middle Class, and Messrs. Robinson, Antal, and Cathers of the Junior Class.

Dr. Lawrence E. Bair, professor-elect of Practical Theology, was a welcome visitor at the Seminary for the better part of a week. It is his purpose during this year to visit a number of Seminaries throughout the country to observe their work with particular regard to the conduct of their departments of Practical Theology. Some historical research on which he is working brought him to Lancaster for a week, and so he spent each morning with us at the Seminary. He visited a number of classes, spoke one morning in the chapel service, and attended a meeting of the Society of Inquiry.

Quite a few of the students attended the Churchmen's Brotherhood Convention at Harrisburg. They were shown every courtesy by Dr. Darms and other officers of the Convention, and enjoyed the sessions greatly.

On Saturday, November 19th, the Seniors accompanied by Professors Frantz and Harner, made a pilgrimage to the Schaff Building in Philadelphia. The tour of the building with stops at the headquarters of the various boards and agencies had been carefully planned by Mr. Keppel with the cooperation of the other secretaries. Following the tour there was a delightful dinner at the Robert Morris Hotel. Dr. DeLong of the Board of Home Missions presided as toastmaster. The major address was given by Dr. C. E. Schaeffer. Mr. Dyson of the Senior Class responded. The Seniors were unanimous in the feeling that they derived not only great enjoyment from the day but also great profit in a clearer understanding of the workings of our denominational agencies.

To previous reports of the placement of recent graduates there can now be added the election some time ago of Mr. Bartholomew, '38, to the pastorate of the St. John's-Stowe charge at Pottstown, Pa.

—N.C.H.

#### A REMINDER

A number of Bulletin subscribers who regularly send their dollar apparently failed to see the subscription notice inserted in the October Bulletin. This unintentional oversight we feel sure will be corrected after reading this reminder.

THE BUSINESS MANAGER.

#### LEADERSHIP\*

FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

Leadership is one of those oft-used words—used so often that their meaning is not always clear. Some words are like coins which have to be reweighed to assess their actual value, with the inscription of their nationality rubbed off. It is sometimes necessary to melt them down and make them into new instruments of exchange.

Suppose we look as closely as we can at leadership. Men are men in all phases of human activity. If we can find what leadership means or implies anywhere, we may find some values for our work as religious leaders.

To begin with, I think that we are all willing to admit that a foremost type of leader in any community today is that of the expert. Authority is the judgment of experts. One of the jibes now and again leveled against Democracy is as to Democracy's reliance upon experts. Was it not Socrates who was thought to have made an excellent hit against Democracy when he asked if we could safely leave the choice of the pilot of a ship to the judgment of the people? Well, a good many centuries have come and gone since the time of Socrates, and through those centuries the people have learned more and more to trust experts—to trust them because of the excellence of results. It may even be asked if in our country today we are not a little too willing to trust expert judgment of too highly specialized a type.

Be that as it may, religious leadership today has to be that of experts. I might mention many types of expert: that of the Biblical student, that of the master in religious education, that of the social worker. I can, however, make my point clear, I think, by mentioning just two.

First, the minister in his pastoral work has a wonderful chance to come to an understanding of people. One of the leading psychiatrists in the country told me a little while ago that no matter how highly skilled one may be in technical psychiatry, one must never lose sight of the importance of just

\* The Anniversary Sermon delivered May 11, 1937.

listening to men, learning how to get them to express themselves in perplexity or discouragement. He did not abate one tittle of his regard for his own profession when he declared that Christian pastors, even without technical training, can better judge of ordinary human situations than many a trained professionalist—and that the professionalist cannot succeed without relying upon the patient and sympathetic listening which is the mark of successful pastoral work. The best experts in the knowledge of what we call human nature that I have ever known have been pastors who have taken their pastoral work seriously. It would be amusing, if it were not so tragic, to hear so-called men of the world speak of pastors as if they knew nothing about the world of men. Nobody, that is to say no servant of the public, knows more about the secrets of the human heart than do pastors, unless it be that social benefactor whom we call the old-fashioned family doctor. A pastor would better not attempt delicate psychiatric work himself. He should know enough to be able to advise the services of a psychiatrist, but he should know enough to guide people in the ordinary crises of life where good sense, kindly sympathy, wise charitableness and unflagging patience are the indispensable requisites. These qualities may not yield much to statistical results but they are mighty in bringing men to the Kingdom of God and that Kingdom to men.

The second sphere of ministerial expertness is that of familiarity with the human consequences of the social conditions under which we live today. Years ago the steel industries of this country were notoriously lacking in safety appliances for the workers. Safety appliances, by the testimony even of critics of the steel industry, are common now. In the eighties, however, men had to work with white-hot steel that, in some form, might get out of control and strike workers with a bite more deadly than that of any cobra in India. When the agitation for improved conditions first began, some industrialists declared that before any preacher talked about the steel industry he should learn something about the steel industry. Well, the ministers laboring in steel districts were the chief experts as to the human consequences of the industry. Preachers may be ignorant, but when they go to a funeral they know somebody

is dead, and they usually ask as to the cause of death. They know the number of deaths and injuries in their parishes. They know what happens to the families of the killed or injured. It is so all along the line. In the foreign fields the missionaries know better than any others the actual consequences of heathenism, of the impact of so-called Western civilization on the Orient, of the effects of Christianity.

It does not meet the demands of this expert ministerial knowledge to ask preachers how they would change things for the better. That is not the preacher's task. The industries possess the engineering skill. Engineers are paid for improving industry. To stand off and tell a preacher that he ought to understand blast-furnaces before he talks about an industry that uses blast-furnaces, can be met by the rejoinder of asking the industrialist if he knows what human beings are before he sneers at the minister.

Another phase of leadership is that which shows itself in the ability to express to people their own best thought and aspiration. This is a high type of preaching and of public prayer. In public prayer the minister out of his full knowledge of his people expresses the desires of those people better than they could express them themselves. The secret in public prayer is that the people want something said for them.

Likewise with preaching. If the people who greet the preacher at the close of the sermon say: "That was fine. I never thought of that before," let not the preacher be too highly exalted. The chances are, with abundant exceptions, that such compliment-dispersers will never think of the sermon again. If, on the other hand, the bearer declares that he had often half-thought what the preacher had said, but had never till that morning got firm hold of the thought, or the feeling, or the aspiration, or the resolution, the sermonic leadership has been of lofty quality, provided the preacher has caught the people on the loftier reaches of their thinking. Gladstone used to say that it is the distinctive task of the orator to send back upon an audience in life-giving streams what comes up to the orator from the audience itself in mist or spray. Of course this power is liable to dreadful abuse. A demagogue may know low, self-



seeking aims in a particular group and may express those aims with power which the group cheers, or may rationalize low aims until they sound like holy patriotism. I am not thinking of preachers, however, as potential demagogues but as actual prophets. It is the duty of the prophet to make the people listen to their own best selves. Self-realization, self-expression are in many lives impossible except for the skilled speech of the prophetic leader. Religious leadership often means this leading of minds out into the acceptance of truth which seems to well up in the inner depths of the individual's life, but which never would have come to the surface if it had not been for the utterance of the preacher.

A third form of leadership is of an altogether different stamp; namely, that of the leader who gives utterance not to today's truth but to tomorrow's. He is ahead of his fellows with teachings that may seem radical today but which will be popular tomorrow and reactionary day after tomorrow. Let it be said at the outset that this leader is likely in for a hard time of it, especially in periods like that through which we are now passing. Nobody is likely to stone him, though some people seem to think that because Jesus said that Jerusalem stoned the prophets stoning is the appropriate way to deal with prophets. Nobody will drive him out of the Church. He may leave the Church for what appears to him a wider field, but he will not be expelled. He may, however, be called a trouble-maker and fail to get the more comfortable parishes. He will not be considered by committees on pulpit supply, but he serves nevertheless and serves immensely. By the utterance of his ideas he gets the people used to those ideas. There are several well-marked stages through which opponents of newer statements of the truth pass. First, they say that the new truth is dangerous and deadly heresy. Then, as the truth proves harmless or even helpful in actual life, they declare that it is an affair of indifference whether one accepts it or not. Then they say that any one is a fool who does not believe it, and they may end by saying that they were the original proclaimers of the truth. By that time something newer still comes above the horizon, and the path around the circle is trodden again.

Every now and again some critic of the Church gets furious because not all the preachers are preaching all the time on some one radical theme. Well, not all preachers are fitted to do this. Poets make poor radicals in practice, splendid as they are in statement, because they are likely to be too sensitive. Orators are likely to overstate their positions, though some positions cannot be overstated. The radical has to be of a definite type, recognizable as soon as we meet him. There are not many in a given denomination. What we ask—and we rightly ask—is that they be given a chance. They have to pay an undue proportion of the cost of social progress, especially of religious progress. They are not of much use at church “sociables”; but, small though they be in number, they do more than their share in holding the Church up to the ideals of Jesus. They make what seem to be mistakes, but usually their blunders are productive because of the idealism which has prompted them. Likely their service, if its worth could be calculated, would stand first in its religious value.

Lastly I wish to mention the leadership of the harried and harassed ecclesiastical official who, in these days, is too often thought of as the least worthy of religious leaders.

May I remark in passing that I do not mean to say, or even to imply, that all these diverse qualities of leadership are to be found in one person. The radical becomes impatient with him who thinks it his task to seek chiefly how to express the best life of his followers to themselves and with the spirit which he calls that of officialdom, and the official finds it a strain to adjust himself to the radical. Yet they all have their place in that social organism called the Church which is the Body of Christ.

Speaking now of the official, it is he who makes possible the progress of the Church by holding the various elements together. It has been said that theological heresy is not that which is downright false, but that which may be true and yet out of proportion to other phases of Christian truth. So in administrative leadership, blunders and failure come when practical activities get out of true relation to one another. Experts, interpreters and radicals—each group thinks its own efforts the most important, and unless there is adjustment and co-ordina-

tion there result schism and friction among what Paul calls the members of the Body.

