



The Religion of the Spirit in Modern Life

HORATIO W. DRESSER

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Preface

IT IS a well-known saying that religion is life, the life of God in the human soul. It is no less true that this perennial life quickens our minds and hearts afresh, seeking new forms of expression in thought and service. He who would know religion as a life must then discern its meaning afresh amidst the changing conditions in which he lives. Thus to estimate the religious life is to take more or less exception to the creeds, traditions, and customs which we are always in danger of revering because they are familiar. Furthermore, religion as life is sometimes disparaged as "vague" in contrast with the precise doctrinal systems so often praised by partisans of theology; hence it becomes more and more necessary as time passes to restate the Religion of the Spirit so as to make it as clear-cut and efficient as the most positive of these systems. To make this new estimate without dogmatism, to recognise the supremacy of the inner life without underestimating the demands of our social existence, and to interpret religion without placing too much stress on the differences of opinion which separate men into groups, is the aim of this book.

The main purpose is practical. It is hoped that this study of the subject will foster the type of religion for which it pleads. For the writer sincerely believes that there is a deep undercurrent of religious life in our age, a

religious tendency actively seeking the modes of interpretation and expression here advocated. Hence several of the chapters have been made partly devotional in form, with the hope that they will be employed as aids to realisation and service. For this reason, also, much stress is put upon inner attitudes, with inner peace as the immediate goal in view, and efficient consciousness as the result. The inner centre or heart is emphasised even at the risk of seeming to neglect the social bearings of the religious life; since all spiritual growth of the profounder sort must begin within. Special appeal is made to those who, dissatisfied with doctrines and religious institutions, still devoutly believe in the essentials of the spiritual life. Hence the style has been made somewhat general, and as untechnical as possible. Again, the book is constructive, not critical, save so far as every one must criticise who dwells upon the life rather than the doctrine. The book is primarily intended for those who are working their way into a larger, stronger, and more spiritual type of faith.

The introductory chapters give expression to the age-long quest for a standard applicable to various types of thought, a standard which will enable us to discern what is essential and practical, despite the fact that we differ in belief, in type, and in modes of worship. The standard is found through a study of the inner experiences here regarded as the life of religion, and bespeaking the divine presence in the soul. Hence constant appeal is made to the reader to test the principles in question by reference to experience rather than by comparison with doctrines. This appeal is not made in contrast to the Bible or Christianity, but with explicit reference to the original Christianity of those who knew it as a life. Hence the experience of the presence of God is made central both in the living present and historically. The corrective of the undue emphasis often put upon a merely introspective interpretation of the divine presence is found in a social view of human nature. It is frankly admitted that each must know the religious life in an intimately personal way, hence that there is a respect in which the divine presence is more real in the living moment than that presence as

revealed in the past. But the larger truth is insisted on that religion is for humanity. Thus the divine presence is regarded in a profounder sense as the basis of social thought and life to-day. The chief purpose will become still more clear if we briefly consider the conditions of religious thought which directly led to the plan for the book.

A few years ago I had occasion to preside over a series of conferences resembling those of the World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893. Among the representatives of various faiths, orthodox and liberal, there were natives of India, Persia, and other oriental lands. The object was not to convert but to inform. It would have been impossible to find a theological basis on which all could agree. Each lecturer was invited to speak as freely and persuasively as he liked, with the provision that he should not attack any other speaker. The listeners were supposed to hear, now expositions of the Vedanta philosophy or Buddhism, now a plea for Judaism or for Bahaism, and thus without limit; and in the end to select the ideas that appealed to them. Needless to say, few listeners were able to discriminate as one must in order to choose intelligently between the great systems of the world. The situation in miniature was much like that of our country at large in so far as it is the home of every conceivable religious opinion. Under these conditions it seemed to be the province of the chairman, as a devotee of philosophical idealism, to do whatever one man could amidst a multitude by way of emphasising an essentially idealistic approach to religion, with the hope that all might at least agree in terms of the Indwelling Spirit, whatever their doctrinal differences. Again, the tendency of the conferences was prevailingly meditative or subjective, and it seemed well to point out that the social life of the Occident is the corrective of the extreme introspective teachings of the Orient. Accordingly, the attempt was made during the seasons of 1909 and 1910 to supply the requisite philosophical and practical principles. Some of the lectures given in these two courses on the philosophy of religion and on spiritual efficiency have already been published in *Human Efficiency*, New York, 1912. The other lectures are included in the present

volume. They are published with the hope that they will meet the same needs in similar cases.

A further opportunity to try out the ideas here presented came through an invitation to give a brief course of lectures in four Meetings in Pennsylvania, under the auspices of the Religious Society of Friends, during 1912. The idea of the Indwelling Spirit was of course familiar to the Friends, and being of one persuasion the Quakers did not stand in need of a criterion in the same sense in which it was called for in the conferences mentioned above. It seemed well, however, to dwell on essentially the same principles with the hope that new light might be thrown on the favourite tenets of the Friendly faith. Moreover, there proved to be a most intimate connection between the writer's views on the inward light, silent worship, and spiritual guidance, and those long held by the Friends. Chapters III., VI., VII., and VIII. contain the substance of these lectures. Chapter V., on "The Spirit in Jesus," has since been added to make the interpretation of the spiritual life more specific.

The question will naturally arise, as the reader turns from the introductory chapters to the more fundamental discussion in Chapter IV., To what extent is the author giving his own views, and how far is he still acting as chairman, endeavouring to harmonise various types of religious faith? The answer is already clear to readers of earlier volumes in which the principles advocated are here applied to religion. These are my own matured convictions after years of contact with religionists of various types. There are three tendencies of modern life and thought which seem to me of profound significance for religion. All of them have developed outside of the organised churches, and all are departures from the traditional doctrines; yet all might be adopted by the churches if the spirit could be put above the letter, and if practice should be put above theory.

The first of these is the tendency to reinterpret life in social terms, in contrast with the mere individualism which is rapidly passing in our time. The second is the growth of idealistic philosophy, the effort to interpret experience in freely rational terms, in contrast with the dogmatic theological

systems also rapidly passing. The third is the modern, practical realisation of the presence of God. That there is an inmost or higher centre of spiritual consciousness within us all, we are more and more surely learning in our day, the day of a profounder psychology, a time when each man tries to prove for himself the worth of the religious teachings of the ages. He who in some measure has found this inmost centre and has learned to seek it when in need, and to apply the wisdom and the power thus gained, is already in possession of the perennial sources of religion. The next step is to interpret this inner experience, and it is philosophical idealism which best enables him to do this. The third is to connect his interpretation with the age, and it is the social tendency of the day which supplies the clue. Each of these tendencies proves to be practical in type, and each may be understood as a return to the Christian idealism of the Master.

It is not easy to assign indebtedness for the ideas here presented. In the last analysis it is experience which leads one to attribute to the inner life the supremacy here given to it; and the convictions on which the book is founded have had a long growth, as indicated in the various volumes that preceded the present one. Emerson was for years the writer who most directly guided the way to the interpretation of inner experience. Then a time came when one turned rather to Professor Royce, to Plato, Hegel, and other idealists, in quest of the system Emerson failed to supply. Meanwhile, it was the stimulating instruction of William James which strengthened the empirical tendency which runs through these pages. The result is the spiritual or empirical idealism here applied to religion, in further development of the theory of inner experience set forth in *The Philosophy of the Spirit*, 1908.

My thanks are especially due to Isaac Roberts, Alfred Wright, and Edward Pennock, for their kindness in organising the various courses on "The Religion of the Spirit" among the Friends, in Pennsylvania. I am also indebted to friends of various persuasions who have given me the privilege of speaking in religious gatherings on "Inner Peace," and "The Inner Centre."

H. W. D.

Cambridge, Mass., March, 1914.

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The Religion of the Spirit in Modern Life

Chapter I. The Nature of Religion

SO MANY have essayed a definition of religion that it is almost audacious to try again. Yet the faulty statements of our forerunners have not been sheer failures. To achieve the infinite is beyond our powers, to strive towards it our glory. Each of us may at least throw into new relief the massive structures of thought which seers and scholars have reared in their attempts to reach the heavens. We turn from these structures with disappointment because we revere the Religion of the Spirit, and refuse to be limited by the Religion of the Letter. No one need fear that another wearisome effort to define the ineffable is here to be added. We shall examine a few current definitions merely to indicate the type of thought to be looked for in this volume, a thought essentially practical rather than speculative, and on the whole remote from theology.

Religion is frequently defined with respect to the objects of spiritual belief, such as heaven, or the being of God; and we turn away dissatisfied because religion pertains to life. Ecclesiastical authority seems to have settled the question for unnumbered thousands, yet devotees of inner experience ever protest against a merely external standard. Inner experience is for many the beginning and the end, the experience of God's presence and love for God; yet others assure us that unless we prove the reality and worth of individual

experience through social service we fail to meet the true test. Persons are still to be found who insist that the whole issue turns upon acceptance of the supernatural. Meanwhile, we are zealously told on every hand to-day that the kingdom of God is in this mundane realm if anywhere, that our cherished Christian beliefs do not in any sense depend on miracles and the supernatural. Conversion and the sacraments signify so much in certain quarters that one wonders if their devotees can really understand those who care nothing for symbols and rituals. Now the true church appears to be an extremely tall, narrow structure, with little room within; again, it is so roomy that one seems to be out in the glad sunlight with no barriers in view.

Menzies tells us, in his *History of Religion*, that religion is "the worship of higher powers from a sense of need;" and undoubtedly the longing for personal salvation is a universal motive. Emphasis on man's unregeneracy readily follows, and the power of sin is made so prominent that nothing save the atonement can apparently bring human life to its proper culmination. Yet there is a growing consciousness that we have overdone this matter, that mere salvation is selfish. In India, we see the results of religion pursued as the goal of those who would be individually free, whatever may befall man in this natural world. In our Western world, we react against this meditative spirituality and demand the fruits of social service, although we admit the possibility of overdoing the institutional side of religion. In love to God and love to man, we say religion is summarised. It is then a question of the right relation between these two.

In his work on *Buddhism, its History and Literature*, Rhys Davids characterises religion as "a convenient expression for a very complex set of mental conditions, including, firstly, beliefs as to internal and external mysteries (souls and gods); secondly, the mental attitude induced by those beliefs; and thirdly, the actions and conduct dependent on both." Undoubtedly, religion possesses these three elements at least. Another mode of statement would bring out the central truth that there must be a cause adequate to produce belief in God, or a higher order of beings; an

attitude of reverence, awe, or worship with reference to this superior order of reality; and a social reaction involving community of spirit, service, a cult or an organisation. That is, there is a divine, a personal, and a social element. It would be possible to unfold the true nature of religion by following any of these as a clue if we bear in mind that inner experience of a convincing sort is the vital consideration without which there would be neither belief in God nor social affiliation. Hence the deeper question is. What arouses such experiences in men? We naturally regard this question at the outset from the human side. Thus narrowing the subject, religion may be regarded as the soul's relation to God from the point of view of inward experience. The inmost or decisive factor is peculiarly empirical. It is this that manifests itself in beliefs, in an attitude, in conduct. The conduct if complete would include the life of service and good works, the genuineness of the faith would be shown by the beauty of the works, and by the uplift of the heart in worship.

We need not, then, search for a single element or doctrine such as that of a given theory of salvation or an established mode of service. The important consideration is that religion springs from within, is essentially an experience which expresses itself through the upward look to God and in the outgoing deed of service. Inner experience is distinctively mine because I apprehend it, because I am stirred by it, in contrast with any activity I may engage in for conventional reasons. He who has been touched by the experience speaks with conviction, while other men borrow, criticise or merely accept. One has touched the reality of life, the others mistake the outward play for reality. Hence there is a sense in which the Hindoo is right: he knows who has communed with God in the inmost sanctuaries of the soul, a communion which in large measure surpasses all verbal expression. The inner apprehension is the reality; the forms of service and thought in which the experience is expressed are the evidences that the reality has indeed been found. There is an inmost centre where dwells this reality, a well of water springing up into everlasting life. This is the true source of wisdom, love, and

power. He whom the Father has touched finds himself in that centre, and knows by the fruits of life that it is the real heart.

To be sure, there are many stages of advancement from lower to higher, and stages of growth from the centre into the life of service; and we who believe in religion are all somehow advancing at various points. But in all things there is both a spirit and a form, and we know when a man speaks from the centre in contrast with one whose thought however acute, is still of the letter. A man may see the law of life very clearly, and propound an excellent theory; yet if not touched at heart by love for God and man we notice a difference. We require a great deal when maintaining such a standard, but we would like to select as our ideal representative of the religious life one who is not only quickened by love for God and who shows his love by his works in behalf of men, but who is also able to expound the law of the spiritual life. That is to say, at heart man is twofold in nature, there is both the understanding and the will. It is impossible to reduce these two, although one may, with Dr. Crothers, speak of "the understanding heart." The word of wisdom or truth springs from this centre as truly as the deed prompted by love. If religious experience has begun to come in large measure, it will express itself both in the word that exemplifies faith or wisdom and in the conduct which verifies, supplements, or fulfils.

The spirit in man is not colourless or of one quality, essence, or mode of action; but is man's inmost nature touched by heavenly life. The more deeply touched the more likelihood that the whole individual will respond. The spirit is the centre or heart, the meeting-point of human and divine. If the eye be single at that point, the whole body shall be full of light. If that centre be strong, the spirit will rule both intellect and will, and whatever power man possesses will be dedicated to the uses of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the divine side of the relationship, the cause or ground, the source of life. The human spirit is man in his highest moment of receptivity and responsiveness. The union is not concealed, as if the Spirit had stolen in as an enemy to man's will. The union is rather a relation from above, a descent

into man, yet a descent which shows that the Spirit is already both within and above. The finite spirit begins to be distinguishable with the moment of responsiveness. What we become aware of is the life we are prompted to follow as our own, not the great extensity of the Spirit reaching into eternity beyond.

Regarding religion as an inner consciousness expressing itself in an attitude towards God and man, we propose three tests of its value and reality: (1) its relationship to the spiritual nature and inmost life of man; (2) its idea of God, for example, the view presently to be considered in terms of the "Indwelling Spirit"; and, (3) its relationship to social life and welfare. Inasmuch as religion pertains to the highest values, hence touches man's true nature, we have a right to employ "the understanding heart" to the full, unconcerned by those who discredit human reason. Without the inmost consciousness which bespeaks the existence of heavenly realities, the touch of divine love, religion could not be. But unless we relate this experience to a source common to us all, we have no test of its objectivity. This consciousness, carried along within the heart as the highest test of the eternal values, transfigures our mundane existence and makes it infinitely worth while. There is, then, what some have called "the God-sense," and the leaders in religion have possessed it in high degree. Nevertheless, to "walk with God" is not all of religion. The corrective of undue subjectivity is found in the deeds wrought for others while thinking first if not solely of others. Salvationism may be selfish. One's idea of God considered by itself may be merely personal, psychological. Not until we emerge into the world where all realities are social, the tests universal, the reasons verifiable in common life, can we be wholly sure that we have found the Spirit.

To undertake anything like a complete account of the relationship between the soul, God, and human society, we should need to begin with an idealistic conception of God as the centre of all purposes, the source of all life in a universe so described as to provide full opportunity for human development to the point where religion appears as the crowning phase of

man's responsive nature. The statement above made concerning the nature of religion would then appear in its appropriate setting, the first thought being God's relation to man. We shall not, however, be concerned with the larger field save in a chapter devoted to the eternal values in which the divine Essence will be regarded as the source of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. We shall assume that the best proof of the views here presented will be found in the types of experience referred to, hence in the confirmatory life and thought of the reader, not in the mere argument. Having acknowledged that social life is in some respects the final test, we have every reason to take inward personal experience as seriously as possible, declaring that only by going to the centre of all life for himself shall any man know God. The reader will then understand in what sense we say that there is a respect in which the soul's relation to God is peculiar, ineffable. Each one who has stood there can give signs that he has been on holy ground, despite the fact that his experience is incommunicable. Thus we have something like a universal standard in religion, yet each soul makes private acknowledgment. No one need be a mystic in making this sincere admission that inward feeling is the proof, for each is free to express his conviction in whatever creed he chooses, and to elect a mode of life that proves its value by its fruits. This appeal is a direct witness to the presence of God as the supreme reason for religion, and it is final evidence over against any attempt to make religion an affair of doctrine. If the reader has thus in some measure found the Spirit, little reasoning will be required; if he is still in search of evidence nothing short of life could ever supply the proof. Thus we admit at the outset the faultiness of the human word, except so far as the reader compares it with his own vitally real inward experience.

Yet if our criterion be a true one the character of the life emerging from the centre thus touched from on high is a test almost as direct as the experience itself. The responses that follow, the worship, the prayers, the discourses and good deeds will be signs of the degree of interior quickening, signs that each may read who has been touched as deeply. If the love of God has

been truly aroused the love for man will follow, howbeit each will manifest it in his own fashion, and many will misread the signs because not looking for precisely that form of service. Each will worship in his own way, each will think in individual terms, that is, each one who keeps so in touch with the sources as to be true to the Spirit. We should expect differences of expression from the first moment a man turns from his adorations and looks outward, since each has his gift, though from the same Spirit. Conformity we should hardly expect to find except so far as each acknowledges the same law, the same essence or love. For it is only the Spirit that is one, not the forms, not the gifts, surely not the souls manifesting them. The differences are to be welcomed, not suppressed. Each should be encouraged to be as faithful all along the line as at the centre in the initial movement outward. This would make of each stage in religious expression a new centre of life.