Radicals are likely to see only one side of a question, though they may see farther below the surface than any others. Still if the radical will listen to anything except what seems to him all-important, he ought to heed the truth that a conscientious official, ecclesiastical or otherwise, may show more courage in a moderate measure of policy which he strives to put into effect than do the critics who denounce him. For the official has the heavy responsibility of acting, when others merely talk. The orator must declare the truth as he sees it. He seldom expects anybody to proceed at once to do what he says. If the advice of radical orators could go immediately into active effect upon utterance, society would find itself pretty badly blown about by repeated explosions. The administrator has to work out the vision of the prophet into hard reality. He raises the wrath of the radical for not going faster and of the conservative for going too fast. He has to handle the tangled problem of how to fit the new conceptions to hosts of other conceptions. It is all well enough to say that we are to have justice done though the heavens fall, but none of us want the heavens to fall. We want the earth lifted a little higher toward the heavens, but not the heavens, which are among our greatest blessings, brought in ruins down around our ears.

I once heard a famous orator describe the leadership of Abraham Lincoln from this active administrative point of view. He declared that in his policies Lincoln was like a man placed where he had to listen to two anthems—one from the ideals which the people ought to follow and one from the voice of the people themselves—that when he heard both anthems sounding full in his ears he went forward. I spoke of this illustration once before a British sea captain who told me that it reminded him of a long, deep inlet of the sea leading to one of the harbors over the northeast coast of America—the steamship channel being most tortuous. The inlet was wide enough across so that there was a surf on both sides. There was only one path of safety for the sea captain, namely to hold to such a course that he could hear at one time the sound of the surf on both sides. To

hear only one surf meant peril—a good suggestion, I think, of the skill and courage required of administrative leadership.

I don't know that these different types of leadership will ever understand one another, or get along smoothly together. I repeat that they are all indispensable, however. Upon them depends the advance of the Kingdom of God on earth.

New York City.

## THE DIFFICULTIES OF NEUTRALITY

LEE M. ERDMAN

That there is a deep-rooted desire for peace among all classes of American people, more widespread than in any period of our history can scarcely be doubted. However, when the subject of the preservation of peace is broached we encounter very decided differences of opinion and sometimes diametrically opposite attitudes. Even pacifists have been known to become quite violent in repudiation of principles they have deemed unworthy and peace organizations, if they have not declared war upon each other, have at least gone to the extent of severing diplomatic relations. In these days of catastrophic change in governments and international affairs it surely is of greatest importance that we should calmly consider some lessons culled from history and face realistically the conditions of the modern world, in order that we may know the better "the things that belong to our peace."

There is one phase of international relations about which there are varied opinions and to which our people have given anxious thought in recent years, especially because of grievous experiences in the past—how can we preserve an attitude in the event of war between great world-powers which will prevent us from becoming embroiled with all the disastrous results that follow? This is not a simple matter. Our fathers found it impossible on several occasions in an earlier day. And now when the ends of the earth are drawn together in economic interdependence and when a fierce conflict of ideologies, philosophies concerning the nature and purpose of the state, separate the European nations into rival groups, armed and arming to the teeth, it is

an even more difficult matter. It is not enough to say in superior manner, "A plague on both your houses." "We will live our own lives though ye devour one another." The trouble is that principles may be involved, that deny the fundamental concepts of our political philosophy concerning the rights and liberties of the individual. To those who consider that life would not be worth living without the preservation of these liberties, it is in the nature of the case impossible to preserve an absolute neutrality. Thoughts and convictions cannot be regimented. We must distinguish then between personal attitudes and the acts of a nation which sustains certain rights and obligations toward belligerents. Not to permit these attitudes, founded upon intense personal conviction, to color our acts as a people constitutes one of the first difficulties in the administration of a neutrality policy of a nation. This is illustrated in the case of President Wilson himself. In his statement to the nation on August 19, 1914, he said, "I venture, therefore, my fellow countrymen to speak a solemn word of warning to you against the deepest, most subtle, most essential breach of neutrality which may spring out of partisanship, out of passionately taking of sides. The United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name during these days that try men's souls. We must be impartial in thought as well as in action, must put a curb upon our sentiments as well as upon every transaction that might be construed as a preference of one party in the struggle before another." That he sincerely and scrupulously labored to realize these high ideals was the testimony of all who worked with him, with one or two exceptions. But evidence has appeared that his personal convictions were different. Col. House writing August 30, 1914, of a visit to the President's summer home states, "I was interested to hear him express as his opinion that if Germany won, it would change the course of our civilization and make the United States a military nation." Brand Whitlock reports a conversation which he had with the President in December, 1915.<sup>1</sup> In the course of the conversation Mr. Whitlock said:

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from an article in *The Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science*, July, 1937, by Stanley K. Hornbeck.

"Mr. President, I am officially representing the interests of Germany as well as of the United States and I can honestly say that I am officially neutral in all things; but I ought to tell you that in my heart there is no such thing as neutrality. I am heart and soul for the Allies."

Mr. Wilson immediately replied:

"So am I. No decent man knowing the situation and Germany could be anything else. But that is only my personal opinion. In the West and Middle West frequently there is no opinion at all. I am not justified in forcing my opinion upon the people of the United States and bringing them into a war that they do not understand."

Manifestly there is no such thing as absolute personal neutrality among thinking men who have ethical convictions. To the extent to which these sometimes intense convictions will influence the policies and acts of a nation which as a neutral has relations with belligerent powers, causing it to depart from prescribed standards of justice and equity, to that extent it is impossible for a state to realize anything approximating a legal concept of neutrality.

It may be helpful to us to briefly sketch the history of the rise and, as some authorities claim, the recent fall of the doctrine of neutrality in international law. Like many other beneficial changes in general practices the conception of a status of neutrality in warfare was a matter of gradual growth and development. "Prior to the sixteenth century the modern conception of a status of neutrality was virtually unknown. . . ." Shortly after the beginning of the seventeenth century Hugo Grotius observed that throughout the Christian world there was "a lack of restraint in relation to war such as even barbarous races should be ashamed of"; that "men rush to arms for slight causes or no cause at all, and that when arms have once been taken up there is no longer any respect for law, divine or human."

"There gradually came to be recognized the principle that nations may remain neutral in any war in which they have no direct concern and that their sovereign rights should not be subordinated to the dictates and caprice of belligerents. Neutral rights were recognized to a greater or less extent in nu-



merous treaties dating from as early as the seventeenth century." In 1793 during the war between Great Britain and France an advanced step was taken by President Washington which is regarded by students of international law as of the greatest significance in the development of the status of neutrality. He issued a public proclamation in which, though the word neutral is not mentioned, as indeed it is not in our latest law on this subject, viz., that of May 1, 1937, but in which President Washington shifts the emphasis from neutral rights to neutral duties and impresses upon his fellow countrymen that they "should with sincerity and good faith adopt and pursue a conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent powers and to avoid all acts and proceedings, which may in any manner contravene such disposition." Americans were warned that by aiding or abetting hostilities against any of the belligerents or by carrying to any of them those articles which are deemed contraband by the modern usage of nations, they would forfeit their rights to protection of the United States and that those who violated the law of nations, within the cognizance of the courts of the United States would be prosecuted. The Act of 1794 conferred authority on Federal officers to enforce the principle of this address. Among other things this act forbade recruiting in the United States for foreign powers or the fitting out and arming of vessels for service against any belligerent state with which the United States was at peace. The essential features of this measure were embodied in the more inclusive Act of 1818 which are still the basic principles of the nation's duty as a neutral.

Not many months passed however before it was apparent that the American government would have to be more concerned with its rights than with its duties as a neutral in the fierce conflict between Great Britain and France. The former invoked a Rule of War of 1756 by which she had declared that trade which had been forbidden to neutrals in time of peace should not be open to them in time of war and she began seizing vessels trading between the United States and the French West Indies. Immediate hostilities with Great Britain were averted by a temporary embargo on American vessels planning to sail for foreign

parts. This was followed by the Jay Treaty which, though very unpopular, eased the tension for the moment. However, this treaty was deemed by the French to have been in violation of the Franco-American Treaty of 1778 which had stipulated that foodstuffs should not be regarded as contraband and enemy goods should be safe under a neutral flag. Thereafter the infant American nation was ground between the upper and nether millstones of Britain and France contending for the mastery of the seas, each making reprisals upon our commerce for real or alleged violations of neutrality. As a result of increasing dangers which had been temporarily warded off by John Adams but which increased in Jefferson's administration, there followed the enactment of what Dr. Elson has called the most rigorous and arbitrary piece of legislation as regards private property ever enacted in the United States. At the instance of President Jefferson, in order to rebuke the warring powers and prevent embroilment in their conflict the Embargo act of December 22, 1807, was passed by both houses by great majorities and almost without debate. By this law an embargo was laid, for an indefinite time, on all foreign commerce and by it every man in this country engaged in foreign trade was deprived of his occupation. As Mr. Dulles and Mr. Armstrong remark in their book "Can We Be Neutral"—"The outcome of this act which has been called 'A great experiment in pacificism' was a decided failure. It failed to work as Jefferson had hoped and brought only chagrin and disappointment. It did not bring Great Britain and France to accept the American idea of neutrality. It created no serious economic disabilities in those countries. On the other hand it cut our exports from \$108,000,000 to \$22,000,000. It caused such intense economic disturbance in New England—where it was openly violated—that secession was boldly discussed." This act was replaced by the non-intercourse act, permitting trade with all countries except Great Britain and France. As a result of continued attacks on American commerce a war party steadily gained strength in Congress. We had as great cause for war with Napoleon as we had with Britain but he was more adroit in his negotiations than the British foreign ministers in their frank disregard of our neutral rights.



But Britain's offenses were more numerous because of her control of the seas and as Prof. Borchard suggests the War Hawk party of Henry Clay and others had persuaded themselves that Canada and Florida were legitimate territory for national expansion. As a result public animosity was concentrated upon Great Britain and on June 1, 1812, President Madison sent a message to Congress declaring that Great Britain had abandoned all respect for the neutral rights of the United States. However, on June 18 when Congress passed the formal declaration of war the offensive Orders in Council had been repealed by the British authorities.

Two impressions emerge as we revive this early episode in our history and which are intensified as we move onward. The rights of neutral commerce are always in danger of being minimized or extinguished by the power that controls the sea if that nation's life is endangered. She will interpret the law to suit her interest. Secondly, the economic price for embargoes and boycotts which have frequently been proposed as a rebuke to law-breaker nations entails such change in the standard of living and actual suffering that, when continued for any length of time, it leads to rejection by the people.

During the Civil War with the blockade of Southern ports, conditions were reversed from those which obtained in 1812. It was now to our interest to bear down on neutrals. We enlarged the list of contraband goods. "We ourselves broadened the doctrine of continuous voyage, the doctrine under which we seized goods which were en route to a neutral port but which we asserted had an enemy destination."