Doubtless, something like this has been the case with great religious leaders, and it may have been very generally true of religion in its pristine stage. If true revelation is spiritual, if to be inspired is to receive a spiritual word spoken in the ear in transcendent purity, there may be a sense in which the letter is remarkably close to this ineffable revelation. Each one who has in some measure heard the inner word may by another's word from the same source be put back into the Spirit. Thus any scripture is inspired which serves as a sign to him who can discern its interior meaning, too great to be confined by the letter. Had we always read our scriptures in this way, we should have been led into the same relationships ourselves, and each would have been in his way a psalmist, a poet of "the beauty of holiness." Had we retained our hold upon the Spirit, we should have prayed "in spirit and in truth," never indulging in vain repetitions. Even now we might worship and pray in spirit if we were to put ourselves back into the attitude of those who adopted the holiest of religious forms and uttered the best of prayers; for these sprang from the Spirit, each may be employed as if coming forth afresh from the heart. Thus provision is made for those who are not as yet able to ascend to the mount of vision.

It is not for the devotee of silent worship any more than for the ritualist to declare his mode of worship the true one; for all are true that sincerely manifest the inmost experience, and there might be as many churches as men if all revered the Father as Jesus bade men worship. Just how far out into the world of organised religion the Spirit extends would be difficult to say, save for each individual who should perchance carry the Spirit from his own centre. The essential is that each speak, live from the centre; not merely in the letter or from the head. This is difficult even for the prophet, owing to the imperfections of human language, the conditions of the time, the worldliness of the majority of men, and the subtle influences of human habit. Man delights in his intellectual powers and undertakes to make of his religion an affair of the head, even in the face of all the warnings of history; hence his thought becomes formal, not to say proud and dogmatic. But religion was never meant to be exclusive. Every soul is sustained from the centre, and every one might be quickened in consciousness there.

To live from the centre consistently, hence to be religious through and through, is to be aware of a guidance emerging from the sacred recesses and reaching into the whole of life. Naturally no man believes in such guidance until he has seen evidences of its utility. Yet any serious Christian can put to the test the declaration that the Father has provided for all our needs. We shall give considerable space in the following discussions to the evidences of this law.

Thus to emphasise the inward light is not to minimise the special times and seasons which men have set apart for prayer, responsive service, and objective worship; or to ignore the creeds and institutions in which the religious life has been expressed. All these have their place. Yet there comes a time when the prayer that never ceases takes the place of occasional efforts, the silent prayer being expressive of the soul's attitude in acknowledgment of the divine presence. There comes a time when work and worship are identical and constant. That is to say, life becomes centred once for all in the sources of all wisdom and power, no longer fluctuates between inner and

outer. There may still be reasons for withdrawing from the multitude, not because the soul has lost hold of the sources, but that one may be newly strengthened to meet a severer test of faith. Thus to know, to live from and return to the centre is to have religion in the profoundest sense.

To be religious in this sense is to find God, not as many seem to win belief in Him through a study of history; but through realisation of the divine presence now by means of an essentially practical type of consciousness. There is no longer a doubt whether or not God exists, whether one has really found Him; since convincing experience brings a sense of possession that dispels all such questionings. This realisational oneness with the Father, overcoming all separateness, is in striking contrast with the painfully careful thought which so insistently qualifies religion that the believer scarcely dares to approach the heavenly throne. Yet, as we shall presently see, it does not lower the divine presence to the commonplace. This is not the oneness of mere objectivity, as if a person were to meet a stranger, become well acquainted with him, and thereby acquire intellectual sympathy; it is not a looking from oneself to another. One is not troubled by the objections of doctrinaires who are disturbed if we speak as if we were "parts of God," or if we seem to overestimate the finite self by claiming that God is "within." For one knows, with the poet, that no language can overestimate the divine nearness.

Closer He is than breathing,
And nearer than hands and feet.

To realise the presence of God in the modern sense is to start with God as the centre, reality, life; and to find oneself all anew as grounded in His being, thinking only because of Him, living only through His life, loving because He loves. Hence one no longer thinks either in historical or in spatial terms, one tries to overcome the separateness which sunders man from his brother man. The centre of life and light from which one tries to live is not limited,

finite; it is the Power that possesses all forms and individuals. To be there, think and live from there, is the goal of all endeavour. But as finite beings, still more or less immersed in separate consciousness, we often wander and must recall ourselves. Moreover, we have a work to do in the world. Hence we need a method of development. Thus our definition of religion implies various interpretations of the divine nature, the human self, regeneration, meditation, service, and other aspects of the spiritual life to which we now turn.

Chapter II. Universal Faith

WITHOUT DOUBT the most profoundly significant fact discovered through the study of various types of religion is the agreement in spirit and practical matters between people who by no means agree in doctrine. The wide world over, such agreement occurs, despite all differences in creed, nationality, custom, language, and temperament. Converse long enough with the religious people you meet, or begin aright; and you shall find this common spirit, even when brought into discussion with those whose theology differs radically from your own. In fact, the most ardently controversial people are disarmed when approached in the spirit of love and good-fellowship, in an essentially human attitude. Not until theoretical considerations are brought forward or are allowed to trespass on the confines of personal sentiment do people stand apart. Granted a spirit of loving fellowship, polemic aloofness is overcome by common consent. There seems to be tacit agreement with reference to essential matters, such as the importance of charity, forgiveness, love; the value of prayer, obedience, and worship; the supremacy of personality, the beauty of the unifying conceptions of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

In all groups of religious devotees of consequence the man of the Spirit is found, the one whose sweet serenity, genial countenance, and simple faith lend august dignity to the assemblage. He is found among the Friends of both persuasions, amidst religious liberals as well as among the evangelically orthodox; and in the Orient as in the Occident. Intellectually speaking, he is too large-minded to be a partisan, while in conduct he surpasses the righteousness of his sectarian brothers, and courageously goes outside of the fold to help men or women in need. If not broadly trained, he exceeds others at least in zeal and effectiveness, beautifying an uncritical faith by the power of a consecrated life.

The man of the Spirit may, however, be a man of learning able to base his faith on wide-spread information concerning the religions of the world, or an original theologian of Schleiermacher's type. He is likely to have a strong sense of the presence of God and the nearness of heaven. He is the man of intuition in contrast with those who depend on external facts, institutions, and authorities; he has preserved a simplicity of heart, a spontaneity, a life comparable to that of the child in his best estate, but supplemented by deep experiences and mature thoughts. He is taught from within, and those who are led by him realise that he speaks from fulness of experience. Capable of propounding an elaborate system, he is more likely to hold a remarkably simple faith, a faith which he can make intelligible to the average man. If a great preacher, he dwells on a few principles, ever restated afresh with vitalising conviction. If a philosopher, he is imbued with a transcendent consciousness of God's being, a consciousness like that of Plotinus or Spinoza. The wide world over, these men of the Spirit discover the eternal realities of religion anew, and do their best to lead men to the sources of divine love and wisdom.

More generally speaking, one finds groups of people who place the first emphasis on the Spirit in contrast with the literalists who insist on right belief or rigorous acceptance of scriptural texts; those who think for themselves in contrast with mere followers. People of all types can be devotees of the Spirit,

each group worshipping or serving in its own way. They may be found in all walks of life and in various professions. Although speaking various tongues, and dwelling far apart, they bear such resemblance, spiritually speaking, that the principles of life and thought might be so stated as to appeal to them all. That is, this would be possible by keeping constantly in view the one great fact that the Spirit unites, in contrast with the human tendency to separate, draw lines of distinction, and insist on doctrines. This would mean the discovery of the universal elements with which each man may combine the particulars of his faith, not the attempt to settle on a final statement of special principles. The immediate interest would be unity, under the only standard ever likely to bring all religious men together, the standard of the Spirit. The venture would tend to break down distinctions on which zealous partisans insist, but it would lead to the day when men shall "worship in spirit and in truth."

In endeavouring to learn the essentials of the Religion of the Spirit, it will always be necessary to work from the idea of the Spirit down into the particulars of the faith in question; for example, in reading the *Sacred Books of the East*, in seeking the spiritual content of Christian history, or taking one's clue from a special sect. In thus proceeding, one will naturally bear in mind that the farther men turn from the Spirit into particulars, creeds, and modes of worship, the more they differ. Hence one will seek the permanent amidst the transient elements of a religion like the Christian, passing by doctrinal controversies, and turning to the illumined men who looked far beyond local conditions and laboured for the eternal verities. These men will prove to be concerned, not with a precise doctrine of the atonement, for example, but with the practical significance of the atonement in the life of one brought into fellowship with the Spirit. Thus the essential religious experience described without doctrinal bias will be found applicable to any case, in any age or clime. In the essential religion, love is always love, faith is a power, peace a blessing, service a joy. In every case a certain attitude towards life is commended, there are disciples who aim to keep religion

alive, to make it an affair of the Spirit. If a time arrive when the essentials are no longer cherished, but the creeds and ceremonials have become crystallised, the life centres elsewhere in new leaders who once more affirm the power of vitalising faith. Hence the hope grows that the universals of faith may be collected and systematised so as to be generally acceptable.

Inasmuch as illumined thinkers independently formulate the same principles the world over, one infers that (1) religious truth is one, pertains to the same objects of faith, hence belongs to the same system; (2) human nature and religious experiences as vehicles of truth are practically the same, although varying in type; and, (3) there is a common source of such truth and such experiences in intimate relation with human nature.

Again, one finds emphasis put on a threefold principle of personality, a recurrence of the number three, or seven, twelve, and forty; hence one concludes that there are principles in the cosmos on which such usage is founded. The same symbols are also found, such as water, light; also a tendency to trace correspondences between spiritual states and natural conditions. The same laws are noted by widely separated men who apparently have never known one another, striking resemblances are discovered between classic myths and sacred teachings, the myths of savage peoples and those of classic times. Profounder knowledge of primitive man and of the ancient prophets would bring into view the common traditions and conceptions in some cases, while emphasising the underlying sources beyond all traditions in others. We should then see why it is that reflective men, passing through similar experiences, discern the same principles, and state them in corresponding terms. The result would probably be more interest in identities and less in particulars. We should then learn to look for verifications of universal faith, unconcerned with special claims in behalf of books said to contain the original revelation of all spiritual truth.

It is reasonable to infer that among all peoples there is a quickening experience which leads them to take interest in invisible realities, and to clothe their interests in certain beliefs. Experience is first in the order of

development, and remains first in the order of reality for those who become religious leaders. Or, as Professor James puts it, there is first a sense of need, then a feeling that the need is met; and a conviction that there is a higher order of being from which comes the supply. What the quickening reality shall be called is another matter. The conviction that it exists may lead to the organisation of religion, and a thousand consequences. The essential to keep ever before us is the quickening experience, so real, so deep, that it leads to conviction, to religious observance; and finally to a type of thought bearing resemblance to all similar expressions of the religious life the world over.

If men would hold to the natural order of development, thinking first of experience, recollecting that practice precedes science, it might be possible to avoid doctrinal differences and build on the universal foundation. For the prevailing conviction would doubtless be that the Spirit moves upon all mankind, and that religion in all its forms is an expression of this divine activity. We should then recognise the Spirit as the starting-point of all true science, and explain religion by reference to it and to the particulars incidental to man in any age or clime. We should then understand why it is that men of the Spirit respond to others who have felt the heavenly touch, and we should possess a secure ground of universal agreement. Thus in accord spiritually, we might be broad enough to accept the differences of opinion which arise the moment men depart from this common ground, and become concerned with their own formulations, as if thought came before experience. Furthermore, we might welcome the individual differences not merely through tolerance painfully acquired through the ages, but through genuine insight into the wealth of the Spirit manifested in all these types of thought.

Keeping close to life, each of us would then indulge in a preliminary reflection somewhat as follows: We awaken into experience as if in the midst of a river whose sources are at first unknown, but whose current ever sweeps us forward. Experience is a twofold process taking place within

us every waking moment. The external aspect of the experience informs us concerning events in the world around. From that source we receive sensations, shocks and jars, pleasures and pains, commingled with events that report the physical conduct of our fellow-beings. The interior aspect of the process exhibits our responses to the incoming activities, that is, our instincts, emotions, volitions. Our reactions are well-nigh as involuntary as the events we witness in nature; because we are creatures of habit, passion, seldom regulating our responses. The most voluntary part of the reaction appears to be the reflective process which in mature life runs side by side with the interplay of external and internal events. That is, we find ourselves thinking about the whole situation as the scenes shift and the reactions change. Looking on in wonder at the marvellous process going on within us, we begin to describe experience and to estimate it. Thus philosophy dawns, itself a gift of the experience of which we are at first unwitting spectators.

The particular activities and reactions which we later single out under the head of religion are characteristics of a whole that is far larger. To understand the special interest we must know the whole. The prior consideration is that experience is in a sense the same for all, and all are spectators of the same objective universe; because there is a single Ground of this great whole, and of the inner stream of activities. My part as an individual is to take cognisance of the activities produced within me, and of my responses to the world of events around, that I may learn the meaning of experience.

When we find a central clue, we discover abundant evidence that spiritual experience is prior to doctrine. For example, Jesus comes forth into his public ministry announcing that the kingdom is "at hand," calling upon men to change their mode of life, and show by their works that they have found the kingdom within. He leads the way by pursuing an ideal mode of life, by revealing its fruits, giving freely, quickening the most receptive to become disciples and "enter into life." The disciples, feeling the living touch, go forth with the word of life. Others feel the quickening life from those who come into Jesus's presence, and heartily respond. Thus the new life spreads, with

all the controversies and persecutions that beset the genuine follower of life in any age. Presently, it is the apostles who come into power, after a time the written word, still later the church. The new teaching spreads as far as the life carries, it is a living gospel as long as the evangelising work springs from the heart of experience.

Throughout history the order of development is the same. There is first the illumination of one or two, the calling of a few disciples, then the gradual spreading of the vital teachings. The prophet teaches by doing, by life, precept, and example springing from the heart; the immediate followers do the same, while the prophet is yet with them. But later the new faith is brought into contact with the world, conflicts ensue, formulated doctrines and systems are needed, and a definite institution is organised. Later still the system is deemed authoritative, as if it had been revealed in this its completed form, and men lose sight of the sources. The letter is then put before the Spirit, the creed before experience, orthodoxy before genius; and men neglect inner experience in their reverence for forms, ceremonials, and creeds.

To be true to the universals of faith would be to remember that the basis of union is spiritual, eternal; while the differences are temporal, national, or temperamental. Each devotee might well be true to the principles which his experience has taught him, although seeking points of relationship with those whose convictions are different. Individual differences would then be welcomed and maintained, not combated or blurred. Local customs would also be preserved, just as each nation would retain its language. The particulars are essential to the universal and give it content. The diverse forms of expression could no more be sacrificed than the universal itself. The important consideration is insight into the underlying reality thus variously expressed. "That which exists is One; sages call it variously," says the *Veda*. To know the one Being—that is the heart of the matter. Granted a universal statement, each man should be able to recognise it beneath its transitory forms, making no attempt to convert others to his particular

terminology; just as one may learn that as a man sows he must reap, noting many exemplifications of this law in the varied experiences of men.

Faith itself is a good illustration of the universality amidst differences everywhere found in the religious life. Faith is unquestionably an element in all human experience: faith in nature, in law or system, in people, in God, a creed, or revelation; that is, dependence on a working principle which supplements our knowledge. Faith is born in us through experience. We believe because we must, because we have been carried through many tribulations, because guidance has come at critical junctures, and we have been abundantly provided for. At its best, faith is due to the quickening sense of the divine presence. It is our part to believe, to be willing to make an advance even when we cannot clearly see; hence unless we do our part we can hardly expect to receive rewards. Yet in the profounder sense unless the gifts of the Spirit were bestowed upon us we should not believe. Thus faith is a reciprocal relation, uniting us to God. Faith is belief in God, belief that He exists; and willingness to follow wherever we may be led. Any one may verify these statements, whatever his special creed.

Thus, too, we all recognise that faith is a clue to practical life, proving its character by its fruits. It then voices itself intellectually and becomes a rational principle; unites, gives integrity, apprehends wholes, reveals essences, thus passes over into intuition; while experience reveals the verifying details, makes good the intuition. Faith also involves a certain grasp of the realities of life, a clinging to the ideal element amidst circumstances that seem to show that there is no ground for our hopes. Thus it is intuition quickened by faith which discloses the ideal order of being, makes us certain that there is a God. Nothing more impresses us than to see people firmly holding to their religious faith under conditions that apparently make such trust impossible. At first thought, the sort of experience men are subject to in the world, with all its coldness and its greed, seems hard and cruel. Yet deeper insight shows that it is these conditions that supply the tests for faith, that without them faith could not be. The guiding principle throughout is the assurance

that the obstacles will not be too great to conquer, with divine help; but that with the burden will come the power to bear it, in the darkness will be revealed the way of escape.

On the divine side, faith means that there is a pathway of the Spirit, a regular alternation and development of inner experiences making towards ideal ends. The man of firm faith holds that this sequence of events, despite the fact that little is known concerning the future, is at least as sure as the coming and going of the seasons. By transferring his allegiance from external forces to the immanent Spirit, he begins to live more constantly for ideal values. Thus he becomes a man of the Spirit, awaiting the gifts and opportunities of experience. Unable to convey faith's essence to another, he is at least able to stand for what he believes, thus aiding others to make a similar venture in the name of faith.

In our day, faith must be critical and constructive in order to meet new issues and problems. It is no longer possible to state a universal faith in merely intuitive terms, or as a mere matter of religious efficiency. It is necessary to show how faith is acquired, how the divine quickening is received, as nearly as we can tell. The acceptance of a revelation, or of any authoritative teaching or divine guidance, implies belief in powers capable of receiving such wisdom. This means that man enjoys a supremely significant experience. Man's belief in himself as an instrument is thus a significant factor in the acceptance of heavenly teaching. The human factors, such as temperament, language, nationality, together with the conditions of time and place, may seem inconsequential. Yet the light is in a measure coloured by the medium through which it shines, and we may learn much about the various doctrines in which people have clothed their faith by comparing the instrumentalities.

Sometimes we err by ignoring the agency and assuming an infallibility never intended by the prophet or teacher. More often we call attention to the lamp, or laud it as if it were the only lamp that ever revealed pure light. The rational ideal is to remember that the divine light is first and last; and that no lamp possesses wholly independent power, while remembering

that "the light of the world" is so rich in beauty that it needs varied lamps to reveal its glory.

The truths in question are spiritual, and all revelation is of the Spirit. But the Spirit is clothed in language, and the language of the letter is instructive. Our philosophy of religion must include both the Spirit and the instrumentality. If we ignore the peculiarities of thought and language, we are likely to assume that our own ecclesiasticism is in every way superior. If large-minded we say: Here is one of the many systems which endeavour to reveal the Spirit, hence you may expect an organic message, but do not look for an exhaustive expression of divine truth; the imperfections of form are as significant as the excellences, and due allowances should be made.

All who rise to the level of a world-view, eliminating the peculiar and eccentric in their system, and emphasising the universal, probably pass through preparatory experiences in which their attitude is decidedly narrow. There is, for example, a preliminary allegiance to a creed and mode of worship supposed to be final, hence espoused with partisan zeal. Then there usually ensues a period of doubt springing from the questioning of a particular tenet, or the rejection of some belief plainly too narrow to meet the needs of men. One doctrine having been discarded, the rest are presently examined; hence a general reconstruction of faith brings about a complete transition from partisanship in the narrow sense to love for the universal and eternal. The result is a conception of religion large enough to include all mankind, an ideal of the spiritual life which includes all types. The devotee of a universal faith is thus recognised by a certain spiritual consciousness which implies dispassionate acceptance of men and women as brothers and sisters; a sense of the unity of life; an outgoing mode of conduct based on the conviction that all events belong in a single system; and an insight into events and changes as they pass.

In our day, the severest tests of faith centre about the modern critical movement. It is now customary to begin the inquiry into religion with an analysis of human nature, the principles by which man is able to

have experience and give a rational account of it. The work of critically reconstructing human nature has been done so well that apparently every object of human belief can be stated in merely mental or human terms. The psychological content of religious faith has been analysed, and the workings of the mind in religious experience appreciatively described. Meanwhile biblical criticism has taught us to look for the human equation at every point in our study of the scriptures. The capital result is a theory of man's religious nature so general and complete that it readily fits all types of experience and belief. Apparently, we need only know how the mind works in order to account for all the religions in the world, including Christianity itself.

For universal faith, however, all this rich addition to our knowledge is contributory rather than final. No one can ignore it now that it is in our possession, yet the crucial question is the same as before. Why is it that men believe? How happens it that they are quickened? What is the cause of the compelling consciousness that heavenly realities exist, that heavenly wisdom is vouchsafed to men, despite all the imperfections of human nature, the limitations of language, and the variations of texts? It would appear to be far more important to possess a theory of the actual divine presence than a mere description of the way the mind functions when it postulates realities in response to a native necessity.

We must of course have a theory of human nature broad enough to compass "the varieties of religious experience" before we can intelligently study the great religions, or make a final estimate of revelation; for it is first a question of religion in general, whether deemed natural or supernatural, and we cannot neglect the human conditions even in the case of the most authoritative teaching. Yet the psychologists who have thus far made a study of religion have displayed a singular fondness for religion in its primitive forms, as revealed in the lives of the "saints," or in its alliances with psychical phenomena of odd types. Again, there is a tendency to conceive of it in terms so vaguely sociological that one misses the essence of religion as a distinctive experience. Why should we not include in our account of the

varieties of experience the type in which religion is identified with a high degree of insight and refinement, in which it springs from a well-ordered life not beset by strange visions and eccentric beliefs?

The same need of a criterion is emphasised if instead of turning to psychology we study religion expounded by the adherents of the great faiths of the world; for the study cannot end with a comparison of human types, as we mingle with our brothers from the Orient, noting afresh that man possesses a religious nature essentially the same the world over. We are left in a situation similar to that in which a psychologist like Professor James leaves us, when he has completed the description of religious experiences in a fashion so splendid that we are embarrassed by a multitude of riches. Indeed, the situation is more embarrassing inasmuch as more factors must be taken into account when we have living representatives of the great religions among us. This is especially the case with people whose interest is religious rather than scientific.

Thus far the general result of the new interest in Eastern religions is probably the desire to see the Hindoo with his turban and his silken robe, to hear the Swami intone his prayers, or converse with the Buddhist or Jain in order to see what manner of man he is. To be sure, much good comes from these opportunities; for there is a great difference between hearing or reading about a religion and actually listening to one of its leading devotees. Much information is gained thereby, desire for more knowledge of the great religions is aroused; and there is an increase of good-will that forbids hostile criticism of faiths other than our own. We have gained something if we now permit representatives of these doctrines to expound and plead for their views without fear that Christianity or the truth will suffer thereby. We have gained still more if we are undisturbed when these teachers seem almost to demonstrate that theirs is the universal faith. If we sincerely believe that Christianity is the highest form of religion we must be prepared to make a far better plea for it than is now customary.

The crucial question is this: Are those who listen to expositions of the world's faiths able to discern what is universal and what accidental? Are they able to discriminate between curiosity and love for truth, between the fascinations of an Oriental personality and the doctrines which when shorn of subtle accessories must be tested by enlightened reason? Without doubt there is confusion of tongues at times, and it is to be seriously questioned whether the average observer derives more than a passing benefit. Moreover, few of these gatherings of religionists are sufficiently representative to give even the well-informed an opportunity to estimate all the great faiths of the world. Those who organise such conferences may deem themselves non-partisan, and yet may give almost no hearing to one or more of the great religions. For example, Christianity may be almost wholly omitted, or may be represented either in decidedly liberal form or in strictly orthodox terms. Again, the majority of the auditors may deem themselves competent to estimate the religions of China, or the spiritual pantheism of India, when they are far from a genuine understanding of the Christian faith which they are setting aside in favour of one of these doctrines.

Other doubts arise when we reflect that the influence produced by nearly all religious gatherings is essentially emotional. The Oriental religionist who is supposably a mere lecturer on the essential tenets of his faith is in reality a propagandist. The argument by which he seeks to prove that his is the universal faith is supported by an emotional appeal that is by no means so understood by the average listener. Hence the conference which was for the sake of the comparative study of religions turns out to be a devotional meeting with a pronounced bias. All this would be different were the auditors trained in religious psychology, were they able to discriminate between emotion and doctrine, between the play of personality and the force of an idea. To say this is not to question the religious value of an emotion, but to suggest that no experience is more subtle and complex.

If we turn to the *Sacred Books of the East*, we may read the full text, judging for ourselves, discovering what portions of the teachings in

question the lecturers have omitted. The more learned one is, the better one's knowledge of the various Oriental languages and systems of thought, the more profoundly one can enter into the comparative study. But where would it end? When could one arrive at a just estimate of all the religions and philosophies of the world? Apparently, there would be no end in terms of the letter. The only resource, if one would acquire a standard, is insight into the Religion of the Spirit. What one needs in order to possess this standard is not mere knowledge of emotional effects and doctrinal differences, as important as such knowledge may be; but to be possessed by that ineffable consciousness which characterises the man of the Spirit. In a sense it matters little what the religionist's doctrine may be if he is touched by this consciousness. If religion is a life with him, if it be a life with you, each may respond to the other; and the silent language of the Spirit will say what the spoken word could never utter. What we need, therefore, is a conception of the Indwelling Spirit large enough and sound enough to cover all true cases of the Religion of the Spirit.

Chapter III. The Indwelling Spirit

THESE ARE days in the country in late summer and early autumn when a superabundant beauty is added to the wealth of nature. The spring with its new life and its rich promises for garden, field, and forest, has come and gone. The summer's work with the new vegetation is well-nigh accomplished, leaving only the harvests to be gathered. Days of intense heat, of rain and mistiness, have been interspersed with days of rare quiet, as the summer advanced. Meanwhile, we have gone about our tasks or enjoyed nature as best we could when occasion offered. But now dawns a period when, for those who are responsive, the days yield an over-element of life and beauty. Among the hills one calls them "mountain days," days when the mere joy of living in the open and walking upon the heights is such that no other interest can draw the mind away. The glorious spectacle begins with the first beauties of dawn, when, in silent splendour and majesty, the mountains stand forth in roseate light, or are purpled in the soft distance. One is almost as deeply impressed by the silence of this dawning of a memorable day as by the visible beauty. Under these ideal conditions one may witness nature's marvels undisturbed, while the transformation scenes give place to one another unheralded. Here in the solitudes this impressive panorama gives us the day. All day until sunset the marvels continue, scarcely interrupted

by wind or cloud. Yet there is a mere handful of men and women present either to listen or to adore. Remote from the conflicts, the noisy enterprise, hurry and confusion of the world, this silent panorama goes forward to completion, the mists of evening gather, the crickets maintain their peaceful rhythms; and the display of beauty subsides into the stillness and the darkness whence it was summoned.

It is of this over-element revealed in majestic stillness that one would speak, so far as this transcendent beauty has its correspondence in the domain of the Spirit. Nature's spectacles are enacted every day and everywhere, every hour with nature is beautiful, abounding in interests and delights—for those who have eyes and ears. This is especially true in certain parts of our country, in a resourceful climate like that of New England. Yet somehow we await these surpassing days before we enter in fulness of appreciation into the life and the marvels that are everywhere present. The rainy days are good for the soil, we admit, sultry days must come; and we endeavour to pass through these with becoming patience. But we steadily anticipate the supreme days yet in store when autumn comes. It is much the same in the spiritual life. Like the glories of the morning light, spread over the landscape for the contemplation of those who are prompted to rise early, so are the wisdom and peace, the majesty and love of God present each day and hour, each moment everywhere. Yet it is the supreme moment that gives the clue. We are in danger of losing the divine supremacy if we dwell on the mere universality, emphasising the truth that God is everywhere at all times, in all forces and the lowest of conditions. By this universality we seem to say that God is merely the power of gravitation that holds all things in place, or the chemical affinity which binds all atoms together. Where everything is equally good and divine, nothing calls for special mention. Where all are inspired there is no revelation. Well for us if we turn from the supreme to the commonplace, from the summit's beatific vision to the valley's darksome struggle. Well if we turn from the revelation of the transcendent hour to the confirmations of our ordinary days, and of the varied experiences and

utterances of men. Yet "without a vision the people perish." Unless we preserve the faith in true reverence, there is a sense in which we possess no faith whatsoever.

The Holy Spirit dwells in the entire race, speaks in all tongues, has been present in all ages; yet it becomes manifest by its own law. Unless we are aware of its descent upon the heights, we are not likely to detect its power on the plains below. To say this is not necessarily to sound a call back to the literal authority of a bygone time. The beauty of the living day is the genuinely surpassing beauty, and each must behold to know it. Without the confirmations of the present the authority of the past is naught. Yet the truth in the greatest of volumes and the life of the greatest teacher may afford the highest standards for the thought and conduct of to-day. Hence it might be possible to overestimate the latest utterances. It should be possible to state the values of the ancient faith so as to be true to the vitalising teachings of the present. To find such a way is the purpose of what follows.

When we speak of the Indwelling Spirit it is with several implications. God in the transcendent infinitude of His pure essence is the true overelement for which all sincere men make allowances when they characterise the divine nature. Hence "the divine immanence" is a figure of speech, a tacit confession of ignorance. The Spirit is the divine life or power going forth from an eternal Ground never exhausted by the universe in any of its temporal or other forms. Thus the term "Spirit" becomes a workable conception adapted to the demands of our thought, employed now with reference to the entire cosmos, now with reference to the life in all beings and things, throughout all time. In the latter sense the Spirit is the source of the universal energy which science tells us is eternally conserved. Again, we speak of the visible universe as the manifestation in objective form of the Spirit, taking care to distinguish between life and form. Out from the infinite wealth of the Spirit, we may then say, the evolving kingdoms of nature with their multiform species have come. More explicitly, the Spirit cosmically regarded is the aspiring, purposive life which not only quickens all forms into

existence, but sustains and carries them forward. The struggle for existence is not the ultimate cause of evolution. Environment is not the central factor in this progressive change. Nor can the first place be assigned to heredity, or the laws of use and disuse. Not even man in his greatest achievements can be termed the creative power. The Spirit is the real efficiency, it imbues all forms and modes of existence with life, underlying the struggles through which the fit survive, stirring within the impulses that give rise to successive adaptations. The cosmos is in no sense the producer or ground of life, but displays life because it is an expression of the Spirit.

The Spirit as productive principle must be as rich, multiform in activity, and as highly specialised as the resulting forms which have emerged into existence. At one end of the scale this gives us the cosmic forces, the electrons or elements, the nebulae, and the most primitive forms of life; at the other, it gives us man with a mental life radically unlike that of his organism, and a spiritual nature; it gives us the genius, the prophet, the Christ. Whatever evidences we find of wisdom or purpose are expressions of the cosmic Spirit as it mounts through manifold levels. The Spirit is not mere energy, since there are higher forms of life to be taken into account, for example, instinct with its remarkable keenness, and illumined reason rivalling the heart; finally, the supreme fact that man, becoming profoundly self-conscious, recognises himself as a child of God. The Indwelling Spirit is no whit lower than the highest of its manifestations. Thus the highest is in a profound sense the rightful type by which to judge what the Spirit is. Forwards, upwards, everywhere around, the Spirit may extend, as the encircling atmosphere reaches out into the illimitable regions of space. But for us at least the clue afforded by the highest enlightenment of men is the true one.

The Spirit is sometimes symbolised by the light of the sun everywhere spread abroad on the brightest of days. Shining upon all, conveying warmth to each responsive cell in plant or animal, the solar energy superabundantly radiates far off into space. Marvellous first for what it reveals, light is still

more marvellous in itself. So, too, is the Spirit. Yet a symbol so general seems hardly adequate to meet the facts of the individual lives of men, with the thought of personality, on the one hand; and the thought of the inward shining of spiritual light, on the other. Nor does the pantheism which adores nature as God prove sufficiently definite, since nature presents many and conflicting forces, sad and cruel as well as noble facts; and pantheism fails to yield the requisite standard. The mysticism that assumes the unity of seer and revelation with God is no less faulty; and while there is profound truth in some forms of mysticism, a mystical view of the Indwelling Spirit is not what we mean. We may see God in everything, revere the Spirit everywhere, yet have a way of thinking which avoids confusion between the natural and the divine.

If with idealism as commonly understood we say that the universe is "such stuff as dreams are made of," we make light of this majestic cosmos, profoundly real in space and time, with the constancy and order of the solar system, with its long evolutions, and its marvellous spectacles. True idealism may indeed give us the clue to the ultimate nature of the cosmos, but only so far as it is profoundly true to the realities of space by passing beyond these to the Being in whom all such realities exist. Hence one would no longer say that the Spirit dwells "in" space, as if another power had first made the spatial world as a home for God; one would not speak of the visible universe as God's body or organism, as if the cosmos were co-eternal with Him. The deeper truth of the Spirit's primacy would ever be before the mind. We should then say that God possesses an eternal world of self-manifestation because He is eternal, the first and last of beings; His is the world, and its eternally conserved energy is life of His life, yet He is more. Thus we should say, not that He dwells as Spirit in the cosmos, but that the cosmos exists in Him. We might thus distinguish without separating, down to the lowest levels of animal life. His, then, is this little world of our organism, with its passions, its bondages, and sins. No deed so foul that we can truly know it apart from Him, no evil sentiment so vile that it is wholly independent. Yet

no way of thinking is more erroneous than that which in any degree lowers the sanctity of the Spirit for the sake of showing that God is "in" all things. Not by praising the lower nature of man, or eulogising the responsiveness of the sinner, shall we prove that the kingdom dwells with all men. The mere fact that all force is of the divine, that every function is divinely purposive, signifies but little: everything depends on the use and the connection. For, one insists, it is not the mere fact that the Spirit descends into the darkness so that even in the deepest places the divine spark is there, that is significant; but the great truth that the Spirit *is* the Spirit, and is from the heights. The pure white lily may grow out of the dismal swamp, but the glory is not in its environment; and the moral is not that all things are beautiful. In order and degree from lowest to highest the Spirit exists. The higher in the scale the more significant. When the Christ is at last manifested to the Magdalene it is because she is already becoming the lily.