In the course of the World War when we were involved in a serious controversy with Great Britain concerning the rights of maritime trade by neutrals our position in the Civil War was frequently cited to our discomfort. Indeed Secretary Bryan, who was so often embarrassingly candid and whose sagacity in interpreting the fateful meaning of events which were drawing us into war is now recognized with the result that there has been an amazing rehabilitation of his reputation, as recognized in a dozen and more recent historical studies—Sec. Bryan admitted writing to Senator Stone January 20, 1915. "The Record of

the United States in the past is not free from criticism. When neutral, this government has stood for a restricted list of absolute and conditional contraband. As a belligerent, we have contended for a liberal list, according to our conception of the necessities of the case."

Nevertheless it is admitted that driven by the menace of hunger due to the submarine blockade Britain not only ruled the waves but waived the rules. She gave her own definition to what constitutes a blockade, enlarged the definition of conditional contraband, published a blacklist of American firms against whom she had a grievance and who could not do business with Britain. Many authorities in international law such as John Bassett Moore and more recently Prof. Edward Borchard of Yale consider that we had a far weightier legal case against England than we did against Germany. President Wilson was at times greatly exasperated and the breaking point with Britain seemed not far distant. His coldness toward his dear friend with whom he had so much in common and to whom he was greatly indebted, Walter Hines Page, Ambassador to Great Britain, registered Wilson's conviction that Page had not vigorously pressed the American case but had succumbed to the charm of English culture as represented in the aristocratic and scholarly Arthur Balfour and Sir Edward Grey. But now note what a sea change occurs in our interpretation of neutrality laws and regulations when once we were in the war and cooperating with the Allies. It is strikingly described in a passage in the "Life and Letters of Walter Hines Page," the unconscious irony of which was not apparent to me when read about sixteen years ago. Balfour was here on a mission to coordinate our efforts immediately after our entrance into the war. He got along famously with our officials.

"As one of these conferences was approaching its end Mr. Balfour slightly coughed, uttered an 'er' and gave other indications that he was about to touch upon a ticklish question.

" 'Before I go,' he said, 'there is—er—one subject I would—er—like to say something about.'

"Mr. Polk at once grasped what was coming. 'I know what you have in mind,' said Mr. Polk, in his characteristically quick way. 'You want us to apply your blacklist to neutrals.'

"In other words the British hoped that the United States, now

that it was in the war, would adopt against South America and other offenders these same discriminations which this country had so fiercely objected to, when it was itself neutral.

"The British statesman gave Mr. Polk one of his most winning smiles and nodded.

"'Mr. Balfour,' said Mr. Polk, 'it took Great Britain three years to reach a point where it was prepared to violate all the laws of blockade. You will find that it will take us only two months to become as great criminals as you are.'

"Mr. Balfour is usually not explosive in his manifestations of mirth, but his laughter in reply to this statement was almost uproarious. And the State Department was as good as its word. It forgot immediately all its elaborate 'notes' and 'protests' which had been addressed to Great Britain. It became more inexorable than Great Britain had ever been in keeping food-stuffs out of neutral countries that were contiguous to Germany."

This latter statement is proved statistically in the comprehensive studies given in "Neutrality for the United States" by Borchard and Lage. We had bettered our instructors. The stark fact emerges again that when neutral rights, as understood in international law, are a hindrance to the efforts of a powerful belligerent, struggling to preserve its national life, they are always whittled down or ruthlessly brushed aside, unless the neutral country is able to defend them. These dangers are always awaiting those who engage in neutral commerce which directly or indirectly affects warring countries.

But more dangerous to the peace of a neutral country than the loss of goods and trade is the loss of human life, incidental to the attempt of belligerents to control or destroy each other's commerce. Undoubtedly the destruction of the *Lusitania* and the wave of horror and resentment that swept over our country when the full extent of the tragedy was revealed was one of the prime causes that swept us into the war. Walter Millis does not think so. International bankers, munition makers and blundering diplomacy of Col. House, he claims were the evil powers that drew us in. But Millis was too young at the time of these events to have an appreciation of the emotional tension which gripped our people and of the resentment which mounted with recurring sinking of ships and loss of life. Now it comes

with quite a shock to find that some of our authorities on international law, even including some Englishmen, are of the opinion that legally we had no case against Germany in that regrettable incident. Space does not permit to detail the arguments. Let me just allude to a few. John Bassett Moore states<sup>2</sup> "It is a fundamental principle that ships on the high sea are under the protection of the country to which they belong and for jurisdictional purposes treated as part of its territory. It was on this ground that we resisted the British claim of impressment. . . . It was the jurisdictional principle which was at the foundation of the rule, 'Free ships make free goods,' which was eventually incorporated in the Declaration of Paris in 1856. It is also the basis of jurisdiction of criminal offenses on the high seas; they are justifiable only in the courts of the country to which they belong." And so it would appear that though Britain may have had a case, we did not when we assumed jurisdiction in the case. But even Britain's case becomes quite weak when we coolly consider other conditions. The *Lusitania* was listed in the category of armed merchant vessels, although unarmed, she carried munitions; the practice of retaliation held on both sides. British ships of this class had orders to sink at sight by gunfire or ramming any submarine which might appear. In effect we were insuring the safety of a vessel which was in this perilous condition by claiming the right of Americans to travel on the same unmolested. But legal abstractions mean nothing when a people have a conviction that fundamental humanitarian principles have been outraged and this incident, coupled with many that followed, prepared the country to think of German ruthlessness as the expression of a military autocracy which was the enemy of all free institutions and we were launched in the crusade to make the world safe for democracy. I do not use this latter phrase with the conventional sarcastic accent which has now become quite threadbare. I use it rather in sorrow as an ideal sincerely cherished by Woodrow Wilson but impossible of realization in the spirit of intense selfishness, hatred and vindictiveness that reigned at Versailles. Wilson's ideas envisioned a

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in "Neutrality for the United States" by Borchard and Lage. By permission of the publisher, Yale University Press.

world in the League of Nations with the independence and territorial integrity of the countries guaranteed and where law-breaking nations should be called to an international bar of justice and when found guilty, punished by the united forces of the other countries. With this thought in mind we can understand what he meant when he stated in a public address "In future wars there will be no neutrals."

The concept of neutrality disappears just in proportion as we become internationalists. It is intensified to the degree that we are isolationists. These two schools of thought have been in violent competition in an effort to control the policy of our state department, and because its policy has been neither one nor the other but has been a combination of both it has been roundly abused by extremists of both sides as being inconsistent. In my judgment it had to be a middle of the road policy during the last fifteen years, even though it led to misunderstanding of and many decided changes in our conception of neutrality.

In illustration of this let me cite some instances in our foreign relations and quote from our recent so-called neutrality laws.

That we have been internationalists loyally cooperating in the interests of international justice and respecting our treaties as signatories of the Kellogg-Briand pact and several other conventions is evident on the record of recent years. Although not members of the League we have endeavored in the spirit of the other pacts to aid the mandates of the League and therefore to assist rather than deter the execution of its lofty purposes. In reply to the accusation, now less frequently made in view of the stern developments of recent years, that, had the United States been a member of the League, international morality might have been preserved, it surely is in place to indicate that the United States has played a more honorable part in discouragement of aggression than have most of the powerful members of the League.

Secretary of State Stimson invoked the Kellogg Pact in branding as an aggressor Japan at the time of the first invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and served notice to the world that this country would not recognize any territory seized in violation of the terms of the pact. That is our position to this day. We

received very indifferent cooperation from the signatories of the Kellogg Pact, particularly from Great Britain and on February 27, 1933, Sir John Simons announced in the House of Commons that "under no circumstance will this government authorize this country to be a party to the conflict." Britain's position now, for various reasons which we do not have time to discuss, had become that of a neutral and our idealistic gesture was regarded as unneutral.

The League of Nations declared Italy to be the aggressor Oct. 9, 1935, in the Italo-Ethiopian War and appointed a committee to bring about a coordination in the application of sanctions against Italy. Our country collaborating with the other powers was in advance of the League of Nations in the severity of the embargo which it placed upon trade with Italy.<sup>3</sup> On Nov. 30, the *N. Y. Times* correspondent reported from Geneva that the League was encouraged by the activities of the United States in enjoining oil, copper, trucks, tractors, scrap iron and scrap steel by classifying them as essential war materials, even though the legality of this act was questioned by authorities because these commodities are also used for civilian purposes." According to Prof. Borchard—"In all these warnings against American trade with Italy, the United States was in advance of the League of Nations, enjoining trade in commodities which the League ultimately declined to control." The tragic outcome of the League's championing of the cause of Ethiopia is present-day history. The last scene in the bitter shameful story was enacted recently at Geneva. Rivalries, fear, conflicting interests prevented any unity of action among the powers of the League and when at length feeble sanctions were applied they proved wholly ineffective and soon by triumph of arms King Victor Emmanuel was crowned Emperor of Ethiopia. And now the former Emperor of Ethiopia haunts the halls of Geneva like Banquo's ghost reminding them of solemn pledges given, which encouraged him to hold out and refuse compromise by which he might have saved a goodly portion of his kingdom. And now astute minds have devised legal formulas by which he can

<sup>3</sup> From "Neutrality for the United States" by Borchard and Lage. By permission of the publisher, Yale University Press.



be most conveniently removed from the scene. Perhaps we have learned a great deal from this experience in the departure from traditional neutrality practice in the interests of international justice. And yet it may be that we have not, when we recall the attitude expressed by those who invite us to consider the threat of quarantining law-breaking nations. You remember the fable "Who Will Bell the Cat." It might be asked "Who will do the quarantining?" Our experience in lack of international cooperation and mutual faith has not discouraged our Secretary of War from talking glibly about the democracies uniting in a war against autocracies.