What men mean, then, when they employ the term "Spirit," is that aspect of the universal Life which is perceived in the higher moments, not that Life as a whole. In the cosmos at large there may indeed be a plan according to which great purposes are fulfilled, but this thought is brought near when God is spoken of as "Providence," with special reference to the inner life. This brings us to the conception of the Spirit held by those who believe in divine guidance. We have left the vast region of cosmic forces, too great for the human mind to grasp, if one tries to form a definite conception of the world-plan; and we have before us a view of the Spirit so intimate that the divine wisdom almost becomes personal in a special sense in the soul of each believer. For it is too general to hold that the Spirit is a guiding, sustaining Life at large. The Spirit is also individuated in each human soul. Each man is led along the pathway of life, with its vicissitudes, its depths and its dark places, but also its moments of illumination. In this sense the Spirit is the immediate source of all inspiration, of all religious experiences, hence of the spiritual teachings of the ages. Its presence is acknowledged by the seers, poets, and prophets of all peoples and all lands. In thus speaking of

the Spirit we seem to speak with the authority of so many in so many lands that the revered ages bear testimony through us, the ages that have known the seers of India, the devout mystics and Pietists of Germany, the Friends of England and America, and such poet-prophets as Emerson.

The experiences which have led people to believe in the guiding presence of the Spirit have in many cases begun in relatively simple impressions concerning future events, or warnings not to engage in a proposed undertaking. More definite impressions have at length come in regard to human character, "leadings" plainly pointing to the right course of action in instances where a number of people were involved, and guidances that indicated the activity of higher powers. The precise nature of these powers has perhaps been obscure for a time, and they may have been identified with supernatural agencies. More definite clues have then been discovered through intuition, "spiritual sight," and other "faculties" or senses taken to imply a superior phase of the human mind. Thus a psychological explanation has taken the place of a supernatural view. The remarkable correspondence between these personal presentiments and intuitions, and the promptings that came to other people almost simultaneously, has led the mind to an empirical view of the divine Spirit as somehow inclusive of all these guidances. Thus has grown up the conviction that the guiding presence of God is the immanent source of the love which prompts man to serve, of the wisdom which imbues him in public and private utterances, leading him to speak better than he knows; and of the peace which sustains the soul and brings rest in time of need. The next advance has very likely come with the idea of a deeper phase of the self, receptive below the level of active consciousness, open to guidances and impressions, and subject to spiritual illumination. These considerations have suggested the idea of silent worship, or of a special mode of meditation adapted to the coming of guidances.

These guidances are likely to begin amidst experiences of a personal nature, hence subject to confusion with selfish inclinations. In due time, however, they prove their superiority by a certain elevation of feeling, by

their disinterested character, and the relation they bear to the welfare of others. Moreover, one acquires the habit of receptivity under conditions that become hallowed. Thus by reverential association through years of thought and experience the mind acquires a conviction that the Spirit is actively present in these leadings and guidances. This idea of the Spirit's presence is strengthened by the reflection that there could be but one source of wisdom, and that this source must be accessible to all souls. This conception is obviously different from mysticism, since these guidances are not said to come amidst emotional ecstasies or visions, but through inward calmness, and without any confusion of thought between God and man. It differs also from spiritism, since it implies the immediate presence of God; although some of the guidances may indeed come through the ministrations of angels. Again, this view is distinguished from others by the very practical nature of the deliverances said to bear the authority of the inward light.

Is such a view sufficient? Is there in the literature of the subject a sufficiently clear characterisation of the divine presence to afford a criterion? Does the individual believer in divine guidance possess an adequate standard so that he can tell whence the Spirit comes and whither it goes? To raise these questions is to be thrown back for the moment on the witness of the Spirit in each soul, since there is no evidence so sure in the last analysis as the surpassing experience which inspires belief. It would be out of the question to adduce absolutely convincing evidence, supposably sufficient to persuade one who has never believed in divine guidance. But the same difficulty besets any one who tries to convince another of the certainty of religious conversion, or the truth of a given Christian doctrine accepted on the basis of years of experience. As matter of fact, there are long processes of hallowed association connected with every form of belief in God. Only through appreciative insight into these experiences can one understand their persuasive power. We may confidently say that the experience of the presence of God through acknowledgment of the inward light is one at least of the great approaches to a universal standard.

In this experience there is undoubtedly a certain uniqueness, since no one else can discern precisely what you and I perceive when listening in reverential solitude, or when a guidance flashes into the mind out of all apparent connection with the thoughts most active at the time. There is a corresponding uniqueness in all deeply religious experiences, and a sense in which one may rightfully call such experiences incommunicable. It is this ineffable element which constitutes the supreme reality of religion, and is the ultimate test in contrast with any appeal to dogma or to external authority. All that is required is the right statement of this surpassing evidence in the light of other aspects of the religious life.

Granted this clue, I ought to be able to proceed outward in my thought, carrying this transcendent memory of the Spirit's presence as the test of all that is worth while. No sentiment would then be so trivial or commonplace that it could not be taken as a partial clue. Each little act of service that appeals to the heart might be taken as a sign, and in infinite ways one might connect daily life with the thought of God. In this way one could entirely disprove the notion that to believe in the immediate presence of the Spirit is to be vague. God's presence would be thought of as bearing the most intimate relation to the hours as they pass, while each hour of human responsiveness may be made replete with faith and love.

Is the Spirit as thus present more real than in the forms through which God spoke to mankind many centuries ago? Assuredly, because presented life is for us the most real fact, and without it no truth can be confirmed. As James Martineau puts it,

divine relations are *living* relations...they are not among things historical that have been and are not, but pertain to souls now on the stage...wherever the struggle of moral life is fresh and strong, and a new generation joins the fight, there is the field and fervour of God's Spirit...Not that the old memorials of Him are other than sacred, too. In the past also He dwelt, *when it was present*: but of *that* only secondary vestiges remain, while the first-hand Reality is *here*.

All truth grew out of experience in the first place, and the utility of truth is found in its power to explain experience. Moreover, each individual acquires through experience the elements of conviction which make truth such for him when he puts it to the test. Thus the revealed word, otherwise a dead letter, becomes a living reality through the present experience and thought of the individual. Again, the Spirit assumes new forms in each age, or is at least apprehended in new terms; and the truth of to-day may have unique value for us just because it is for to-day. Hence there is far more for us to do than merely to expound the established truths of old. The truth of to-day is not given by way of mere comprehension of the truth that went before. It would seem wiser to turn our eyes forward, with the realisation that in a profound sense spiritual truth is still in the making.

The living Spirit is the first of considerations. It is more than all its modes and types. The forms left behind are mere crystallisations, unless we take them as clues by which to test the living whole. They are comparable to the ancient geologic remains which men trace back to the time when the earth was molten in order to explain the aspects of the earth to-day. More to me is the living Essence surpassing definition than the formulation insisted upon as the only true one. It is our concern to show that the Spirit is a surpassing Life, larger in the marvellous present, with its heritages from the sacred past, than in any previous age. Possessed of this clue, we may well look with expectant eyes for signs of the Spirit's moving presence amidst social issues just now touched with life.

Shall we then take our clue from creative evolutionism and declare that *change* is the fundamental concept? Shall we say that God progresses, that He is "in the making"? It seems not only unnecessary but impossible to make this assertion. The wise men of the ages are in impressive agreement on this point. God in His transcendency is the immutable ground of all life, power, intelligence; He is one in type, character, will, purpose; constant in all creative attributes, the master of eternity, not the product of time; and the divine energies are not exhausted, nor are they increased by creation.

God in action as Spirit, immanent, all-imbuing, is the same immutable Being yesterday, to-day, and for ever. What we call "time" is simply the marking off, part by part, of the whole. What we call "progress" is the successive manifestation through difference of the one Identity to which nothing can be added, from which nothing can be taken away. That which is conserved is of more value than that which is spent. The eternal truths of the ages need no further proof. Love will always be the greatest gift. Out of God's permanency all life perennially comes, it is the divine "over-element" which beautifies all things in this world of time and gives to them their value.

We as men know the Spirit through the progressive experiences of the race, the changing modes which reveal the same Essence. Our concepts are living, generative, if they represent the divine Essence through these its varied manifestations in the race. We need both the new, fresh revelation of the eternal values, and the confirmations gathered by a study of the ages. We need both the precise, scientific conceptions which ever more persistently seek to co-ordinate all the facts and laws of the great cosmos, and the poetic values which supplement these by yielding visions of the surpassing whole. The Spirit has as many forms of manifestation as there are types, orders, degrees, in the cosmos; as many types in the realm of æsthetic, moral, and spiritual values as men of insight discover. To look from above is to find the Spirit descending through all forms, actuating men, attaining far-off goals through age-long processes; to look from below is to find men moving forward in groups toward these same ends, with here and there an individual consciously dedicated to the eternal values. The Spirit from above individuates, quickens, guides; man from within receives love and wisdom as if the life were his own, and proceeds to do his work. In this union God and man are made complete, as if each existed alone; since nothing interferes with the divine purposes, and yet man is free both to produce or to wander into the by-paths of experience. The terms "above" and "below," and all that imply separateness, are thus mere figures of speech; for that Essence is more truly within than above us, is ever "here," whatever changes

time may bring. Our thought is never more than half-true unless we make large allowances for the ineffable "over-element" which surpasses all our concepts, yet in a highly intelligible sense is the true basis of them all.

The conclusion naturally is, Let each who is gifted ascend the mount of the Spirit, adoring in reverence and receptivity, seeking the universal Essence which men express in various ways; let each revere his gift, making himself proficient that he may portray or symbolise the Spirit as befits his vision; let all produce who can, realising that expression or service in all its forms will be furthered by the productions of those who are creative; let those who interpret do it reverently, remembering that it is constructive work that avails; let all others follow according to their light. Thus if all do their part down to the least gifted, who merely echo a brother follower, we shall have spiritual co-operation. Then no one need ask what the Spirit is apart from its manifestations, for it will be seen that the Spirit is in truth what all these gifted ones reveal.

There is plainly a great difference between regarding the Spirit as creating through the changing conditions of to-day and placing the emphasis on such conditions. If we dwell on the conditions as such, we are likely to become anxious, like those who become absorbed in the wrongs of the existing social order so that they scarcely think of God at all. The time-server is as far from the truth as the theoretical believer in the eternal values who has divorced those ideals from the world. What we need is a vision of the Spirit working through the changing conditions of the day. We need to put matters in the right order, beginning with the Spirit's method of creation, the lessons of history, the meanings of human experience viewed in the light of spiritual ideals. First find the Spirit on the mountain-top, then carry its standard into the darkest valley below. This standard should generate an effective consciousness leading to constructive work, it should lead to the love which is eager to reveal to men the inner dues to the Spirit's presence.

By the surpassing consciousness of the presence of God one means a life active within the soul to which each may refer in his own way as to a

standard that tests or measures every issue submitted to it. The standard is not like a measuring-rod, for that would suggest the crystallised form or dogma. It is not a mere voice, as if the utterance of to-day could wholly displace the great teachings of the past. Nor is it an authority vested in a person or institution. The Indwelling Spirit is not the mere energy we feel in the organism, or the life we are made aware of in the mind. Yet God dwells wherever these forms have undertaken to represent the Spirit. We could find the divine wisdom even in the rock, had we the clue. The central clue is not the universe of rocks, trees, animals, and planetary forces; nor any one of these inner activities of which man becomes aware. Yet the same Life which, starting at the primitive level, expressed its law and wisdom through successive stages of evolution from electron and nebula to man, is even now active within the individual and society. This Life moves from lower to higher, from within outward. The higher we look the more directly we enter into relation with this Life. The higher its utterance through the prophets, the greater its deed through the man of service, the more central must be the confirmatory experience on our part. To test, confirm, or realise, is to put ourselves in living relation with the same Spirit that wrought these deeds. This need not imply the exaltation of the finite self, as if one's own present experience were higher because coming later. Truly to possess the standard is to be lifted above self, while realising that through human selves the Spirit is made manifest. Truly to possess it is to know why the wise ones agree that in the conduct which reveals love to God and men the supreme test of spirituality is met. Hence in a word one can say, The divine love is the surpassing presence, the criterion of heavenly reality. He who is truly ready to let that perennially productive Love create within him anew, who is prepared to accept whatever may follow, is best able to know God to-day. Love comes first, then the idea, the will, the conduct or social expression, ever leading from within outward according to the law of life. The surpassing Reality lives in us, loves and achieves through us—this is the great law.

Chapter IV. The Criterion

IT IS natural for the student of the religious life to be absorbed in one great consideration, the life of devoted service to humanity in behalf of righteousness and the love of God; for righteousness, or the Good, is the greatest of the eternal values. Hence in a study of the Religion of the Spirit he would look for a discussion of well-known types of religious experience or special phases of the spiritual life, such as prayer and worship. But we are in quest of a universal standard, and the investigation which takes its clue from the surpassing presence of the Spirit must work downward from the highest universal principle to an explanation of various types of experience and thought, one of which is religious. We must therefore be at home in the largest field of thought in order to delimit the special sphere within which there are particular experiences to explain. The artist and the scholar would remind us of this larger interest, if in our zeal for righteousness we should forget Beauty and Truth. All men live in the same cosmos whether interested in the True, the Beautiful, or the Good; and the cosmos is describable in universal terms without regard to any special interest. No man however spiritual can escape from his cosmos, and his spiritual life, if profound, bears relation to all matters that are fundamental. This larger view is especially important in our time, since certain critics have assured us that religious

experience is not a clue to the ultimate reality of the universe, but is solely a question of "the conservation of values" precious only to those who lead a subjective life.

Disengaging our thought for the moment from the surpassing presence of the Spirit as known through religion, let us penetrate further back into the realm of the eternal values. To turn to it as Plato regarded it, for example, is to adopt a line of thought not yet sure that there is a God in the personal sense; but to contemplate an assemblage of essences, archetypes or values whose chief is the Good, Plato conducts his readers through a long journey up the mount of perfection, guiding them by the light of reason, himself a profound believer in systematic thought. Not until the journey is nearly at an end does he remind the lover of wisdom that the Good can only be discerned "with difficulty," in a beatific moment in which reason itself is outdone by a surpassing insight. All through the greatest literature of idealism, in the supreme verses of the poets, and the last word of the painters, one finds a similar admission. These men of genius are as deeply impressed in their way as the religionist in his. Yet they clothe their thought in wholly different terms, and some scarcely venture into the field of religion at all. What we need is a sympathetic insight into these several modes of discerning the eternal values.

Let us say, then, that there is a universal Essence which various men intuitively apprehend in their own manner, each according to his gift; some with a philosophy of the Essence, others with a religion, still others by producing works of art in a region sacred to Beauty. Let us remember that these men may be so diverse in type that they may not understand one another, the devotee of Beauty working at his art as if the Good and the True were nought, the lover of the True unmindful of the Good, and the disciple of the Good passing by all others save his fellow-disciples. Great work is done in the world by men thus unmindful. There is no necessary connection in the temporal world between the arts, the sciences, and religion. Not until we ascend to the level of the eternal do we draw near that Essence which

is the same in all. Yet, whether mindful or not, the painter, for example, apprehends this Essence through the perception of beauty of form, line, colour; and portrays his perceptual imagery on canvas in accordance with his training or genius. There are many degrees of attainment in this realm, to be sure, and one need not look for widespread recognition of Beauty in this its universal sense; but in a Michael Angelo one finds conscious recognition of the eternal values. Again, the musician enters into relation with the Essence in his special way, representing his insight and emotion through sound, developing his theme in accordance with his own art. The result in the case of a Beethoven symphony, for example, is a marvel of harmony lifting the soul out of the temporal, and bringing the great Essence unspeakably near. The scholar seizes the universal Essence as law, order, system, working out his insight with reference to the solar system, to human history, or the explanation of long processes of development in nature. The preacher or prophet gives forth his thought with special reference to righteousness. The poet is inspired as poets are wont to be, singing as his muse enables, mayhap symbolising the eternal Essence itself. The philosopher is explicitly concerned with this Essence, and in the case of Plato we have one who is at the same time thinker, artist, and poet.

All these, as truly as the poet, are "born and not made." There is a kinship between them which the world seldom suspects. Those who apprehend the eternal values never dwell apart in worlds of their own, whatever the temporal appearances may be, but all live in the same world, are touched by the same Essence, and represent it with differences of emphasis. Hence the greater the insight the more a man tends to be at once artist, poet, musician, thinker, prophet; although he may not produce in visible form in more than one field. The sculptor labouring at his block of marble, or the scholar analysing minute chemical processes, may be as truly worshipping as the religionist. In a sense the only one who stands outside of them all is the philosopher, consciously seeking the rationalised universal. Philosophy has sometimes been disparaged as the most abstract of subjects, hence the

universal has been thought of as an empty essence; but we are speaking of the true philosopher who, with Hegel, knows that the universal includes the content of all individual spheres and particular facts.