The Spanish civil war should remind us that here we have a perfect example of conflicting theories of government and of the clash of Fascist and democratic countries in their championing of the Nationalist and Loyalist causes respectively. And in the warfare in Spain and the near war between the two groups of nations surrounding her, our recently enacted neutrality law has received its first severe test. Until January, 1937, it was the policy of the United States to sell arms to friendly governments engaged in repressing revolt. The Resolutions of Congress of January 8, 1937, placed an embargo upon the sale of arms to Spain. This was now extending into the sphere of civil strife the principle of embargo of arms to belligerents. Theoretically this is the fair and safe position. We are aiding neither side and are not involved in the munitions business with all its possibilities for evil. In practice it has worked out in a different way. We acted on the belief that the non-intervention arms committee representing the great powers would prevent arms from reaching either side and so localize and shorten the conflict. In practice we see a very different picture. Germany and Italy have flooded Franco's forces with men and arms and technical advisors. Our position has accomplished nothing save to severely handicap one side in the struggle. This has caused a domestic issue at home and many weighty names have been attached to petitions asking for a change in what is conceived to be an unneutral position of our country. Religious and political feeling, I may say passion, make it difficult to deal with the situation calmly. The desire to get advantage for one side or

another, rather than to preserve the good relations of our country are uppermost in the minds of partisans in this issue. Attempts to modify this embargo were abandoned in the past session of Congress as a result of the convincing reasons advanced by our able and courageous Secretary of State in a letter addressed to the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate. Unsatisfactory in many quarters, difficult to administer, in effect working an injustice on one side, it is generally regarded as the best for the immediate present.

There are many reasons why the embargo on arms has not been invoked in the present Sino-Japanese conflict, beside the technical one that there has been no declaration of war, but the most influential one is no doubt the fact that China would have been the greatest sufferer. And because sympathy for China among our people is so general, such a law might conceivably be reversed under mass pressure. Again we see the difficulty of reconciling a legal concept of neutrality with one that squares with our fundamental convictions of righteousness and fair-dealing among nations.

While there is a difference of opinion among authorities whether the present law commonly referred to as neutrality legislation but intended primarily to keep us out of future wars will accomplish this much desired purpose, some indeed charging that it will bring involvements precipitating war, yet on the whole we believe that a definite advance has been made toward this end. On the basis of our previous experiences in the late war a resolute attempt has been made to deal with our position as a neutral power in the event of war that will escape the involvements which, in the opinion of many, dragged us into the war.

The joint resolution approved May 1, 1937, amending the joint resolution approved August 31, 1935, as amended in 1936, prohibits upon proclamation by the President the shipment of arms, ammunition and implements of war directly or indirectly to belligerent countries. This registers the profound conviction of danger involved in the international munitions business, perhaps also the recognition of the unhealthy economic condition created in a country that profits by the abnormal gains of this



industry. I need not pause to point out what an about face this is from the position we assumed in 1914 to 1917 and when we vigorously defended this practice which of course was perfectly legal, but which caused bitter resentment in Germany and her allies who were unable to reach our ports and markets.

Section 2 sometimes referred to as the cash and carry plan (Sen. Johnson calls it the scuttle and run policy) authorized the President after he has issued a proclamation with respect to arms, ammunition and implements of war, to issue a further proclamation prohibiting American vessels from carrying to a belligerent country or countries engaged in civil strife such articles or materials, in addition, as he may specify. This provision is not mandatory on the President but he may invoke it, if he feels that the gravity of the situation justifies.

In the enactment of this legislation, it has frequently been pointed out we gave up our cherished doctrine of the freedom of the seas in regard to neutral commerce, in defense of which we fought two wars.

A further proviso of Section 2, subsection (b) provides that all cargoes leaving our ports destined for belligerent countries or countries engaged in civil strife, shall be, on proclamation by the President, "divested of all American interest therein." In other words "title to the goods must pass to foreign consignees before it is permitted to leave our ports." Under this provision, it is believed the further danger of capture of American goods by belligerents and all the involvements incident thereto would be obviated. The other side of the picture presented by those who are critical of this provision is that only those powers who have the cash and the carriage, viz., command of the sea, could profit by trading with us and secure the tremendous advantage of non-contraband goods, particularly food and raw materials. In effect we say, come and get it at your own risk and then salve our consciences of all responsibility, if only one side is able to obtain the same. But, as a humble parishioner once said to me, "It is hard to do right in this world." Difficult indeed to find the right line of action, it is evident that this section of the law was regarded as only tentative and should be revised in the light

of further experience, as the framers specified that this particular section should expire May 1, 1939.

Section 3 of this bill prohibits after the proclamation above referred to, any citizen from having financial dealings in the securities or other obligations of belligerent states. This of course registers the conviction that where your treasure is there will your heart be also. I need not pause to remind you how much money would have been saved for American citizens and what further dangerous complications would have been obviated had this law prevailed at an earlier day.

One of the most significant provisions of the present law, Sec. 9, is that when the President shall have made the proclamations referred to it shall then be unlawful for an American citizen to travel on any vessel of the belligerent states. The law of the previous year had stated that such action was at the passengers' risk, but Congress in the present amendment strengthened it to the extent of making it a prohibition. A sober second thought on the significance of the Lusitania tragedy and all that flowed from it must have been the controlling factor in this instance. It has been suggested that remembering Bryan's stand on this issue, if mortal affairs are noted in Elysian fields, the great commoner could hardly have resisted the temptation of nudging Wilson and indulging in a bit of badinage.

But, recalling that consistency may indeed be the virtue of small minds, we need have no undue misgivings in radically reversing the traditional position of our country in various phases of neutrality. We have learned through bitter experience. The present law should safeguard us against many of the incidents which arouse the war spirit. That it will present many difficulties in administration and be unsatisfactory to numerous groups, especially to those who are more passionately attached to a foreign cause than they are mindful of the interests and welfare of their own country, is quite evident. One of the chief differences of opinion will continue to revolve around the question of whether the President should exercise discretionary power in the matter of embargoes. Much can be said on both sides. But it would appear that the desire of the Department of State that the law remain flexible in this respect rests on good

grounds. We cannot foresee all contingencies. Some may not require so drastic a course of action. A mandatory law might work needless economic hardship. Again it must be borne in mind that neutrality is not always an equivalent of impartiality. Although it may approximate it there will be instances where it will work hardship. And indeed the word neutrality is not mentioned in the title descriptive of the purpose of the present law, but as repeatedly stated in the several articles, the purpose is "to promote the security or preserve the peace and to protect the lives of the citizens of the United States."

A new mood has settled upon the statesmanship of Europe. The vision of collective security, under the aegis of the League of Nations, has vanished as a dream in the night. A mood of cold realism which occupying itself now not with things ideally desirable but with things that can be actually realized has settled upon London and Paris. The work of the dictator with all its monstrous excesses must be recognized as a fait accompli. Appeasement of the situation is a word spoken by a hard-pressed Chamberlain. It will be no light task to reconstruct our foreign policy to this new order. But it well may be, at least let us cherish the hope, that, though chastened by our foreign experiences, and ever mindful of our own interest, from the vantage point of this portion of the new world we may make our distinctive contribution to the better world order in which the injustices that have bred the present disturbances shall have disappeared.

Reading, Pa.

## THE APPREHENSION OF SPIRITUAL TRUTH

CHARLES E. CREITZ

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned—1 Cor. 2: 14.

Truth is one as the universe is one. But like the universe which is multiform and has many parts, so truth is manifold and diverse. There is, for example, scientific truth, historical truth, mathematical truth, philosophical truth, etc.

There are truths which can only be discovered with the aid of the microscope or the telescope or the test-tube. The chemist, the biologist, the logician must be our guides into certain kinds of truth. Books are depositories of vast stores of truth which can be acquired simply by reading. Other truths we can find out with the help of teachers.

But there are also truths that can not be gotten out of books or learned from teachers. These might be called experimental truths or truths that can only be known by experience, like love, for instance.

Kagawa some years ago wrote a large volume on "*Love*," but one could read that big book and inwardly digest it, and yet not know what love is. Paul tried his hand at giving an answer to the question, "What is love?" But all that even he could do was to tell us what love is not, or what it does and does not do.

Love is not eloquence, he tell us; nor knowledge, nor faith, nor generosity, nor self-sacrifice. It is kind, but kindness is not love. It does not behave itself unseemly, but good manners is not love. Paul makes a brave effort to define love, but it nevertheless remains true that only lovers know or can know what love is, for it is an emotion which only those who have experienced it can know. It is for this reason, no doubt, that love is beyond the reach of argument. Men are not argued into love, and if it is genuine, they can not be argued out of it. One emotion as a rule can only be overcome by another and a stronger emotion.

Other examples of this kind of truth are, pain, grief, penitence, etc. Only those who have suffered can know what pain

is. Only the bereaved can know grief. Only those who have experienced real sorrow for sin, can know the meaning of penitence.

These are all truths that one can only experience. They can not be learned from books or taught in a class room.

Then there is still another group of truths which may be called *spiritual*. These are truths which relate to the higher spiritual and moral nature of man. They involve man's relationship to God and the moral law. They have to do with the matter of conscience and duty; with faith in God, and man's accountability to Him, with human destiny and the hereafter. These truths might also be called *revelations*, for they come neither from books nor from personal experience, but by being revealed to men. First to men who have the gifts and qualifications to receive the revelation, and then through these are communicated to the rest of mankind.

It may be proper to consider the ways and means by which we come into possession of these various kinds of truth, for each kind of truth has its own appropriate organ of knowing or of verification.

The *brain*, for instance, is the organ of thought. The brain therefore is the physical medium through which the mind works. The power to think is regarded as one of man's supreme endowments. But thinking is really one of the least trustworthy of all the organs of knowledge in all realms except those of fact or of the exact sciences. If thinking were the sure way to a knowledge of the truth, then one would naturally expect more agreement among thinkers as to what the truth really is. But thinking rarely leads men to identical conclusions on any subject under consideration. Indeed thinking is divisive rather than unifying. It is when men begin to think that they begin to disagree. Thinking divides men into factions and sects and parties.

Thinking about God is responsible for an endless variety of theologies. Thinking about Christ has given the world many Christologies. Thinking on the problem of salvation has resulted in many different theories of the atonement. Thinking about the Bible has produced varied theories of inspiration.

Fascism, Communism, socialism, anarchism and democracy are the result of men's thinking on the theory of government. And each of these main theories has been split up into many varieties.

In medicine, education, economics, etc., men are not led into one school or camp by the application of their minds to these problems. The exact opposite seems to be the case in most instances.

One frequently hears the complaint: "Men do not think," by which we usually mean that they do not think as we do. If they did, then they would be *thinking*, in our opinion. But there seems to be a perversity in human nature that simply makes it impossible for even thinking men to think alike.

Perhaps after all this is not perversity, but God's method of securing perpetual progress and improvement in the life and achievements of the race. If all men thought and acted alike on all possible subjects, the possibility of changes would cease and change is essential to progress and advancement. While thinking, therefore, is not an infallible method of arriving at the truth at any particular point in history, it is nevertheless indispensable in the quest for truth, for ultimate truth is never attained in one generation by one man. Truth grows by small accretions, and is always relative to the age in which it appears. We shall always know only in part and see the truth only as in a mirror, no matter how earnestly we give ourselves over to its pursuit. It is not important that all men should think alike, but that they should think soberly and honestly, without hate or bitterness in their heart.

Then there are the *physical organs* of the body which serve as avenues of information concerning certain kinds of truth. The eye, for example, is the organ through which we learn beauty of color and form. While Helen Keller professes to be able to distinguish colors, we may feel certain that one real vision of a rose would be a new and unspeakable revelation of beauty to her soul.

It is through the ear alone that we can know the beauty of harmonious sound. We know taste and smell through their appropriate organs. And these organs are not interchangeable.



We can not hear through the eye, or see with the ear. We can not smell with the tongue or taste with the nose.

When any one of these organs ceases to function, we can get no further information or knowledge from the quarter where that organ alone can operate. One avenue of knowledge is now closed. By no possible effort on man's part can one organ become a substitute for another.

This principle, it seems to me, can also be seen working in the wider realm of humanity. Certain individuals of the race have been especially equipped and endowed to become the channels or the bearers of specific truths to mankind. Talents and genius are the gift of God. They are not given for merit, but freely bestowed. And they are not to be wrapped in a napkin and hidden away for personal use but to be developed and invested for the benefit of the human race.

Among these geniuses and especially gifted have been Plato and Aristotle in philosophy, Archimedes and Einstein in mathematics, Homer and Shakespeare in literature, Mozart and Beethoven in music, Washington and Lincoln in statesmanship, Paul and Calvin in theology and Jesus Christ in religion. These and many others like them in their respective fields have been organs of knowledge for the whole race of mankind.

But these likewise are not interchangeable. Shakespeare is no authority in mathematics, and Einstein may have less qualification to speak on Christianity than many an humble believer in Jesus Christ of whom the world has never heard. The church has often become unnecessarily alarmed when a great scientist or a great philosopher has reported that he can find no truth in religion. While on the other hand she has frequently become unduly elated when some world-renowned astronomer or inventor has come out publicly in favor of God. The eye can not substitute for the ear; neither can an unbeliever for a Christian. "Holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). In all ages God has had men who were his especial mouthpieces, through whom He spoke to men and made known His truth and His will. Hear ye them.

Let us now apply these principles of understanding which relate to truth in general, to what may be designated more spe-

cifically as spiritual truths—God, Christ, the moral law, conscience, the sense of duty, etc.

Here likewise an organ of knowledge is indispensable. As we can not see without the eye or hear without the ear or think without the brain, so we can not know God without the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God in man is as much an original endowment as the eye and the ear, and this is true no matter what theory of the creation of man one may hold.

As the eye or the ear or the brain may become impaired; as one may shut the eye and close the ear, and thus decrease or destroy entirely their usefulness and efficiency, so the Spirit of God in man may be made of no effect through wilful neglect and sin.

"The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11). Indeed the natural man can not know them for they are spiritually discerned. The natural man lacks the organ by which alone they can be known. The invisible spiritual world is altogether imperceptible by means of the senses. They are also imperceptible by means of the intellect alone. A man must become spiritual, led and enlightened by the spirit of God, before he can become an organ of spiritual truth.

The mode by which the Divine Spirit operates on the human personality may be inscrutable, but the fact that He does so operate is indisputable. When Simon Peter made his great confession, Christ himself traced his spiritual insight directly to God: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt 16:17).

But though every human being has this organ of spiritual understanding, it does not operate automatically or passively, or without preparation and cooperation on man's part.

Other things being equal, the man who is most spiritual will be the man to whom God can reveal most clearly His will and His truth. What then can man do to become a more efficient channel of divine truth to his own soul and to the world?

Paul gave as one reason why certain persons perish in the darkness of unbelief, that they "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thess. 2:10).



*Love of the truth*, therefore, is one essential qualification of spiritual understanding. Those who dislike truth, who hate it and turn away from it, can not receive it or know it. Truth will reveal itself to those who love it and passionately seek it. While man by mere searching can not find God, it is doubtful if any one ever found Him without searching. Preparation of the heart is as necessary as the training of the intellect if one would be able to penetrate the inner secrets of the spiritual world. "Affection" it has been said, "is part of insight." Love has a way of knowing that the mind can not comprehend. In many cases emotion is a necessary part of comprehension. Love as well as logic is essential in the quest for truth.

Again, *purity of heart* is a condition for spiritual vision. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The clarity with which spiritual truth is discovered, depends on moral qualities more than on natural gifts or intellectual acumen. Power of spiritual apprehension is at bottom a moral matter involving sincerity of spirit and purity of heart. "Every one who is of the truth heareth My voice." To the carnally minded, to those immersed in worldliness and fleshly lusts the way to spiritual understanding is closed.

Another indispensable condition to the ability of apprehending spiritual truth is, *obedience to what is already known or believed to be true*. "A good understanding have all they that do His commandments." "He that willeth to do His will shall know. . . ." Willingness to follow the truth at all cost, faithfulness to the light already possessed is an essential condition to progress in spiritual knowledge. "Every duty we omit," says Ruskin, "obscures some truth we should have known."

Love of the truth, purity of heart and life, and obedience to what one already knows of duty and the will of God, are prerequisites for the fulfillment of the promise: "He will guide you into all truth."

It is important, however, for the individual, if he would be saved from personal vagaries, not to ignore the accumulated wisdom of the ages. He will test the reality of his own vision by comparing it with what others have seen. He will supplement his own findings by what others have discovered of truth. Yet

he will not rely on outward authority alone. He will call no man Master. He will seek to know what God the Lord has to say to him—expressly to him. He will take nothing at second-hand. He will demand to see for himself.

This road must inevitably lead to Jesus Christ, for truth must ultimately become personal, and Jesus for us is ultimate truth. "I am the truth." Apart from personality, the universe would have no meaning. In the person of Jesus Christ, the quest for truth reaches its climax, its fulfillment, its consummation.

There is a way of life that we can not walk unless we walk with Him for He is *that* Way. There is a truth that we can not know unless we know Him for He is *that* Truth. There is a life that we can not live unless we live in Him for He is *that* Life. "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Easton, Pa.

## CHRISTIANITY AND THE IDEA OF PROGRESS IN HISTORY

WILLIAM TOTH

Is there progress in history? How is Christianity related to it?

Scarcely any idea was more taken for granted until very recently than the idea of progress. To deny it was to bring upon one's head the anathemas of the learned and unlearned alike. As a matter of fact, no thinker of any significance appeared to demolish what had assumed the proportions of a divine revelation of the way God works in the universe. For circles that preferred to find explanations for riddles without the assistance of the deity, the idea penetrated the innermost secret of the universe and life itself. It constituted the very climate of cultural thought. The academic mind with its rich background of biological, sociological and philosophical studies drew upon these resources to undergird the notion of the certain onward and upward sweep, while the more simple mind rested in the assurances of divines that the kingdom was indeed at hand.

And just as mankind was waiting for the radiant bursting of

the golden age, with all wrongs set right and the parliament of man a working reality, something happened to the grandiose idea of progress. The iridescent bubble was burst right in the face of mankind. We are now in a state of confusion. One listens blandly, as if to a long outdated phonograph record, to such an idea as this pertaining to the Christian "logic of history": The moral structure of reality is "glorious proof of Nature's purpose to progress. Our human lot, both individual and corporate, is a pilgrimage—a pilgrimage forward and upward. Reality will have no slackers and no turncoats. We must go higher, or we *shall* go lower."<sup>1</sup> The inward urgency of progress has lost its force. For the last twenty years thinkers have begun to mistrust this idol of modern thought. It is referred to as the "superstition of progress" by the Dean of the church who has turned out to be more realistic than gloomy. Indeed not an eye is blinked as a recent philosopher, true to his science and to the Christian faith as well, asserts confidently: "There is no such thing in history as simple progress in human happiness."<sup>2</sup>

Nor is there progress in some other significant aspects of life, if we are to take the words of Dean Inge in his discussion of this topic. "Our optimists have not made it clear to themselves or others what they mean by progress, and we may suspect that the vagueness of the idea is one of its attractions. There has been no physical progress in our species for many thousands of years. The Cro-Magnon race, which lived perhaps twenty thousand years, ago, was at least equal to any modern people in size and strength; the ancient Greeks were, I suppose, handsomer and better formed than we are; and some unprogressive races, such as the Zulus, Samoans, and Tahitians, are envied by Europeans either for strength or beauty. Although it seems not to be true that the sight and hearing of civilized peoples are inferior to those of savages, we have certainly lost our natural weapons, which from one point of view is a mark of degeneracy. Mentally, we are now told that the men of the Old Stone Age, ugly as most of them must have been, had as large brains as ours; and he would be a bold man who should claim that we are intellectually equal

<sup>1</sup> H. P. Van Dusen: *God In These Times*, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> N. Berdyaev: *The Meaning of History*, p. 192.