The unity between the arts and sciences may be approached through what we call taste, or "good taste." What does the lover of Beauty mean by taste? Both the artist and the exponent of æsthetics would find it extremely difficult to say. Yet both know what they mean till asked to define taste or Beauty.

Whatever else taste may mean, it is at least that subtle power of perception which enables a man to tell what is beautiful in the world of pictures, statues, buildings, in such a way as to classify according to types and standards of fine art. It is not a mere expression of technical skill, for people possess it in considerable degree who do not paint or design. It is not merely intellectual, but is partly a matter of that vague quality known as "feeling." An artist will be able truly to appreciate and accurately to portray beautiful forms who is yet unable to give the reasons for his "feeling." In technical knowledge he may be widely developed, hence precise and definite in all that he does; nevertheless, at the point where "the divine fire" burns most brilliantly his thought may pass into the realm of feeling, totally unable to account for itself. What he knows is that he possesses taste and that it makes its appreciations known to him. He can only infer what it is by what it accomplishes, and this is ordinarily the utmost we know about the choicest possessions in life.

Those who possess taste in large measure with respect to painting, for example, may be gifted in other arts, hence they may be able to pursue Beauty into various regions, apprehending it in the realm of sound as well as in the realm of colour. Just as the painter judges by the subtle power known as "taste," endeavouring to attain an adequate standard with respect to his art, so the musician produces and criticises according to unwritten laws involving æsthetic values. In a somewhat analogous way the man of science investigates and analyses through years of research, proposes hypotheses, and applies scientific tests, all the time keeping before his

mind the standard of the universally demonstrable proposition. He aims to achieve results which the competent will accept because these correspond with dispassionate reason. His grand achievement is a work of art as well as a gift of the spirit of truth. It is achieved by fidelity to the subtle something denominated "taste" with reference to Beauty, but called "insight" with regard to the True.

The master in any field works according to methods which all employ who are gifted with the creative spirit. Creative work involves, for example, a certain perception of values, relationships, lines, and tones; an insight into universal forms, laws, ends, ideals; and a definite clue or theme, a group of images or ideas employed in the realisation of the specific task. The creative spirit relates a man to the universal in such a way that he not only reproduces in consciousness or visible form, but also produces new combinations by imbuing them with his own individuality. However great a man's appreciative feeling of the immediate values of things, he must produce in order to make his insight complete, and attain sure knowledge; for real knowledge means command of details and parts, involves both analytic and synthetic insight. Hence the thinker must be as able to detect minute shades of meaning as the artist to discern fine shades of colour and infinitesimal values of form. The creative master thereby gains insight, as it were, into the heart of creation, learns how the universal Essence can be the same and yet different through the almost indiscernible changes of time. To gain this vision in something like a universal sense is to be able to pass beyond the differences which ordinarily separate the arts and sciences.

The lover of Beauty is free to follow where he is led, unhampered by the obstacles which have often beset the lover of the True. If he chance to live in the Middle Ages, he is supposed to select religious subjects; yet even then, "when art was still religion," the painters and sculptors of renown were remarkably free. In ancient Greece, the philosopher could pursue truth wherever it led him, howbeit one of the greatest suffered martyrdom. Then came hundreds of years when wisdom had to serve the Church or cease to

function. The enfranchisement of science began with Copernicus, Galileo, and the other lovers of the nature of things who had the courage to break with ecclesiastical authority. Since the dawn of evolutionism in our own time thought has been almost wholly free, so free in fact that science and philosophy have contributed a new foundation for religion.

It requires very little knowledge of history to show that religion, hampered by ecclesiasticism, has lagged several hundred years behind the times. The attainment of universal insight in the field of religion is long postponed because religion, unlike the arts and sciences, clings to its eccentricities and peculiarities, and worships not only tradition but crystallised theology and several types of authority. The motives that prompt men to seek its shrines are mostly private and local. What men want is individual comfort and personal salvation, and they readily accept a creed which promises these. When tribulation ceases for a season, it is an easy matter to return to worldliness. What is true for practical purposes is ordinarily true enough for religion. Hence there is little incentive to thought. Even in the theological schools thought is ordinarily checked if it venture outside of established lines, and the theologian seldom follows truth wherever it may lead, lest his doctrines be endangered. To preserve the systematic faith intact is the ideal, and science is deemed a more dangerous enemy than the arts, or the world.

Meanwhile, religion is often allied with the abnormal or ecstatic, or with some new cult whose standards repel the intelligent. If free from these matters, religion may become smilingly complacent or æsthetically crystallised. Its golden age is always in the past, and innocence is more highly esteemed than wisdom. Again, it is so devoted to the life of feeling that no one dares to abstract it from the privately personal. Thus religion is supposable for children, weaklings, and the self-centred. The man of power and thought turns elsewhere, the churches languish; and it is only by dint of long persuasion that people are convinced that religion may also exist for the mature mind in a healthy body. The time may come when its devotees will care so little for creeds, rituals, and dogmas, so far as these sunder the

world into factions, that we shall enter a stage of freedom comparable to that already attained by the sciences and arts.

The religious worker is in a measure as much a specialist as the painter working at his easel, or the astronomer gazing at the stars. To be touched by the Essence and to show the fruits appertaining to righteousness are of course the paramount matters. But religion need not end here. There may be a science of things spiritual, founded on insight into the Spirit and unhampered by any particular creed. Thus as the artist proves his insight by what he portrays, so the religionist in varying degrees of regeneration might prove his until a time shall come when universality of religious insight will be taken as the standard. The sectarian differences will then fall into oblivion, and all men will esteem it a privilege to "worship in spirit and in truth."

We may gain some inkling of a universal religious criterion by once more turning to the arts for an illustration. No one who has appreciatively listened to a master tenor or a rare soprano, one of those exceptional voices that create a world of beauty amidst the din of ordinary singing, can ever forget the master. The same is true of the unexcelled performance of a symphony by the greatest of orchestras. In a measure the rendering of an oratorio produces an equivalent impression, the music of an organ called forth by one whose soul is manifest in his work, or the wondrous harmonies of the piano summoned into being by the master hand. Almost involuntarily the memories of these red-letter days in the world of music combine to form a standard of all that is best in that world, even though one have no technical skill or power of musical expression. In a lesser degree, there is a corresponding consciousness with respect to things religious, generated by the memory of the exceptional sermon, the reading of scripture by one of those persons who deeply realise the spirit of what they read, or the unusual service in which music aids religion in entire keeping with the thought. In imagination at least one can consider what a religious service must be in order to equal in value the rendering of a Beethoven symphony. Thus idealism, building on what is actual, acquires a test equivalent to that

of taste in the fine arts. In a measure we all judge in this manner. In some such way, also, we bear the memory of unselfish deeds we have witnessed or read about, cherishing the blessed presence of the doer as a suggestion of pure virtue. Thus we acquire an intuition concerning the eternal qualities of religion, supplementing present experience by idealisations of scriptural scenes and personages. The intellectual element of the criterion we may suggest by a brief reference to enlightenment in general.

In all men, whatever their vocation, there are differences according as they are or are not enlightened. To be enlightened, let us say, is to meet life reflectively, reproducing it in thought according to universal principles. The enlightened man knows things at first hand, and creates them anew by the impress he puts upon them. Nature, for example, means something to him over and above the mere facts gathered by general reading; and when walking over the country, encountering new conditions, or observing varying phenomena he is able to interpret what he sees according to principles by no means obvious on the surface. He uses books but is not limited by them. He is dependent on people, but also lives in a world of his own. He is able to take a dispassionate view of a situation. At home in his own mind, he knows his own intentions and hence has a purpose. In his relationship with others he tries to discern the heart, to judge by motives. Taking up his position in the inner life, he looks out upon the world with philosophic repose. He is keenly aware of the fact that human interests are for the most part allied with the impulses, feelings, and other vital experiences which actuate men; yet he knows that reality is truly known through thought. Is it not possible for such a man to be typical of religion in its nobler estate?

Psychologically, this centre of enlightenment may be described as the point of direct apprehension of experience, the feeling-point, the psychological immediacy which makes life uniquely individual. It is also the point where the self reacts upon the world of its experience, where experience and thought emerge into will and become conduct; and where experiences change in type from physical to moral and spiritual. Every one has such a

centre within him, for all men react upon the world in some fashion. But not all know it, not all recognise the world of reflective self-consciousness. To know this in profound degree is to be an idealist, to be engaged in the process of interpreting the universe. To know it in another form is to be an artist, poet, or scholar, as we have already seen.

There is a sense in which to possess and know this centre in a religious manner is to possess it in the fullest degree in the world. For one may be poet, musician, thinker in a manner such as to be far more than these; hence in thought, attitude, and work, to lead a life inspired by the conviction that God as source of all wisdom and power really exists, heaven is a fact, immortality a surety. This conviction will be made manifest by an impressive constancy far removed from the ordinary fidelity to religion. Intellectually, it will be shown by a persistent yet trustful attempt to understand the conditions and laws of life with habitual acknowledgment that all efficiency is from God. In conduct, it will be revealed through firm love for humanity and a willingness to labour incessantly. Again, it will indicate a readiness to live by faith to the last point of trustfulness in the divine promises. Hence there will be deep belief in and earnest quest for guidance, a life of adaptation to the conditions of inward receptivity and external expression. On the whole there will be a tendency to depreciate rather than to exalt the self, yet with sufficient self-reliance to insure spiritual efficiency. The doctrines that grow out of this inward experience would be secondary matters; for what we mean primarily is a certain spirit, a sentiment of deep reverence and humility, a love for God and humanity springing from recognition of universal principles.

The man who thus knows spiritual realities at first hand is able to think within and behind ecclesiasticisms, sacred books, ceremonials, and creeds to the Life out of which these spring, distinguishing between the eternal Essence and the temporal forms of its expression. He may have needed these, particularly the Christian Bible, in order to arrive at spiritual self-consciousness, and to be able to recognise the surpassing presence; but

once arrived he deals with reality directly and thoughtfully. This does not mean that he deems himself in any way superior, but that he is enlightened enough to know that the forms are true for him only so far as he has personally touched the realities they symbolise. A principle set forth in the Gospels, for instance, is true for him because he has applied it, like a principle in mathematics. Accordingly, he knows it would be true if all the bibles in the world were destroyed. Thus his belief in the essentials of Christianity is not dependent on the acceptance of miracles, nor of any merely historical event. What he esteems in Christianity takes its clue from the Indwelling Spirit, not from any specific doctrine.

The real church in these terms is invisible, eternal, and every man enters it who is deeply quickened whether or not he belong to an earthly organisation. That is to say, the real conversion is of the heart, and by making the great change a man enters a spiritual group, just as the inmost marriage may be said to take place when two souls are genuinely plighted. The act of joining an earthly church, like the civil marriage, has its place, and by it a man is further united with his fellows. One who becomes a man of the Spirit but does not join an earthly church is not deprived of the rights of the spiritual kingdom, although he may not subscribe to any particular creed. There is a living church, eternal in the heavens—that is the great fact. The more truly a man is a member of it the more likely he is to appreciate the best in any church. In earthly churches men often pray to be seen of men, and a preacher may hold one group of views in his own consciousness, another for ecclesiastical reasons. An earthly church may be exceedingly worldly, subject to the conditions of time and place to the last degree. On the other hand, a church on earth may correspond in marvellous degree with heavenly ideals. In any event, let us lay down the principle that for the man who has been deeply touched and is able to go to the sources, religion is a living gospel springing out of his soul into everlasting life. The highest religion, within or without the church, is life-giving, touches the whole of a man's life; and he shows by its fruits that this is the case.

It may be objected that we are setting too high a standard, since few men become so filled with the Spirit that they apprehend first and last things, and think out the relationships of the spiritual life. Yet there is every reason to look for these signs if with the apostle we seek to pattern our consciousness after "the mind of Christ." When Jesus bade men take up their crosses and follow him he doubtless meant that they should so far sacrifice the personal life as to learn through direct obedience to the divine will what the Father's love is. To one who truly believed he promised even greater things, and a more complete appreciation of the truths he taught the world. How shall those greater works be wrought, how shall the more complete understanding come if not through direct fidelity to the guidances of the Spirit? What is the standard for us lesser mortals if not the endeavour to walk humbly in the same pathway as far as we may be able?

He who has beheld the Christ at least in vision can never be content with any standard short of that set by the Master of men. To adopt that standard is always in a sense to be a follower, loving the elder brother who has both revealed it in his teachings and exemplified it in his life. Yet this is the glory of the religious life, as the perfect ideal of Beauty is the endlessly pursued goal of the artist, or the ideal of the absolutely True the end sought by the philosopher. The first group of Christians needed no other shepherd because the Master of the sheep was with them. But those who came later needed the inward witness of the Spirit that they might have the needed assurance. In the end, the basis of assurance for every one was the guidance discerned by each in the inner kingdom. Men have lost touch with true Christianity only so far as they have permitted other matters to come between them and this guidance.

Again, we may illustrate by the Bible. God spoke to the hearts of men and that inner utterance surpassing all languages and formulations was the genuine Word of God. Men also wrote what they heard, or thought they heard, reporting as best they might, and the transcript has been denominated the Word of God, as if the words themselves had been

dictated sentence by sentence. All honour to those who have revered the letter and have gathered consecrated groups to worship it, founding earthly churches thereon. Yet to know what the true Word is each soul must listen, ready to be led by the Spirit that "giveth life." That Word is never finished. The messages that spring from it ever rise into consciousness in the hearts of men, ever anew it inspires psalms of peace and thanksgiving. He who in some measure bears this Word in his consciousness may turn to the written text and find within its symbols and parables, its apparent inconsistencies and incongruities, the inmost or spiritual meaning. Thus to emphasise the Spirit to-day is not to take from the authority of the Bible, but merely to say that not until its consistent meaning has been borne in upon the individual spirit can it become an open book.

Religion is and ever will be more personal than art or science. The artist objectifies on canvas and in stone, through lights and shades, in beautiful structures intended to endure. A work of art is finished and stands out there a thing of beauty by itself. likewise a scientific production may become complete, as in the case of a mathematical demonstration or an invention in mechanics. Others may with training succeed in reproducing the work thus made externally complete, howbeit the one who copies is unable to copy the genius. A work of art may also lift the beholder beyond itself to the realm of the eternal, and thus in a way suggest the unattainable. Nevertheless, it is characteristic of the work of art to possess what Professor Palmer calls "rounded completeness," whereas the work of the religious spirit is never done. The invisible reality always counts for most in religion, and the inmost apprehension of it is always the highest. In saying this we have of course admitted that it is more difficult to interpret religion than to judge a picture or a sonata, but it is well to recognise the fact that despite all the eccentricities that crowd about the subjective side of religion it is still rightfully personal.

The view we take of the universal Essence will of course depend on our view of human nature and our conception of God. Taking our clue from

the thought of God as Spirit, let us say that the Spirit comes to man first as life, wisdom, love; and that these divine powers take form according to the type, individuality, purpose, of the man in question. The Spirit itself, like the sunlight, exists for all creatures as a quickening presence. As such it is impartial, universal. Yet just because it exists for all it is orderly and purposive, hence it more readily quickens a man in the direction in which he can best work than in any other. In all men it is creative, or may be when the individual is fully responsive. In all it is life, and it will lead ever forward those who are true to its guidance and to their genius. In all it is wisdom, and it will reveal the best road to the individual end, a way that will not conflict with the rights of others. To all it also comes as love, with a consecrating power which in the soul of the faithfully responsive becomes devotion. Unless it were in essence at once the life that makes for the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, it could not attain completion among the various groups of men who labour for these eternal values.

At some point unknown to the human soul, because we cannot look down upon man from the point of view of the descending Spirit, the divine life becomes individualised, hence is apprehended by man not as universal Essence but as guidance. The lover of Beauty who forthwith designs a cathedral, models in clay, or paints a human figure, may not be in the least aware that his work bears intimate relation with the works of love and wisdom. Even the lover of the Good may wander so far into the externalities of form as to be blind to the other values. It is well for each to love his work best. But as students of the universal we need to stand on the heights and behold the divine life before it becomes thought in the mind of the scholar, or æsthetic form in the artist's perception, an absorbing motive in the heart of the devotee of righteousness. Thus in theory at least we shall have a source large enough to yield all the fruits of genius. God the giver of all life and wisdom will be the adequate cause; and we shall see in imagination all finite selves grounded in the divine selfhood, thinking because of that Thinker, working because He works.

This, then, is the whole in the light of which we may understand religion as a part. We begin with the eternal cosmos as the manifestation of God whose transcendence is beyond our ken. The eternal world-order is invisible in the heavens, in the inmost consciousness of man; and the religious description is one of several possible accounts of it. The physical or temporal order is existent by means of what we call space, inclusive of all earthly forms of experience. Man partakes of both the eternal and the temporal, and may work for the eternal while immersed in the conditions and necessities of space and time. The truly universal man is one who is able to apprehend this eternal environment, to cognise the principles that underlie all being. On earth he may be known as poet, artist, philosopher, or the man of the Spirit who is too large-minded for any sect.