to the Athenians or superior to the Romans. The question of moral improvement is much more difficult. Until the Great War few would have disputed that civilized man had become much more humane, much more sensitive to the sufferings of others, and so more just, more self-controlled, and less brutal in his pleasures and in his resentments. The habitual honesty of the Western European might also have been contrasted with the rascality of inferior races in the past and present. It was often forgotten that, if progress means the improvement of human nature itself, the question to be asked is whether the modern civilized man behaves better in the same circumstances than his ancestor would have done. Absence of temptation may produce an appearance of improvement; but this is hardly what we mean by progress, and there is an old saying that the Devil has a clever trick of pretending to be dead. It seems to me very doubtful whether when we are exposed to the same temptations we are more humane or more sympathetic or juster or less brutal than the ancients. Even before this war, the examples of the Congo and Putumayo, and American lynchings, proved that contact with barbarians reduces many white men to the moral condition of savages; and the outrages committed on the Chinese after the Boxer rebellion showed that even a civilized nation cannot rely on being decently treated by Europeans if its civilization is different from their own. During the Great War, even if some atrocities were magnified with the amiable object of rousing a good-natured people to violent hatred, it was the well-considered opinion of Lord Bryce's commission that no such cruelties had been committed for three hundred years as those which the Germans practised in Belgium and France. It was startling to observe how easily the blood-lust was excited in young men straight from the fields, the factory, and the counter, many of whom had never before killed anything larger than a wasp, and that in self-defence. As for the Turks, we must go back to Genghis Khan to find any parallel to their massacres in Armenia; and the Russian terrorists have reintroduced torture into Europe, with the help of Chinese experts in the art. With these examples before our eyes, it is difficult to feel any confidence that either the lapse of time or civilization has made the *bete humaine* less

ferocious. On biological grounds there is no reason to expect it. No selection in favor of superior types is now going on; on the contrary, civilization tends now, as always, to an *Ausrottung der Besten*—a weeding-out of the best; and the new practice of subsidizing the unsuccessful by taxes extorted from the industrious is cacogenics erected into a principle. The best hope of stopping this progressive degeneration is in the science of eugenics. But this science is still too tentative to be made the basis of legislation, and we are not yet agreed what we should breed for. The two ideals, that of the perfect man and that of the perfectly organized State, would lead to very different principles of selection. Do we want a nation of beautiful and moderately efficient Greek gods, or do we want human mastiffs for policemen, human greyhounds for postmen, and so on? However, the opposition which eugenics has now to face is based on less respectable grounds, such as pure hedonism/'would the superman be any happier?'/; indifference to the future welfare of the race/'posterity has done nothing for me; why should I do anything for posterity?'/; and, in politics, the reflection that the unborn have no votes.'<sup>3</sup>

The quotation is rather long, but justified, it seems to me, because it is representative of the nascent criticism of this idea in the post-war era. And with the years this tendency to undermine the idea of progress has developed into a searching criticism that has passed the stage of gleeful iconoclasm and become a very serious effort to resolve fundamental problems in the philosophy of history in the light of the changed atmosphere of thinking. As proof of this assertion, witness any of the works in the field of the metaphysics of history, which has seen the light of day within the last few years.

The most enthusiastic opposition, curiously enough, hails from Christian circles. We are the more surprised at this phenomenon since at one time the Christian worldview supplied the chief source of inspiration for the idea and certainly it may be safely asserted, provided the most acceptable buttressing of the idea for the common man. The idea easily became a dogma of Christian faith in a tradition that was fraught with apocalypticism on

<sup>3</sup> W. R. Inge: *The Idea of Progress*, p. 22ff.

the one hand and an invincible faith in the Kingdom of God on the other. The blend was inevitable.

And so was the general acceptance of the idea. The doctrine of progress took fast hold of the imagination soon after it was first clearly formulated by the Abbé de St. Pierre following the close of the War of the Spanish Succession about two hundred years ago. The idea of progress, which was foreign to the Greek mind that thought of history in cyclic movements, thrived lustily in Christian countries, the intellectual soil of which was well prepared. The Christian ideal of service and the correlative endeavor of Christians to set things right in the world and in the life of individuals fitted into the scheme ideally. The emphasis of the Christian religion upon the infinite worth of the individual, the object of God's redemptive love in the work of that entirely unique person, Jesus Christ, contributed to the acceptance of the reasonableness of the idea, as well as in secular circles somewhat the development of the science of sociology and the formulation of the evolutionary hypothesis cast out every doubt in the orderly ascent of man upon the scale of progress. The rise of ordered secular government, the growth of towns, the unbelievable expansion of business and geography, the developments of science, the pressure of social discontent and the emergence of an educated middle class opposed to the aristocracy were instrumental, through succeeding decades, in various ways to inspire the further working out of this notion with reference to history.

Historically, the notion is linked with the names of the 18th century positivists and rationalists. In point of fact, the notion first finds itself affirmed in the theory of knowledge promulgated by rationalists, whose fundamental thesis was the acquisition of power through knowledge. Progress was achieved, they believed in general, in direct ratio to the increase of knowledge. Then such works as Campanella's *City of the Sun*/1623/, Bacon's *New Atlantis*/1629/, Andreae's *Christianopolis*/1619/, More's *Utopia*/1516/, and Hartlib's *Macaria*/1641/ applied the notion to social life and developed the idea of the regency of humanitarianism in progressive history. Man was to lay hold of the secrets that controlled the orderly rule of society and its guidance into a state of per-



fection. The search began for a law of progress; for to all appearances progress was automatic, necessary and inevitable in the very nature of things in the cosmos. Rationalism and romanticism alike were wedded to the idea of progress. The liberal religion of the late 19th and early 20th century, particularly its very popular offshoot, humanism, very confidently looked forward to the inevitable upward pilgrimage and could most calmly call all the sciences to witness this faith.

What is the idea of progress as it has been manifested in the thinking of the last two centuries? One cannot say in a brief statement for the doctrine has been held in various permutations and combinations. In the main, however, it means that man advances steadily and surely in an onward and upward direction to some nobler and better state. It implies, as one scholar has stated, that "as the issue of the earth's business, a condition of general happiness will be ultimately enjoyed, which will justify the whole process of civilization: for otherwise the direction would not be desirable." We must bear in mind what he further observes: "The process must be the necessary outcome of the psychical and social nature of man: it must not be at the mercy of any external will: otherwise there would be no guarantee of its issue and the idea would lapse into the idea of Providence."<sup>4</sup> The goal is a better state of things and better beings. It is significant that this "betterness" has meant different things in different interpretations of the unlimited dream expressed by Herder in these words: "the flower of humanity, captive still in its germ, will blossom out one day into the true form of man like unto God, in a state of which no man on earth can imagine the greatness and the majesty."

In this idea of progress what was the determinative force that carried human destiny forward so sublimely? In the rationalistic conceptions it was human reason, untrammelled and enthroned upon its own rights. Among the romanticists nature herself, replete with mystic inner powers of incredible potency and ingenuity, not to say anything of its altogether-to-be-trusted moral innateness. In the Marxian theory of economic progress this carrying force is economic necessity, whatever that may be.

<sup>4</sup> J. B. Bury: *The Idea of Progress*, p. 5.

Liberal Christians were wont to point to some spiritual force or other, whose workings had the paternalistic sanction of the Deity but now that the process had been initiated He no longer had anything to say about it by way of control or redirection. This was a new type of determinism, which for inexorableness and precision was a match of any theory of predestination in the history of Christian dogma.

History thus proceeds in orderly fashion, from step to step, always in an upward direction. The movement is confined within itself and within the time-span. However, as Berdyaev points out, the purpose is independent of the historical process, one not situated within history nor connected with any given period of past, present or future, but detached from time and thereby qualified to elucidate the historical process.<sup>5</sup> God, too, was detached from the process. Man and nature were to be trusted blindly, but, according to the rationalists, one had to be mighty careful of God, who tended to be whimsical. A very optimistic view of man was taken, often with the denial of evil in man, which in reality was only ignorance, and the affirmation of the total goodness of man. Many dear dogmas of the Church, such as the Fall, Redemption and the Last Judgment, along with other minor ones, fell upon evil days and had to undergo pretty rough treatment. The end of life became life itself and, while Christian congregations were often and eloquently exhorted to live their lives "as if it were lived in the aspect of eternity," immortality was at best a poetical expression. It was firmly believed that man, of himself and by virtue of his natural endowments, was capable of perfecting the good life on earth. And the essential condition of this good life was to liberate man from the superstitions and ignorance of his mind. For the love of God the love of humanity was substituted and for the hope of immortality we find the belief in the endless memory of oncoming generations. The hero was he who courageously surrendered himself to the authority of the grand stream of inner forces that carried the universe toward the devoutly wished consummation. For progress was taken as a fact, observable and desirable, woven into the very being of the universe for the good of everyone concerned.

<sup>5</sup> N. Berdyaev: *The Meaning of History*, p. 186.



A very rewarding study it would be, indeed, to separate the secular and Christian elements that entered into the fabric of the idea of progress as it adorned, much admired and much admiring, many a Christian pulpit and many a Christian professorial rostrum throughout Christendom.

For we must recognize that there are many points of contact between the doctrine of progress and the Christian view of history. If it were not so, how could it have happened that Christianity was so willing and eager to sell out, bag and baggage? The affirmation of man's goodness given renewed support in many new studies, the goal of a better world and better individuals, the peculiar and unmistakable rôle of nature in the life of things, the humanitarian impulse, the eternal striving for the continuous pushing back of the horizon that hides so much, the unquenchable thirst for truth yet unrevealed, the search for the laws that govern life so passionate an object of the rationalist school of thought, the affirmation of a meaning to the historical process, the significance attached to time, dissatisfaction with conditions, social and economic, as they are—these are all notions that are very congenial to or a part of the Christian doctrine of history. In many respects they constitute the faith of the fathers, even though they may have appeared under various and different colorings in Christian history. Saints lived for them and martyrs died that they might triumph.

However, one must raise very serious objections to the notion of progress from the point of view of the Christian metaphysics of history.

The cardinal weakness of the idea of progress, from the Christian point of view, may be found in its attitude toward the question of time. It harbors an antinomy, which defies all reconciliation. On the one hand it affirms the flux of things as well as movement: history moves from one stage to a higher, on and on until a state of perfection is attained. Then the opposite state is affirmed, namely that this flux and movement are contained within the limits of history as finality and achievement. Somewhere terrestrial paradise becomes a reality within the time-span. But the problem of time is not to be resolved so easily. Time loses significance and certainly is emptied of meaning, so con-

ceived. Everything falls into the lap of death. As Berdyaev cogently argues, "The all-resolving happiness will dawn at some moment of the future, but until then every moment is a disintegrated particle, the devourer and the devoured, the past devouring and being devoured by the future."<sup>6</sup> Christianity maintains vigorously the significance of time, but brings it into proper relationship with eternity. There must be some all-inclusive integration, "a victory over time, over its disruption into past, present and future, over its disintegration into reciprocally hostile and devouring elements."<sup>7</sup> We claim that nothing has significance in time unless it is related to eternity. The cross on Calvary has become pivotal only because there is an eternal cross in the heart of God.

The theory of progress also belittles the past and present. This follows a corollary of its position with respect to time. All that went before is merely a stepping-stone and the most fortunate are those, who will come at the apex of progress, for they are the inheritors of the perfected state of things. The tragedies of the past and present, the victories and defeats that go before—what matter these, when the glorious goal is achieved? What matter the heroes that struggled at cost of pain and sacrifice? The great prize is won and the glory of the past is that it was privileged to participate in the lofty climb of the universe. The trouble is that the human soul is *always* at unrest until it personally finds rest in God. This universe cannot be a social-climber, making use of infinitely worth-while souls, throughout the ages, only to throw them aside with a sweet thank-you and a patronizing pat on the shoulder when the climb of social beatitude is attained. To shed rays of blessedness on those who are fortunate in being among the elect at the end of the climb does not compensate for all the heartaches and tragedies that intervened and tortured those who were likewise created "sons of God." The universe must be just, as well as aspiring. It cannot be utilitarian, for we are so created that we refuse to be satisfied with merely being a means to an end, especially when that end is enjoyed by someone else. In deifying the future at

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 190.

the expense of the past and present the idea of progress runs into very dangerous implications with reference to the significance of the individual and of personality, which do not ring true to Christian gospel. Berdyaev is especially keen in presenting this criticism of the doctrine of progress.

In the idea of progress is contained the notion that all things that intervene between the beginning and the end have only a transitory value. Values of the past and the present are significant only as a preparation for something higher. This notion certainly runs counter to the Christian view, which finds the hand of God in and upon everything, as well as everyone. Our Christian doctrine of immortality, furthermore, hits up against any view that would attribute only passing meaning to personality. The crowning fact of the gospel is that the universe of God is profoundly concerned with the conservation of values. Cultures do not seem to die; they may be transmuted; certainly in their essentials they remain in the flux of history. What God has created is good in itself as well as good for something. As such, His creation bears upon its face the mark of both time and eternity. And upon all that has come out of His hand is written the legend: for this and for all time. For if God enters this life, as Christians believe that He does, it would be antinomous to declare that any part of it, being good and of His being, is lost in the infinite ocean of the past. Man is valuable in his own right. How otherwise does the magnificently broad "whosoever" in John 3:16 carry any meaning in the Christian evangel? And how are we to explain the utterly unique person of Jesus Christ, who lived on earth twenty centuries ago and who is the Savior of the world?

Another point of conflict is in the idea of the active agency which carries on the historical process. Exponents of the idea of progress extoll the rôle of nature and of reason and of economic necessity and of some inner spiritual force, be its nature what it may, as the bearers of history. It has been well pointed out that the idea of progress excludes the necessity of Providence. Over against such forces as have been claimed to be at the helm of human history the Christian tradition has steadfastly upheld the providence of God. God, the creator, is God,

the provider and His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts. Who or what is the ultimate power of the universe? God and His redeeming love, answers the Christian preacher. "A Deity refusing itself to all past generations," Berdyaev pointedly argues, "admitting to its intimacy only the last and perfect product of history, could only be thought of as a vampire, unjust and pitiless to the vast bulk of mankind."<sup>8</sup> But God provides out of the fullness of His love for every individual, for every generation that grace that lifts him out of the morass of his confusion to the heights upon which his relation to time and eternity becomes clear and he is led into the possession of the "peace that passeth all understanding." God provides. In times of victories and triumphs, every good and perfect gift comes from His hand. When we face setbacks and tremendous tragedies befall us, God provides. The believer can stand abasement and exaltation, because God provides. As a modern theologian claims, "with the gospel we cannot answer many questions, but we can bring a man into a relation with God so as to deliver him from the perplexity of his questions, and to enable him to live joyously and triumphantly in spite of his questions."<sup>9</sup> Here is where the incarnation becomes a living necessity for the believer and a force, the nature of which differs from and transcends the dynamic and agency of history put forth by the metaphysics of progress. And so, the idea of progress has no place for the incarnation in any real and vital sense. For the Christian tradition is that history becomes such only as the spirit and guidance of God are infused into what goes on in the dramatic life of man. Man's history is not self-enclosed, like a cosmic clam shell, but its nature is such that superimposed upon it is what might be termed superhistory or divine history, which is teleologically related to it.

The Christian doctrine of redemption runs counter to what is contained in the idea of progress. Christianity affirms that man continually falls short of the glory of God; he has fallen from grace in that he misses the mark of being what he was essentially created for. He is sinful and unable of himself to rise to the

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>9</sup> G. W. Richards: *Beyond Fundamentalism and Modernism*, p. 33.

heights of his true being. He must be redeemed. Christ, it confidently affirms, redeems everyone who believes in Him and follows Him. There is no place for improvement that rises out of ourselves, by and of itself and having no connection with the continuously active agency of God. The church of the Middle Ages, indeed, like primitive Christians of all ages, appeared rather satisfied to see the end of the race consummated in its own time. And all this because Christians have realized that salvation is not a matter of lifting oneself by one's own bootstraps but rather something that arises out of a faith and grace relationship. Nor is anyone lost or used merely as a tool, it matters not what period of human history he arrives in, provided he fulfills the conditions imposed by the divine economy; whereas, in any theory of progress those who precede the perfected state of things are necessarily excluded from the enjoyment of blessedness and joy.

Christians believe in judgment, going on continually and occurring, at the last, in the fullness of time as that is ordained by God. There is no judgment in a scheme which, like an escalator, provides for a joyous ascent into some far-off stage of perfection. All acts and every time stands under judgment. There is *sin*. We live in a world in which the opportunities for freedom are often misused; forces other than ignorance interplay within the framework of human life. The good we would we do not. What is to resolve the problem? Certainly the theory of progress has no satisfying answer because in it sin is rationalized away and the human conscience, stricken abjectly and repentant, never stands before the judgment bar of the Eternal. Christianity proclaims the gospel in which the judgment of a God, who is love on the one hand, and stern justice on the other, is affirmed as a reality.

All this is not to argue, naturally, that Christianity stands for a static world. We are beyond that. "E pur si muove," as the Italians say, "the world goes on." To negate the rationalistic view of progress is by no means to affirm the lack of movement in time toward eternity; it means merely to set one's self against an easygoing optimism, which is not born out of the given facts of history and which does not bring satisfaction in

our modern climate of thinking. Our firm faith is that we move toward God, history moves toward God, for the will of God must triumph, but precisely how this takes place is the exciting problem of modern thought in the field of Christian philosophy of history.

## FOR FURTHER READING

- Bury, J. B.: The Idea of Progress.  
 Berdyaev, N.: The Meaning of History.  
 Inge, W. R.: The Idea of Progress.  
 Dawson, C.: Progress and Religion.  
 Wood, H. G.: Christianity and the Nature of History.  
 Van Dusen, H. P.: God In These Times.  
 Whitney: Primiticism and the Idea of Progress.  
 Becker: Progress in Encyclopedia of Social Sciences.  
 Tillich, P.: Interpretation of History.  
 Niehbur, R.: Beyond Tragedy.  
 The Kingdom of God and History—Oxford Conference Series.  
 Troeltsch, E.: Protestantism and Progress.  
 McNeille: Christian Hope for World Society.  
 South Norwalk, Conn.

## "CREATIVE CONTROVERSIES IN CHRISTIANITY"

THEODORE F. HERMAN

By this time the readers of the Bulletin are familiar with Dr. Richards' most recent publication, entitled "Creative Controversies in Christianity." It is the fourth book from his pen, and the ripest fruit of his scholarly life. Together, these four treatises are the record of a spiritual pilgrimage that is typical of our age. It is the autobiography of a citizen of two worlds—the spiritual realm and the domain of science and philosophy; of a soul profoundly evangelical in its basic convictions, and of a mind thoroughly conversant with the major currents of modern life.

Just before the World War, Dr. Richards published a series of "Studies on the Heidelberg Catechism," to set forth the history and genius of this symbol of faith, and to define the mission and responsibility of the Reformed Church in the U. S. It was mainly an historical treatise, but it presented the principles and conclusions of a church-historian whose pedigree ran back through Ritschl and Schleiermacher to Kant.



Then, after the lapse of ten years, came "Christian Ways of Salvation"; and, twelve years later, "Beyond Fundamentalism and Modernism." Finally, the present volume made its appearance. In these three writings it is still, primarily, the church-historian who plies his pen; but his scope is wider now than before, and his aim is critical. The field traversed is co-extensive with the history of man's eternal quest of God. And though they differ in their content, these books have one common theme and aim. They form a trilogy whose keynote was struck prophetically in the title of the first book of the series—"Christian Ways of Salvation."

Their one theme is Salvation, and their constant aim is to establish the utter and absolute uniqueness of Christianity as the salvation wrought fully and wholly by a sovereign God, through Christ, and by Him freely proffered to a world lost in sin; to set forth the impotence of humanism and the irrelevance of science and philosophy as aids or adjuncts of redemptive religion. This high aim becomes most explicit in the last volume, but, implicitly, it characterizes the two earlier ones. Only the arena changes, but not the issue that runs a cleavage through all the ages. The conflict is ever between the "Man-god" and the "God-man," and in chaotic times, like ours, that eternal issue confronts mankind with startling clarity and with an imperative challenge.

Thus, in this trilogy Dr. Richards reflects a mood that has been steadily in the ascendant since the World War. It is widely shared, and variously expressed. In general, it represents a revolt against the modernism of the 19th century, and a return to a more objective theocentricism. One may safely affirm that, on the whole, the effect of this revolutionary movement in the realm of theology has been good. Whatever its causes, it has resulted in a new emphasis on the divine factor in religion. Our teachers and preachers are once again talking about the transcendent God and His action in revelation and redemption. They are proclaiming a Christ who is more than an inspiring exemplar, and a gospel that has a cosmic rootage. To say the least, all that must be welcomed as a corrective of the theology of the last century.

Dr. Richards was among the first American theologians to respond to the incisive challenge of the new mood, as his writings attest. Moreover, in their temporal sequence one also discerns a growing appreciation of its importance, and a corresponding deprecation of man's action and agency in salvation, and a widening of the chasm between the sinner and his Saviour.

Thus, in "Christian Ways of Salvation," Dr. Richards speaks of a "theology and a christology that will square with the evangelical experience of salvation and with the metaphysics and psychology of our age." In that earlier volume Christianity is called "a ministry of reconciliation between human discovery and divine revelation" which "unites infinitely diverse orders of being into the harmony of a glorious universe" (pp. 280, 281). One finds here suggestions which point to the possibility of a final synthesis between the divine and human factors of religion. But in the present volume, antithesis, rather than synthesis, is Dr. Richards' guiding and controlling clue for the evaluation of great personalities and for the interpretation of history. The fundamental question of theology, we learn, is "continuity or discontinuity; evolution or creation; immanence or transcendence; monism or dualism; reason or revelation; the world and the word of man or the world and the word of God"—antitheses which are irreconcilable and, therefore, demand an "either-or" decision. And Dr. Richards' conclusion leans hard to the "either-or" side.