Yet what is consciously true of the universal man may gradually become true for us all. You and I dwell at the heart of being, too, however humble our calling, however slight our development. The best and utmost that men ever say, ever depict in beauty of colour or form, or manifest in their conduct, is poor in comparison with the living possession. The supreme Reality which in our poor efforts we endeavour to describe is here for each and all in the throbbing moment. This is the universality, the Essence. Our vision of it need not take us from our interest in the temporal, from our individual task. But let us remember, whatever the mode of expression, whatever the product, that the Essence greatly surpasses all the forms in which it is made manifest. We may well carry deep within our consciousness both the ideal of its transcendence and the criterion essential to our special work. Somehow we are all needed to contribute our share to this the universal art of portraying the eternal verities.

Chapter V. The Spirit in Jesus

STRICTLY SPEAKING, the Religion of the Spirit is universal, and should not be limited to any positive type of religion. Yet it is also concrete, applicable to life; and unless we develop its implications with reference to special forms we shall miss its value in part. One of these types may be denominated the impersonal, and of this type we find representatives in all ages. Another is so distinctively personal that it finds the alternative view beset with insuperable difficulties, that is, this view is held to be radically wrong. Hence the well-known appeal to revealed truth as different in kind from all other truth, and the usual views concerning the personality of God, the person of the Mediator; and all that follows by way of contrast with the impersonal or pantheistic conception. It is incumbent upon us to examine this view in so far as it may be said to fall within the province of a philosophy of religion.

We observe, in the first place, that although God is deemed personal by those who feel the necessity of a mediating Son, He is so far removed from man that even in prayer He is to be approached indirectly. The Saviour, too, is infinitely nearer God than man in type; for the strictly orthodox the Saviour is God. Qualification after qualification is introduced until we are led to ask, What then becomes of the Spirit? The Spirit is no longer the

Indwelling but the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, going forth into the world to fulfil a certain office supposably described by the doctrines of the established church. We are told that there are three Persons and yet one God, one Lord; and hence we are left with a certain mystery not to be examined too searchingly but to be believed. Or, perhaps we are assured that this doctrine symbolises the great truth that God is social in nature, hence that the doctrine should not be taken literally. Thus the doctrine becomes a "value" for purposes of worship, just as creeds are employed nowadays by those who no longer take them literally. Again, rival theologies insist in differing terminology that we must acknowledge the Deity of Christ in order to enter into possession of the Holy Spirit. The phrase "the Deity of Christ" has come to have a meaning different from that once assigned to "the Divinity of Christ."

What now becomes of the marvellously rich conception of the Spirit as immanent in all men and imbuing the whole cosmos? What shall we say about the testimonies of enlightened men to the presence of God prior to Christian times, and in later times outside of the Christian church? Must we surrender that view? Are we mistaken in supposing, with the Friends, that there can be an empirical approach to the Spirit as indicated in the foregoing discussions? Must we substitute for the surpassing presence of the Spirit the authority of dogmas which assign a relatively unimportant place to religious experience?

The spiritual history of man leads rather to the conclusion that the Spirit has been present within the soul throughout the ages, and has led to the heights those who through temperament and responsiveness were ready. Hence the prophets of God, from the times of India's great sages and hymn-writers until to-day, have stood above the multitude as mountain-summits rise above the plain, sometimes in groups, again in isolated supremacy. These men are not separated from the masses of mankind save through the clarity of their consciousness. The ideal for all is communion with the Spirit, that each may know religion as a life and understand the principles

of the spiritual life. But so engrossed are the majority of men in the things of the flesh that only the few cognise the things of the Spirit. Hence the province of the seer is to call attention to the glories which all may witness. The teachings of India's seers culminated in the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, those of the ancient Hebrews in the *Old Testament* and other books; and so on through the sacred books which bear testimony to a time when men were intimately open to the presence of God in the heart. Every now and then new leaders and groups of men have been needed to lead the masses back to the heavenly sources. Some of these have appeared within the Christian church, while others have arisen in protest against its formalism and externality. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is one only among manifold instances of recognition of the constant presence of God. Within the church itself this doctrine has been variously espoused. Thus George Fox and the Quakers, with their profoundly workable conception of the Holy Spirit, belong within the church, although far removed in type of thought from the Church of England. Emerson, with his splendid conception of the Over-soul, leading to the practical doctrine of self-reliance, and fostering a high ideal of spiritual individualism, is another representative. The Unitarians, from the time of Channing to the present, have produced ideal representatives; for example, James Martineau, with his exalted ethical idealism, and his unsurpassed style of almost poetic interpretation of the finest shades of meaning in the spiritual life. It might be said in general that the Religion of the Spirit has been fostered in modern times to the extent that man has been given his rightful place in the spiritual life, in contrast with the Calvinistic over-emphasis on "the glory of God."

In the attempt to discover a mode of statement at once faithful to the universality of the Spirit throughout the ages and to the teaching of the Spirit through Jesus, it would be difficult to find a more satisfactory conception than that of the remarkably compact sentence in the *Rules of Discipline and Advices* of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends. Let us note some of the merits and implications of this impressive sentence.

It is held by the Religious Society of Friends that God endows every human being with a measure of His own Divine Spirit, by which He has revealed Himself to His children in all generations; that this Spirit, which although in man, is not of man, is the manifestation in our human nature of the Eternal Word, "which was in the beginning," and which was manifested without measure in the person of our Divine Master, Jesus Christ; and that as we submit ourselves to the leadings of this Light of Christ in the soul, we are loosed from the bonds of self and sin, and enabled to live in conformity with the will of our Heavenly Father.

We note that while this statement carefully qualifies so that there is no room for mystical identification of man with God, it distinguishes without separating; hence ample provision is made for genuine receptivity to divine guidance. For man is endowed with a measure of the same Spirit, and the element of the divine which we have in ourselves is in no sense foreign to that which has been manifested throughout history and in Christ. We may accordingly believe in it to the full, taking it as a clue to all that is highest, without danger of over-estimating ourselves. It is plainly an "endowment," not a production of our selfhood; it is "in" us but not "of" us; and is measured unto us according to capacity and fidelity.

This statement also shows how one may think of Jesus as Son without confusing him with the Father, as if the Saviour had no distinctive personality. Jesus is not separated from us by the theoretical barrier which some have reared who dispute about the nature of substance, but is united with us by the truth that in him the same Spirit resided in fulness which is measured to us in lesser degree. The implication is that Jesus was wholly faithful to the divine will, fully received and as faithfully expressed the divine love; while we receive and manifest less of the Spirit because of adverse conditions within ourselves. Jesus is the example of perfect obedience through complete sonship, is near to us through the inner light, "the Christ within," yet we have no ground for attributing undue powers to ourselves. To be distinguished in measure rather than in kind is to feel ourselves close at heart to our elder

brother, yet to be made aware of our own littleness through realisation of our imperfect response.

Again, a principle of salvation from sin is implied. To be obedient to the light of the Spirit is at once to commune with the Father and to revere the perfect example. Jesus is not a merely historical character who died for us, interceding or rescuing, taking upon himself the sins of the world, as if by so doing he freed men from their obligations; for there is also the "light of Christ in the soul," the guidance which makes the Spirit practical for you and me. Jesus was tempted as we are, met these temptations triumphantly, and was faithful even to the last, finally attaining that state of glorification which made him wholly one with the Father. To obey the leadings of the "light of Christ" in the same manner by which Jesus responded to the Father's will is to find ourselves set free from sin, and from our mere self. Life in conformity to the will of the Father in the spirit of Christ thus becomes the ideal.

There is also a solution for theological difficulties. First we have the idea of God; then the idea of the Spirit as made known in all generations, through the Bible, and in the human soul; and then the thought of Jesus as the Master whose light (the Christ) is made known in humanity. We see the necessity of the Bible and of the complete manifestation, and yet we avoid various theoretical complications. We learn from this statement that the Friends do not deny the Divinity of Christ, but explicitly declare that Jesus was "our Divine Master." This statement does not fall into the trinitarian difficulty by speaking of God as three Persons, yet one; but states the eternal meaning behind the idea of the trinity by teaching that the Divine Spirit is universally active.

Finally, this remarkable statement provides a basis for practical life. The light of Christ did not shine in a far-off age merely, but shines in the human soul to-day, for the same Spirit is manifested in all generations. There is not merely the Light but there are also "leadings," and these presumably apply to the needs of the individual. The idea of submissiveness implies receptivity and subsequent expression in accordance with the guidances. The true

Christian is one who, awaiting these leadings, moves in harmony with them, guided by the inner light in all matters, seeking to live in conformity with the divine will. Since we are endowed with a measure of God's own Spirit we have reason to believe in ourselves, hence it is not resignation that is demanded of us. Thus we are duly accredited without being exalted, the way is made open to all, but there is no reason to indulge in pretensions of any sort. We are not told so much about our sin as to be disheartened, but enough is said to make us aware of our finitude, compared with the perfect standard of "our Divine Master."

The advantage of this statement is that while involving a minimum amount of doctrine it leaves room for a maximum acceptance of the Spirit; and does not deny the specific teachings which may appeal to the reader. Our hope lies in the avoidance of dogmatism, and in allegiance to the Spirit, even at the risk of being called "vague" by those who insist on a particular creed. By this larger allegiance we are made mindful of the fact that the Spirit exceeds all formulations, and is more likely to be adequately suggested by a poetic expression than by the most precise theological system. Again, all love and wisdom are attributed to God who, as Indwelling Spirit, has quickened all men throughout the ages. This is without doubt the universal principle behind the doctrinal demand that one shall recognise the "Deity of Christ." For, practically speaking, the doctrine of the Lord reduces itself to (1) the acknowledgment that there is but one Giver of life, that all efficiency is from this source, namely, from God; (2) that God individuates Himself in the human personality, supremely in Jesus; and, (3) the subsequent Christian conduct in which we show by our life that we attribute all efficiency to God. This acknowledgment implies the acceptance of the facts of Gospel history, so far as these can be determined; but avoids the complications of belief in a special Son independently eternal with the Father, and ambiguously maintaining a peculiar position in the trinity. One may say unqualifiedly that "Christ was God," that is, Christ was the divine wisdom that spoke through Jesus; and yet one need not merge the personality of Jesus into that of the

Father so as to lose "our elder brother." Thus one will have a clue to the interpretation of two types of passages in the *New Testament*, those that express the unqualified wisdom, and those that express the human self of the Master.

It is not the province of the philosophical writer, however, to attempt to settle any of these issues; but to suggest a sufficiently comprehensive mode of thinking to include the Spirit as expressed by the strictly orthodox and by the most enlightened liberals. The orthodox critic may insist that only in his peculiar formulation of the "Deity of Christ" can one truly state the case, and one may respond most heartily to *the spirit* of his doctrine and of his life. One need not quarrel with him when he asserts that the liberals "deny the Deity of Christ," and make of the Saviour "a mere man"; for the lover of philosophical wisdom does not need to quarrel. One may agree with the Unitarian critic who insists that the orthodox brother has "deified Jesus," contrary to the Master's own statements; for one is eager to respond to the Spirit as manifest through both liberal and orthodox, well aware that the Spirit needs both groups of Christians. This non-partisan attitude will puzzle the ardent religionist to the end of time. Meanwhile each of us is free to think and worship as he likes.

Accepting the statement above quoted, as affording an excellent working conception of the Indwelling Spirit, let us say that Jesus represents at once the summit of all manifestations of the Spirit, so far as we know them, and the noblest aspirations and highest conduct of men. His coming marked the attainment of a higher level in the creative manifestations of the Spirit. It would be as erroneous to degrade him to the level of prophets in general as to remove him wholly from men, from all temptations and struggles, and everything human, as if he were purely divine even before his glorification. He stands between, revealing God, speaking for the Father, doing the Father's work. He manifested untainted the glory of the divine wisdom, uttered in tenderest purity the divine love; yet he is an example for you and me. If indeed "the fulness of the Godhead" dwelt in him "bodily," it is

beyond our language to explain what this relationship fully means. We may well avoid the assumptions of those who have undertaken to tell everything about him. Instead of holding an ambiguous conception of his two natures, denying in a second statement what we have affirmed in the first, it would seem far more reasonable to regard him as the greatest prophet of the Spirit, and draw as near to him as we can.

One interpretation of the Deity of Christ turns upon acceptance of a certain view of St. Paul's teaching, supplemented by doctrines established after the second century of our era, and made classic in the various creeds. Another interpretation finds little value in the Pauline view, but makes everything of the inner word of the *Old Testament* read in the light of certain teachings found outside of the Bible. Probably any philosophical reader would admit that the actual text is ambiguous, so far as the letter is concerned. Unless one should accept a given interpretation on other grounds, outside of biblical texts, it is doubtful if one could establish a positive view. Yet this verbal uncertainty is marvellously faithful to the Spirit, especially in the greatest of all Gospels of the Spirit, subject as it is to any number of interpretations if one bring preconceptions concerning the Logos. The term Holy Spirit or Comforter may be as faithfully referred to as "it" as to be mentioned as "he." Corresponding uncertainties are discoverable in the other Gospels and in the Pauline epistles. What is the general inference if not that we should read these writings as Gospels of the Spirit, letting the "the Spirit of Truth" supplement the brief words whose meaning not all the volumes in the world can contain?

Surely the candid reader must admit that each follower of Christ and in a measure each Christian sect makes its own idealisation of Jesus, and that what most of us contemplate is our own ideal. The sort of Deity most Christians have developed out of the Gospels may be far from the idea which Jesus had of himself. Yet there is a sense in which this idealisation is permissible, that is, if it lift us beyond the mere letter into the spiritual meaning. The standard interpretation of the future may be essentially spiritual, hence free

from the critical subtleties which our scholars have multiplied without limit during the past three decades. Meanwhile, the resource for most of us is the simple Gospel.

In the last analysis, we should all be constrained to appeal to Jesus's own words. In the brief record of his life on earth we find, on the one hand, sayings which indicate the faltering of the human will, the almost despairing cry of the human spirit, and a progress leading to the supreme effort to be faithful. But we also find Jesus declaring that even the words he spoke were not his, that he always did that which was pleasing to the Father; hence his unqualified statement, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." God dwelt with men without qualification, we may then say—so far as the infinite Ground of the total universe can dwell in a single human being—Whence the witness to the Indwelling Spirit is complete. Yet for every man who would follow Jesus the way is plain, since the Master revealed the universal law of God, taught men the science of the Christ-spirit.

The Indwelling Spirit, then, does indeed become personal; for God is manifested in personal guise in Jesus; God meets, guides, sustains us all as the persons whom He has endowed with the Spirit. We miss the deeper meaning of the divine presence if we overlook either the personal relation of God to each of us or the personal leadership of Jesus. But we also fall short of the true conception if we neglect the divine science taught by the Spirit in all ages, and supremely in the Bible. It is in this twofold sense, through the appeal to the heart and to the head, that Jesus is the example for those who would live by the Spirit. We shall fail to see in what sense the Indwelling Spirit was more fully manifested in the world if we respond to the mere feeling without developing the implied thought.

Jesus not only exemplified the inmost law of receptivity and obedience, in the relationship of son to Father, in the faithful expression which carried quickening love to men; but explicitly taught men what to do to be wholly faithful to the Father's will through right thought concerning Him. The kingdom of the Spirit, he assures his listeners, is "within," coming without

observation yet in manifold ways which he makes practical by means of parables. The kingdom is central, stands first in rank, should be sought first as of worth in itself; not for the reward, not for oneself. But that which is prior has meaning with respect to what follows, hence there is a law according to which all that is germane is added. Within the sanctuary of the heart there is a secret place where, if one listen and respond, there shall be revealed what the Father has provided; and one may think of the Father in the most immediately human sense, praying to Him when in urgent need as well as in the hour of grateful worship. He who would test any matter, proposal, or desire, has here a standard by which to weigh it. If it meet with the assent of our inward nature in devout receptivity to the divine wisdom, it is right; if the inmost mind dissents, the prompting or plan should not be followed. This applies to all men, all can enter the kingdom of prayer and obedience, all have been provided for. Out from this centre proceeds the straight and narrow way, the way of the cross it may be; but the way which is at once the truth and the life.

It is a simple program, clearly and incisively defined. What are its implications? That all men belong together in a spiritual order or system, since otherwise they could not be provided for by one Father. That the events of the spiritual kingdom are intimately connected. The provision made for my brother belongs with that made for me, and it is possible for us to work together towards the same end. The guidance which the inner light reveals to-day pertains to that of yesterday and last year, it relates to my spiritual welfare as a whole. If I am as faithfully adjusted to the guidance of the day as the apostles were in Pentecostal times, I shall as surely find that the words I should utter will be given me, I shall be as fully protected, and led to do pentecostal works in the promulgation of the kingdom.

Jesus does not utter a code or found an institution. He takes little interest in facts, does not discuss problems. The affairs of the day concern him in the light of the kingdom of the Spirit that is to come in greater fulness. He first lives, then communicates of the life that is his. He touches those who

are ready, and summons to life those who can become his disciples. He performs works that exemplify his teaching, and utters words of power that appeal to the soul. To come into his presence is to come into life, and he associates with any individual who can be quickened through an appeal to life. His indeed is the gospel of life in such wise that truth, words, and deeds are one in spirit.

Note the implications of these principles. The reality of the Spirit is the abiding presence, the presence which has always been with men to sustain them and lead them, although unrecognised. Since all events in the spiritual order belong together, and since all men belong to that order, I may give myself trustfully to it, knowing that there is wise provision for me. To be faithful it is incumbent on me to trust at every point. The essential consideration is the life which enters the soul from the intimately present Spirit. What it means to be wholly faithful to this life the Master has shown by his own fidelity and by the works he wrought.

Have we then a standard which reveals the presence of the Spirit? Yes, in a twofold sense. We have the evidences indicated by spiritual books and teachers who have gone before, and supremely the testimony of Jesus; and we have the living presence within the soul to-day, teaching the same truths in other terms, making known the same laws and the same principles of guidance. If I have not yet had an experience or insight which like the grandeurs of an exhilarating mountain-day stand forth above the common days and years, let me turn to those who have met the inward tests, who have stood in the holy of holies; or, let me turn to the sacred writings which make clear the heavenly way. If as a mere follower my feeble steps have not brought me in sight of the summit, let me cling to the hands of others until I know the way. But by all means let me begin to live for myself. Then I shall learn that the way of history and of the sacred writings is the same as the law even now manifested within the individual soul.

The authority of the Spirit is not lost if we say that each of us may ascend the mount of illumination. The Spirit descends upon us, it stirs within the

heart, and sends us forth to share its blessings. When we have been touched from within, we may turn to the physical organism and find it "the temple of the Holy Spirit." The Spirit is not the merely emotional life, and we may well endeavour not to confuse it with human affections; yet "God is love," and he who has found his Lord may open wide the gates of feeling to pour forth the life of the Spirit. The Spirit is not our own mere thought, and there is a vast difference between theory and genuine religious practice; yet for him who has become aware of the supremacy of the Spirit there is a sense in which every idea is one with God. Nothing is excluded when we possess this interior clue.

Chapter VI. The Spiritual Nature of Man

THE EXISTENCE of what we have called the surpassing presence of the Spirit is sufficient to guide us in the interpretation of the higher nature of man, so far as general principles are concerned. The fact that man is capable of rising above his ordinary mental states in the experience of prayer, worship, the communion on the mountain-top in which he is filled with the divine presence, shows his nature to be such that these experiences are possible. Since all have access to the sources of divine guidance, any one may penetrate to the sanctuary where the inner light shines, each may have a peculiar relation to the Father through the experiences in which one becomes a creative instrument of expression. The spiritual nature of man is such that he can, when he has sufficient incentive, hush his self-activities into silence and listen in the holy of holies; it is such that he can know himself, acquire patience, moderation, control, and manifest tender emotions to his fellow-men. Out of these supreme moments of the soul great deeds are born, great psalms are written. But this is too general and seems to apply to the seer rather than to the average man. Not many are thus vividly aware of the divine presence. Most of us slowly learn to detect the gleams of the inner light, guided by the wisdom of those who see more plainly. Therefore,

much depends upon a philosophy of the human selfhood which shows why communion with the Spirit is possible despite all hindrances.

As we turn to this study of the spiritual nature of man, we emphasise as our starting-point the idea of the Indwelling Spirit regarded as the supreme efficiency, and reproducing the universe in the smaller world of our human consciousness. Experience as a whole is a gift from God who manifests Himself because it is the nature of love to give of itself. To start with this idea and to hold steadily to it is to bear in mind the great truth that each moment is a new revelation of God's presence, hence to remember that life or experience is the test. The essential is to hold to this truth while studying the human activities which seem so varied and imperfect that we often wonder how God can be known at all. Since the Spirit works from within outward as life, our first need is to gain light on that part of our nature which is most central, which may become most spiritually alive.

Yet we cannot overlook the contrasted fact that we ordinarily know man as aggressively seeking his own ends, or as a theorist insisting upon doctrines. We shall find a solution to this contrast through a study of man as an essentially reactive being, dependent on the world as given by experience and upon God from whom he receives life and wisdom. We wish to show that the Spirit impresses man on the intuitive side of his nature; that the Spirit is not first known by thought, then through emotion or the will, but is apprehended as an inmost activity which quickens both emotion and thought, discloses a guidance, illumines the understanding, and arouses the will. That is, man's higher nature is manifold in type, and the Spirit is present to it as a whole. If we interpret this manifoldness in the right way, we shall be able to disengage the elements of the spiritual life so as to put them in the right order, assigning to the heart the first rank without underestimating the head. To establish this position it is necessary to examine other views, for example, those that may be called essentially psychological. These considerations are important because on our view of the human mind will depend the doctrine we accept. If we hold, for example, that the spirit in man is so far

separated from the intellect that all rationalising processes are foreign to the heart, we shall tend toward emotionalism or mysticism, hence we shall deem the understanding an enemy. To put the intellect first and discount the feelings, would be to lose hold of the presence of God as an experience. Or, if we insist upon the primacy of the will, we might overestimate conduct as a test. But if we conclude that the mind is one, however many its phases, we may frankly accept all mental processes, volitional, intellectual, and the rest, taking our clue from the central fact that man's nature has several roots.

We start with the conception of the Spirit as a universal life present to man's whole inner nature, conscious and subconscious. If we could apprehend the Spirit in its wholeness we would no doubt manifest the divine life in a form comparable to pure white light. In that case we could rise above the human instrument which ordinarily divides or interferes with it, just as the sun's rays are interfered with when passing through various objects, dense, colored, or nearly transparent. But, conditioned as we are, we look back from the varied colours and shades of the spectrum to the pure radiant energy whose presence is the source of all light however dim. Looking upward from our preoccupations, habits, eccentricities, and other phases of our mental life that tend to interfere with the pure inflow of the Spirit, two alternatives are open before us. We may hold that the limitations of the human instrument are such that we never can pass beyond them. Or, beginning with the Spirit as incoming life, we may hold that through precisely these conditions God makes His love and wisdom known. The facts of finite life in our modern days are taken to prove the first alternative, the power of faith is seen in its triumphant acceptance of the second.

Let us fully accept the fact that the human mind tends to read into experience whatever has been previously adopted by way of interpretation. Where everybody interprets it is simply a question of the best. Life, in whatever guise we meet it, is known as partly contributed from without, partly responded to from within. Into the personal reaction is likely to enter whatever opinion, prejudice, or conviction the self may contain. Only in

case we hold that the mind is like a colourless pane of glass can we throw the influence of the human instrument out of account. Experience shows that the mind is so prone to intrude its own cogitations that to a large extent each man lives in a little realm of his own. It is almost a truism that: man brings to experience whatever he is, seeing what he is quickened to see, passing by the rest as a blind person might. Essentially reactive, he never meets any sort of experience without making a response, and this reaction must as surely be taken into account in the highest as in the lowest type of experience. Hence even our views of truth, heaven, and revelation are affected. Yet, despite the fact that all this is well known in our modern time, we accept doctrines uncritically as if the human mind played no part either in constructing or adopting them.

When we regard the matter more closely, we discover that it is impossible to single out mere reciprocity on man's part, to separate what he receives from his power to apprehend it. We cannot, for example, describe heat as experienced apart from the sensation of warmth and the awareness of the sensation. Nor can we differentiate mere sensibility from all sense-objects. What we apprehend is a relationship between perceiver and perceived. The merest reciprocity involves a response even if involuntary, and even when we try to be as passive as possible. Hence what we experience, as well as everything we believe that we know, is a result or product, not a mere object in the air, unaltered. There is no sensation of heat by itself, any more than there could be a perceiver without perception. Every experience is a complex of elements. These may indeed be disentangled for scientific purposes, but we never apprehend them separately.

If this is true in the case of physical sensation, how much more true in personal experience. Take love, for instance. We may regard this affection either as our own sentiment, according to the way we feel; or with reference to its object, the person whom love holds dear. But what we mean by love is a relationship inseparable from its partners, and we know that its possession on our part is inevitably affected by the sort of person we are,

also by the accompanying experiences. Ordinarily, we simply love. But if we take thought we note how varied are the responses made to what is called love, according to the disposition and intelligence of the individual. Noting the physical factors in a certain case we say, This is not love, it is infatuation, although deemed the most ardent love by its partners. When selfishness is uppermost, we declare the so-called love to be self-will and passion. The bare cold fact in all cases is that we feel, not the person to whom our heart goes forth, but our *own states in that person's presence*. Yet when the last word has been said, we declare that love is love, that it rises above its conditions and unites man with man.

Now, if into love there enters all that we are, so that our love briefly speaking is our reaction, our spiritual experiences are no less complex. It is not necessary to itemise all the constituents, the main fact being that man's spiritual nature is the inner man engaged in a specific reaction. The mistake we make is in supposing that the particular creed or interpretation of the spiritual life is given with and proved by the experience which leads a person to accept it. The first principle to emphasise is that, while our spiritual experiences may be similar, a number of interpretations may be made to fit them.

Here, for instance, is one who in heart-hunger and loneliness reaches for the hand of a personal saviour. At this time he experiences an upliftment of soul in which he apparently feels the presence and sees the face of the risen Lord. A representative of a certain church approaches with his statement concerning the hunger of the soul and its fulfilment through acceptance of the creed of his church. Vision and creed appear to correspond, and the creed is accepted as the sole truth concerning the way of salvation. To the uncritical observer this is a beautiful illustration of desire and its fulfilment. The more cautious observer, however, throws out the hint that possibly the participant has read too much into the experience. This may well have been a genuine religious experience, he admits, but is there necessary connection between experience and interpretation? Might it not cohere as well

with another faith? A Hindoo, for example, might take it as signifying the impersonal presence of Brahm; the spiritist might infer the presence of an exalted soul freed from the flesh; while the liberal might find no evidence in the experience that orthodox Christianity is true. Our resource is not to play into the hands of authority, declaring that amidst the confusion of tongues the only way is to accept "the one true creed"; but to point out that in any case there would have been nothing to interpret without the quickenings of an experience which should be regarded as prior to all interpretations. This experience may be deemed universal in type, possible to man because constituted as he is.

Modern scepticism, indeed, would deny even this universal element, insisting that we now know so much about the personal equation that we can never be sure there is an object corresponding to our faith. Accordingly, we would be invited to believe that each man creates his private system, his heaven, and his god, merely contemplating his own interior states. It is well to see the force of this extreme alternative. It leaves us with a highly developed and greatly valued effect supposably explained by an extremely meagre cause. Such scepticism immensely magnifies the power of man. Contrast this with the notion once prevalent that we are as worms of the dust feebly permitted to feel the beauty of the august Creator, upon whom all glory should be bestowed.

We cannot, then, declare that God is man's idea, although admitting that each thinks about God in his own way. Nor can we return to the stage of innocence, childlike feeling, and unquestioning faith. These questions have arisen and we must face them. For us the way lies straight through all modern doubts to the mount of illumined reason. To assert that the spiritual nature of man is subjective or subconscious would be virtually to give up the quest, since this would mean that we possess a sort of inward ear capable of listening and reporting to an outer self debarred from understanding. Yet we need not give up the idea of a phase of life less conscious than our ordinary selfhood. Below the threshold of active consciousness we

may indeed be open to the spiritual world, and we may well make large reservations in favour of channels of experience of which we have no cognisance save through the results produced by them. In truth, we must believe that our nature extends beyond the conscious, inasmuch as it is not given us to know the moment or the manner in which the Spirit comes. Yet the fact remains that whatever we do know about ourselves we know by inference from consciousness, by what we find ourselves doing, feeling, and thinking. If the soul were merely or even essentially subconscious, we could never really know anything.

It is plain, however, that one phase of our nature may be uppermost while others are subconscious and that our whole life is a succession of such alternations. The spiritual nature is partly known through the struggle of certain tendencies to gain the ascendancy over others. If there are any more traits untouched within us they must somehow be called into exercise until at last every activity of our nature shall be brought into line with the ideal. In this sense our entire spiritual experience during many years is a development out of the concealed recesses within us into the arena of controversy. What we need to guard against is the notion that our moral and spiritual contests can be settled below the threshold, or while we sleep, by a mysterious part of our nature to which the responsibilities of life can be delegated. However deep the roots of the human will, its decisive activities are out in the open, and there is no way to meet moral issues save to face them.

The same general result follows if we examine the theory that man's spiritual nature is resolvable into a special "sense" or "voice." It is matter of common experience to hear voices, but experience also shows us that we do not always hear aright. Sometimes our motives become confused, or we are left to do the best we may with the wisdom we already possess. A voice is a clue so far as it bears the test of the fruits to which it leads, but an infallible voice speaking in clear fashion every time we question it would leave no room for responsibility. Experience shows that conscience involves

an element of faith, calling upon us to make the venture, to do our best, yet to abide by the consequences. Its authority is not limited to a single utterance, but is established through varied experiences. Nevertheless, we may well give fullest credence to the prompting which wins assent from within, even though in some of us this assent take the form of a voice.

There is apparently no reason for assuming that powers active in one type of experience are wholly quiescent in another. There is no purely active side to human nature, and no merely passive. The same self employing the same mental powers rises through the whole scale from sensuous hatred to celestial love, from physical to spiritual hunger, from muscular to moral deeds. The difference is essentially one of emphasis, as we give expression now to emotion, now to desire, will, thought, character. Thus one might contemplate a heavenly vision in an ecstasy of awe and happiness leading to mysticism, or in Stoic calmness implying rationalism. By disposition one might be intensely emotional, impulsive, impressionistic, or despondent; while through character and training one might be moderate, self-contained, optimistic.

In general, we may say that there are as many spiritual powers as our experiences of prayer, worship, thought, and service, imply. Yet the central clues are few in number. The emotional life with its kinship with passion, and its culmination in heavenly love is one of the chief of these, while the intellect with its careful scrutiny of the emotions is another. Again, we may say that the spiritual begins when we ascend out of the prevalingly personal into the disinterested thoughts and affections. Intensely personal as most of our emotions are, we readily project them into whatever we will to believe; yet what is so free from the private and the selfish as the emotion which prompts to service? No side of our nature is so cold, keen, and disagreeable on occasion as the intellectual; yet through its higher form (reason), we become dispassionate, and attain knowledge of the universal.

Most difficulties encountered by those who endeavour to assign the intellect to its proper place are due to the fact that they theoretically limit

human experience on its spiritual side, or put the intellectual life in the wrong place. No one knows the limits of experience of any sort save through experience. The true order is to live first, feel deeply, then think; not to start with a creed, criticising before we have perceived, or shaping a guidance so as to point toward a plan previously accepted. If we thus give play to our higher sentiments and quickenings, welcoming our guidances, and going forth to service; when the mind is less active in these higher reaches, we may give place to the clarifying light of reflection. Thus it is the province of intuition to lead, to reveal wholes, essences, visions that far outreach present attainment; it is the province of reason to come devoutly after, making no claims, indulging in no self-confident definitions, yet endeavouring to make clearly manifest the rich content which intuition has bestowed.

The surpassing presence of God is most fully apprehensible through experiences of the intuitive type. Hence one turns first to the heart or spirit, the centre where the divine life enters unawares, uniting the soul with the cosmos, declaring the glories of heaven. Then one comes to the will, with its prevailing love, and its responses in social conduct in behalf of the inner vision. If having been touched at the centre one preserve the attitude of the heart, then the idea is quickened by the Spirit, and the intellect is no obstacle. If the will be touched by the heart, its activities are for the sake of others, and the self as a whole is not an obstacle. God may then be said to reside as truly in our understanding as in our heart, as truly in the will as in the emotions. Now we respond as if by instinct, moving straight toward the goal of devoted service. Again, we follow the quiet and orderly leadings of the clear idea. Now we move by faith because we cannot fully see. Again, the will is guided by knowledge of spiritual law. All these are related terms for different lines of spiritual activity belonging to the same self. The true contrast is not (as commonly supposed) between the spirit or heart which feels one reality while the head thinks another, and the will in its unregeneracy wants a third; but between inner and outer in the same experience, the same heart, understanding, or character. To live on

the surface is to think on the surface, and seek superficial ends; while to be touched within, and let the Spirit that touches affect the whole life, is to feel, think, and will in the same spirit. The spiritual emphasis is on the inmost love, thought, or motive. These combined constitute the heart. Their summary is best made in terms of adaptation of the whole man to the Spirit.