Yet even in this latest volume one finds, not merely lingering echoes, but clear notes of a position less radical than that of the champions of the paradoxical "totaliter aliter" God. If God is essentially human and man essentially divine, as this book maintains, it seems contradictory to accept Kierkegaard's conception of God as being "the Wholly Other," qualitatively different from man. And then, though sin has marred the imago dei in us, there still remains the "Anknüpfungspunkt" that is so vigorously denied and defended by continental theologians.

Similarly, in the chapter on "Jesus," Dr. Richards, speaking of "the way of obedient faith," calls it "the way of Christian pragmatism," of Christian "experimentalism," and of Christian "operational philosophy"—the daily facing of life with all its

issues from the viewpoint of Jesus, in the light of a God-like Christ and a Christ-like God." And he adds, significantly, "Both revelation and discovery are necessary." Very definitely, it seems to me, that excellent statement belongs to the "both-and" category. It runs counter to Karl Barth's uncompromising definition of faith (quoted on p. 216), as "God's work in us apart from all known or unknown organs and functions, and also without any of our so-called experiences of God."

"Creative Controversies" deserves to be read and pondered by every minister of our Church. It raises the central theme and the vital issue in current theology, which is that of the nature of God's revelation. Dr. Richards presents it from "an historical point of view," and that implies that his own position, on many fundamental questions, must be inferred from his critical comment on the great galaxy of men whose life and labors crowd his pages—from Amos and Socrates to Schleiermacher and Barth. That, of course, is not a defect of the book, but its inevitable limitation.

It is also its supreme merit, for to this historical task of narration and interpretation Dr. Richards brings the wide and thorough knowledge of the professional historian, and the insight that penetrates beneath the surface of facts to their cosmic meaning. Thus the volume unfolds the panorama of history from antiquity to our troubled times. Two recurrent types are delineated, with masterly strokes of the pen—the philosopher who seeks God, and the prophet who proclaims Him; two movements, that seem to run in parallel lines through all the ages. The one starts with matter and man, and ends with a metaphysic that "at best," yields "only an ethics." The other starts with God. It consists of His revelatory and redemptive acts in history, and results in religion.

These contrasting movements, represented, respectively, by Socrates and Amos, are sketched in the first chapter, and they are vividly portrayed in the last, where Schleiermacher and Barth are the protagonists. In all the intervening chapters we see the same struggle between reason and revelation, as wrought out and thought out at pivotal ages of history. In the midst of this glorious company of seekers and seers stands Jesus, "the

first of a new species of manhood," whose way they prepared. He is "the God-man," the Word of God made flesh. As such, He controls and determines the destiny of mankind. He confronts our age with the mystery and majesty of His personality, and if we follow Him, as did Simon and Andrew by the seaside, He will reveal Himself to us. "Only so shall we know the unutterable mystery which has been hid for ages and generations, but now is made manifest to His saints" (Col. 1:25).

Are "Controversies," then, truly "Creative"? In his Introduction, Dr. Richards tells us that he uses the term "Creative" as the equivalent of "clarifying." In that somewhat diluted sense his book nobly fulfills the promise of the title. Admirable in spirit, clear in thought, smooth in diction, and authentic in its portrayal of historical characters, it sets in bold relief the age-old controversy between reason and revelation. That is a service which meets an urgent need of the hour, and the manner in which it has been performed, both in substance and form, is most praiseworthy. And while I find no warrant in the book to attribute to its author the extreme dualistic and eschatological supernaturalism of certain continental theologians, his sympathy and support are clearly on the side of the transcendentalists. That feature of the book will receive the acclaim of all who accept the antithesis between reason and revelation as the fixed and final solution of their relation.

It may be that the struggle so well portrayed by Dr. Richards will run on to the end of time, forever separating men into the seekers who find God and the seers who surrender to a deus absconditus, into mutually exclusive groups whom, roughly, we may call transcendentalists and immanentists.

Personally, I believe that our "controversies," carried on in the candid and catholic spirit exemplified in the book under review, may become "creative" in a deeper sense. Twice, at least, men have formed a synthetic conception of the universe that satisfied both their faith and their philosophy. The Greek fathers and Aquinas used the highest categories of the philosophy of their times to bring reason and revelation into accord.

Many men, here and abroad, are today facing the mystery of life in a similar spirit. Much has happened in every sphere of

life, since Aquinas wrote his Summa. Our knowledge of God's world is wider, and our insight into His ways is deeper. We cannot appropriate the forms, whether of faith or philosophy, into which men of past ages poured their synoptic Weltanschauungen. But we can emulate their spirit, and carry forward their quest for a unified view of the world that will give an adequate recognition to the immanence as well as to the transcendence of the God who has revealed himself in Christ.

So one closes Dr. Richards' thought-compelling book with grateful appreciation of its rich contents, but also in the mood of Simmias, the interlocutor in the Socratic dialogue. Thou reasonest well, he says to Socrates at the end of the argument, but many questions still remain to be asked and answered.

Many questions, but they all seem to fuse into one supreme question under the stimulation of Dr. Richards' book. Just what is the *nature* of man's response to the challenge of God's revelation? If there is no capacity left in sinful man for spiritual insight and apprehension, how does he know that it is God who speaks to him? Granted that in the last century theology lost the tap-root of religion in seeking its essence in the soul of man and in the soil of history, must the pendulum of our thought now swing to the opposite extreme and totally deny the reality of the psychological and historical factors in the genesis and maintenance of a religion of revelation and redemption?

Questions like these hardly come within the compass of semi-popular lectures whose main approach is historical. But they underlie the interpretation of the meaning of history. As one who, on many happy occasions, has discussed such questions with Dr. Richards, I may be allowed to express the fond hope that, in years of greater leisure, he may find time to crown his trilogy with a final volume that will contain a constructive treatment of these basic theological and philosophical problems. That book would be "creative" in the deepest sense in pointing the way that leads beyond Barthianism, as well as beyond Modernism and Fundamentalism.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

All of the books mentioned below come from the Friendship Press. They represent a part of one year's output of the Missionary Education Movement, which is an interdenominational agency in which our own Church cooperates along with many others. One never ceases to wonder at the uniformly high quality of the materials which come from the Friendship Press. In authorship, in authenticity, in vividness, in format they leave nothing to be desired. If the missionary enterprise is failing to receive adequate support at the home base, it is surely not because of any lack of graphic interpretation of that enterprise in print. Most of the books which follow relate to the two study-areas for the current year, which are, respectively, India for International Missions and the City for Home Missions.

*Joe Lives in the City.* By Jeannette Perkins Brown. Friendship Press. 1938. \$.25. For children.

*City Shadows.* By Robert W. Searle. Friendship Press. 1938. Cloth, \$1.00. Paper, \$.60. For young people. A series of case-studies depicting one by one the shadows of city life.

*The American City and Its Church.* By Samuel C. Kincheloe. Friendship Press. 1938. Cloth, \$1.00. Paper, \$.60. A thoroughgoing study for adults, written by a leading authority on the subject.

*Urban Scene.* By Margueritte Harmon Bro. Friendship Press. 1938. \$.25. Principally pictures—not word-pictures but actual photographs.

*A Sari for Sita.* By Nina Millen. Friendship Press. 1938. \$.25. A study-book on India, written for children.

*Tales from India.* By Basil Mathews. Friendship Press. 1938. Cloth, \$1.00. Paper, \$.50. For young people. Stories of all classes and conditions of mankind—but all of them Christians.

*The Church Takes Root in India.* By Basil Mathews. Friendship Press. 1938. Cloth, \$1.00. Paper, \$.50. A study-guide for adults, based upon material gained during a special, extended trip by the author to India.

*China Through a College Window.* By William G. Sewell. Friendship Press. 1937. \$1.00. Student life in the interior



of China, presented in the form of the story of a composite college, Jen Dah.

*Adventures of Service.* By D. M. Gill and A. M. Pullen. Friendship Press. 1938. Cloth, \$1.00. Paper, \$.50. Ten biographies, ranging from Booker T. Washington to Jane Addams.

*The Missionary Education of Adults.* By John Leslie Lobingier. Friendship Press. 1938. Cloth, \$1.00. Paper, \$.60. The last of the series, which began with the missionary education of little tots and now ends with adulthood.

*Women and the Way.* A symposium. Friendship Press. 1938. Cloth, \$1.00. Paper, \$.50. A thoroughly unique volume, treating of what Christianity has meant to womankind the world over. The prologue is by Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, the epilogue by Muriel Lester, and a host of notable writers in-between.

*Each With His Own Brush.* By Daniel Johnson Fleming. Friendship Press. 1938. \$1.50. An equally unique volume, consisting of reproductions of Christian art in China, Japan, India, Africa, etc. A companion volume to *Heritage of Beauty*, which did for architecture what the present book does for art.

—N.C.H.

## SOME RECENT LIBRARY ACCESSIONS

- Ball, Elsie. The greatest name. 1938.  
 Barker, R. J. It began in Galilee. 1938.  
 Bates, Esther W. The church play and its production. 1938.  
 Brock, W. An introduction to contemporary German theology. 1935.  
 Brown, W. A. The case for theology in the university. 1938.  
 Buber, Martin. I and thou. 1937.  
 Burkhardt, R. A. From friendship to marriage. 1937.  
 Burkhardt, R. A. Understanding youth. 1938.  
 Buttenwieser, M. The Psalms. 1938.  
 Coyle, Grace L. Studies in group behavior. 1937.  
 Drummond, A. L. Edward Irving and his circle.  
 England, F. E. The validity of religious experience. 1938.  
 Fahs, Sophia L. Beginnings of life and death. 1938.  
 Fahs, Sophia L. Beginnings of earth and sky. 1937.  
 Flew, R. N. Jesus and his church. 1938.  
 Fosdick, H. E. A guide to understanding the Bible. 1938.  
 Frere, W. H. Principles of religious ceremonial. 1928.  
 Goodenough, Florence L. Developmental psychology. 1934.  
 Hall, A. N. Craft work-and-play things. 1936.  
 Healy, W. Personality in formation and action. 1938.  
 Hicks, G. D. Philosophical bases of theism. 1937.  
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