Human receptivity, then, is at least twofold, and manifold are our ways of making response. If one of us feels too much, another may not feel enough. If in one the will is uppermost, in another the will is not yet valiantly responsive. One analyses too much, another too seldom. True spirituality calls for a union of these sides of our nature, not for a sharpening of the lines between them. In the well-balanced man the illuminating idea is as eagerly sought as the upliftment of feeling, or the consecrated impulse of will. The spirit is rightfully the leader, just as conscience is the regulative principle in the moral sphere. Without the spirit there is no interior clue, no centre of life-giving power, uniting the individual with heavenly reality. Without the spirit we have nothing on the human side relating us to the divine Spirit on the God-ward side. Hence we rightfully revere the heart as primal, and in a degree ineffable. So rich is the immediacy of our union with God in the heart that we need these various phases of the spiritual selfhood to bring out the beauty of the gifts bestowed upon us. Purity of heart is a test on one side, loving service on another, while intellectual fidelity is a third. The spiritual is never what we feel or contemplate alone, what we love or think about, nor can any mode of social conduct wholly take the place of the silent communion of the individual soul. He who loves from the Spirit is wise, he who is truly wise lives according to his belief. One in essence is the Spirit, one in essence may be our thought, our worship, and the service that springs from both.

What we have questioned in this discussion is not the authority of conscience, not the deliverances of intuition, feeling, or the subconscious mind; but the right of any doctrine to insist upon one of these alone. Our spiritual powers are not distinct, as if one could function without the rest,

but in whatever direction we turn we employ them all. The Spirit speaks to the inmost self and is ready to minister to the whole man. Hence the spiritual standard should be fulness of life. He who is faithful to this standard will be quickened throughout his nature. Or, if unresponsive, it is the whole man who stands in his own light, not the intellect alone. It follows that we need more time both for quiet contemplation and for practical action, we need to yield our wills more fully, and we also need to think more.

Restating our results, we may start with receptivity as first in order. That mode of worship or service is most likely to be faithful to the divine Spirit which involves the truest receptivity at the centre, with humble recognition of the fact that of oneself one can do nothing, with quiet eagerness to obey and to follow wherever one is led. Hence the importance of silent worship, times for inward listening for divine guidance in the sanctuary of the heart. Gentleness of manner and tenderness of speech betoken this inward state, although true receptivity is also consonant with the vigorous utterance which indicates moral strength. Spontaneity is also a sign, indeed spontaneity steadily preserved is almost the same as receptivity. Open-mindedness is its intellectual phase; breadth of vision, tolerance, charity, readiness to change one's mind in the light of further evidences, are other signs.

Next in order, as we proceed outward into the world of expression, is the understanding with all its modes of acceptance or interpretation, varying from simple acceptance to the power of a long-cherished conviction. The understanding contributes all these qualities according to temperament, experience, and purpose in life. For most of us a great deal depends on the first thought we associate with a religious experience, since the mind so readily builds upon, excludes, or interprets the facts as the case may be. The ideal would be—having placed ourselves in the most wisely receptive attitude of which we are capable—to make sure that we derive the full benefit of an experience or guidance, then to use our intellectual powers to describe and express before we begin to explain and interpret. If humility reigns at the centre, the intellectual life will not be proud and cold.

Then there comes the appeal to the will, with its alliances in the emotional life and the deeply rooted prevailing love. To be sure, the will is never separated from the less active operation of our nature which we call receptivity. In truth, receptivity is in essence a quiet centring of the will on an exalted object, the nature of which requires us to exclude other interests for the time; and we are receptive to what we love. But there is a difference between the mystic's devout appeal to emotion, as if contemplation were the goal of life, and the strong moral reaction which bespeaks the uprightness of the lover of service. The moral representative of the spiritual life scarcely lets his left hand know what the right hand does. He, too, might have been a pious monk in a solitary cell, but he loves humanity too deeply. A man may be moral in an accepted sense without caring much for the name of God, or spiritual in a sense which passes current among the self-centred without being notably moral; but man's spiritual nature as we are here regarding it is his moral nature conceived in terms of heart and will.

The forms of expression which these qualities assume differ with the individual. In some, the higher prompting immediately assumes the form of service without the intermediate pause for reflection so necessary to others; while the deliberate person waits to know how the new incentives may be most effectively expressed. Some are so given over to good works that their entire spiritual nature is summarised by the word "love." Hence it is that to visit the fatherless and the widowed, to care for the sick and the afflicted comes to be the essence of the Christian life. But we cannot forget those who, differently constituted, are able through the spoken or written word to explain spiritual principles and instruct the disciple of good works. The one in whom emotional warmth is prominent may seem to be the true type of spirituality. But let us also remember the serene face bespeaking inner trust and a life which blesses, even though unaccompanied by the more obvious deeds of love. Then there are men whose purity of tone is a benediction, those whose genial smile inspires courage and joy. Again, there is a sense of humour which is the saving grace of a spiritually minded

person who might otherwise be unduly saddened by a life of service. The spiritual life has often expressed itself in severe forms implying a splendid consciousness of justice and consecrated zeal. But this sternness may indicate a rigid hold upon dogma fatal alike to the receptivity above mentioned and to the preservation of that spontaneity without which the Christian life is a mere form. To the extent that we are severe, even in the administration of justice, we can scarcely be called representatives of the spiritual life. The sense of humour which comes to our rescue may at least make us tolerable representatives of a type of the spiritual life.

No doubt the highest degree of Christian integrity is consonant with the spare form, the sharply chiseled face, and the incisive mode of speech which tolerates no compromises. But if with this outward form there is commingled an inner rigidity which holds people up to the mark, we hesitate to classify it as spiritual, so easily does it become the instrument of the autocrat. Sometimes, too, there is a nervous tension which urges its possessor to preternatural activity; not because there is genuine zeal to be so active, but because its victim has never understood and controlled it. The listless ways of the easy-going temperament are as far from the ideal in the opposite direction. Hence we look for the well-balanced type, we like to see something more than composure written in the face.

This leads us to the acknowledgment that suffering plays its part in the complete spiritual life, hence to point out that there is in our nature the power to sacrifice, to enter deeply into sorrow. Intermediate in some cases between the early conversion or decisive experience which turns the heart toward religion and the years of fruitful service, there is perchance a long period of illness, of cruel separation, or a bereavement which stirs the soul to the foundation. Heaven may for a time seem exceedingly remote, or God nonexistent. In other cases, it may be that this struggle is itself the greater revelation of God's goodness and love. At any rate, there is a testing period which leads to profound conviction. Suffering and the spiritual life are not equivalent terms, nor need we say that sorrow will always be an element of

religion; yet we must assign a high place to that side of our nature through which sorrow and suffering make their appeal.

On the other hand, there are spiritually minded people who have been in excellent health most of their life, free from sin as sins are usually counted, who pass through a period no less momentous than that of physical suffering. Doubt, intolerance, negative criticism, pride, and many other factors enter in varying proportions into these cases. There may be a struggle with unbelief lasting for years, or an equally long quest for truth in which spiritual incentives play no part. The point is that the emancipating conviction may be born of calm reason, and may manifest itself so insensibly that no one credits it with its true power until the results of years are seen. A gradual conversion of this sort may be far more profound in the end, and may imply much greater strength of character than the relatively sudden emotional conversions so often singled out as the only true signs of the religious life. We are surely wrong if we identify the spiritual nature with the prevailing feminine qualities in either sex. The masculine interest in knowledge is often a more mature expression of spirituality. Humility is not alone revealed in the bowed and penitent heart, but also in the moderation of the patient lover of wisdom who declines to make any claims for himself. We less frequently eulogise the intellectual struggles and virtues because as a rule we who assume to have settled these matters are philosophically deficient.

Not until a man becomes spiritually productive is his full religious nature made manifest. The same dominating temperament which at first impedes the Spirit, reading its emotions into even the most sacred experience, may become the most earnest worker in the kingdom of God. Thus the supposedly cold intellect with its definitions, its creeds, forms, and institutions, becomes the creative or illumined reason of the later stage of development. Not until this stage is attained is it possible rightly to estimate the intellect. This stage once gained, one sees that only through the illumined thought of the individual can the great spiritual truths be made a part of our nature. No

less true is it that only by living in accordance with these truths can they become manifest to the world in such a way as to meet all tests. It would be a false humility which should keep us from the endeavour thus to understand. No less one-sided would be that attitude in which we should permit our spiritual experience or knowledge to remain subjective. The Spirit to which our spirit bears witness is essentially dynamic, creative, touching the whole man and heart, the will as well as the understanding; our response must be productive through both head and heart, if we are really true to our nature.

Richly complex as our nature is, we must take the whole into account if we would attain spiritual truth. The complexity is illuminated by the discovery of the contrast above mentioned between inner and outer. What we call "the spirit" is the immediate side of our nature, the centre which receives guidance, is touched by the inward light. The spirit is also that inmost power of thought through which we clothe the guidance in words, accept and reflect upon it, making it our own. Again, it is the will ready to follow where the Spirit leads, obedient yet dynamically responsive. Thus the idea of the inner centre or spirit gives us an essentially spiritual point of view, that of the divine Spirit quickening the heart and working through man to achieve purposes. In contrast with this, the ordinary processes of thought are intimately associated with the brain and its memories, hence with the external life. Into this external process there enters personal inclination and desire, together with whatever theories we may have adopted. It is possible for our consciousness to become so enveloped in externality that life at the inner centre shall be relatively quiescent. It is also possible for a confusion to occur between inner and outer. But if we know the difference we may check the tendency of the outer to intrude, we may turn from externalities, and give play to this central life. At the centre, one learns rather through direct spiritual perception or intuition than through conscious reasoning. Hence insight becomes the great ideal, that insight which is a synthesis of the several processes of our inmost nature already described, the insight which unites the products of our spiritual nature in one truth. Hence there need

be no conflict between head and heart, none between inner and outer; but a co-operative life faithful to the divine presence, to its sublime truths and transcendent affection, and a responsive mode of expression using the brain as an instrument.

Our analysis accordingly shows that more than one factor is required to make the Religion of the Spirit. The summarising word is love. Man regarded as a spiritual being is essentially social. Hence we must declare any religious theory or mode of expression inadequate which does not lead to spiritual co-operation. The same insight which shows me that I can go to the sources of spiritual power, also shows me that I am a finite being with limitations such that it is my privilege to serve and to supplement others. By accepting myself I also accept my limitations. I am therefore content to do my individual work, to paint, to write, to compose, teach, or give my life in some other form to contributory service. No element of my nature is intelligible alone, nor can I understand myself apart from my brothers, apart from the Spirit who is my life. Well for me if I "worship in spirit and in truth" by endeavouring to give adequate expression to the particular gift, the type of experience, thought, feeling, wherewith God has endowed me.

Chapter VII. The Pathway of the Soul

SOMETIMES WHEN we look upon childhood with its innocence and purity, we wish there were a way to preserve this heavenliness, or at least to recover its pristine character in later life. The way of the world seems so far removed from the paths of gladsome play that we almost question whether the reward be worth the contest. Do we really depart so far from the heavenliness of youth? Or is the soul merely encrusted by layers of conventionality, leaving the simplicity and beauty of natural life where they may again be brought into activity? Apparently, it is the destiny of the soul to descend into the dark places of the world, wrestle with the flesh and with self-will, in order to be instructed, tested, and brought to self-command. It seems reasonable to hold that although tempted at all vulnerable points the essential character of the soul is not changed. A review of the stages through which the soul passes on its way to regeneration reveals strong evidence that this is the case. If we had profounder knowledge of these stages it would doubtless be possible to pass through them without losing hold of the Spirit within us.

The starting-point is found in the thought of the Indwelling Spirit continuously present with all men throughout all time and place, whatever the waywardness of the soul. We may think of the Spirit, thus present as

an inmost activity in direct relation with the heart or centre, producing its results in and through us in much the same way that life in general attains its ends. Life, we know, maintains itself through change, movement towards an end, and through constant renewal of the organism, in which it functions. In accordance with what we know about man's spiritual experience, we may say that the Spirit pursues an orderly, progressive, sustaining course in our lives. If we do not thus take our clue from life we are likely to think of the Spirit as static, or as one who always in the same manner "stands at the door and knocks," seldom eliciting response because of the preoccupations of men. Our experiences tell us rather that even though we are not conscious of growth the Spirit comes in advancing forms of guidance and inner quickening. To speak of the Spirit as "coming," or as "flowing in," is of course to employ a figure of speech; but a figure of some sort is required to avoid the notion of mere quiescence in a changeless centre. It is plain that we are guided whether we know it or not, and that we undergo development through successive stages without having chosen to do so. If wholly ignorant of the great fact that the soul is led by the Spirit along life's pathway, we are likely to oppose the very Power that would bless us. Some know that they are guided, and we may well follow their lead when they declare that the Spirit pursues an orderly course with men.

The problem is to become acquainted with the law of the Spirit's progressive presence so that we may adapt attitude, thought, and conduct to its guidance. At first this seems like an effort to master the comings and goings of the wind which "bloweth where it listeth." But, making allowances for the transcendent activity of the Spirit, we may at least gather evidences of the divine law by noting some of the phases through which the soul passes. We may mark these stages by means of the potentialities quickened within the soul. These are plainly not the potentialities of mere fate or attraction, as if the soul were destined to be good without conscious adoption of moral opportunities. Since these potentialities have meaning only through human

freedom, we may in a degree read the history of God's presence in terms of the responses men make from stage to stage.

There are times, indeed, when every item of experience seems to be attracted to us by a precision equalling that of a railway time-table; for we find ourselves drawn into circumstances that meet our needs, our wants are provided for, and guidance is constantly at hand. Again, we have prescience of what is about to befall us, prophecies are fulfilled, and in many ways we appear to be realising a plan whose details are adjusted in minutest degree. Moreover, those akin are apparently involved in the same plan, for we meet them when there is opportunity for service, and provision is made for the welfare and needs of those working together. The fact that these remarkable occurrences sometimes result in answer to prayer, or when we have sought divine guidance, does not conflict with the possibility of a plan in which provision for these necessities was made long before the request was uttered. Finally, there are occasions when we can hardly escape the conviction that we are not living our own lives at all, but that we are merely granted the power of apparently independent action.

So simple a principle would not, however, seem to explain all the facts. We are by no means like mere magnetised centres of attraction, or mere evolutions or pre-established harmonies. We are complex, we face alternatives. Even when these impressive experiences lead us to wonder whether we really act at all we find it impossible to escape responsibility. A succession of correspondences between need and supply may give place to a period when no clear guidance appears. Whatever there is in our nature that needs to be tested is brought to the surface, meeting conditions that enable us to rise to the spiritual occasion. We have in part produced what is thus raised to the surface, and we cannot escape from life's lessons. The supposed "fate" which we sometimes deplore is the wisdom which leads us steadily to the meaning of these works of our own hands. The events which sometimes coincide to the very hour are most likely to be connected

with our inmost state. Behind all is the Spirit ever carrying us forward as individuals, in groups whose interior conditions and needs are akin.

Presupposing an initial spiritual quickening or conversion, let us pass by the earlier stages of the soul's progress and take up the thread of history at the point where the work of destruction begins. Not until a man passes out of the childlike period of acceptance of tradition is he at all aware that he has been laying the foundations for a series of bondages which must be broken down before he can enter into sure possession of the Spirit. Once a creature of instinct, spontaneous, emotional, free, man now becomes self-conscious, harassed by restraint, perplexed by doubt. Thus changed, man seems to reason that he may well make as much of the self as possible. Hence he gives way to pride, takes abundant credit to himself, asserts his freedom, and declares his independence. With some this means a life of self-centred emotionalism, with others a period of crystallised allegiance to forms and creeds adopted for personal reasons. Still others assert the self through the effort to manage and control. Thus in numberless ways man enters a stage which gives grave concern to those in ecclesiastical authority, but which viewed in the light of man's development is merely transitional.

A time comes forthwith when, tired of criticism and self-assertion, weary of relating every experience to the self, ever analysing and comparing, one longs to return to the spontaneity of unquestioning faith. When the critical activity thus spends itself, and the desire for freedom is strong, one enters the period of destruction. Then one is brought to consciousness of the long series of bondages acquired through allegiance to authority, dependence on externals, compromises with the world, and subservience to conventionality. If the self-absorption has taken an aristocratic form, there is a reaction against exclusiveness, coldness, and haughtiness; hence a desire to associate with people of all types, especially the so-called common people. If there has been narrowness of belief, rigidity, there must be a breaking up of restraints and resistances. If God has been identified with the merely good, while the major part of men were condemned as if not children of the same

Father, a fundamental change of attitude must come about. Hence invidious distinctions of many sorts fall to earth. A corresponding change occurs even in the case of those who, apparently more humble, have concealed their motives, claiming to work solely for the interest of others. If we have become crystallised, it may be necessary to open wide the gates of life, that we may once more be natural, genuine. There is no virtue, however, in mere relaxation; and if we take delight in our escape from restraint we may be compelled to rear new bondages before the work of destruction begins in earnest. Extremes do indeed beget extremes, but the moral is that one should seek the main highway of life and travel thereon.

Nothing could be more painful than the work of destruction if we regard our past with regret, meditating on what we might have done had we known more than we did. He who regrets has not yet begun to be truly free, or to understand the law of development. The soul did thus and so because in that stage of consciousness. Mere self-condemnation accomplishes very little, since one must continue with the same self; and what is requisite is self-integration. The way we trod was the way of the Spirit. Never were we separated from the Father's tender care. The work of destruction is in process because a new period of up-building is at hand. It is the ideal present that should claim our attention.

It is not easy to tell precisely how the iconoclastic work begins. We awaken to the consciousness that our point of view has changed; we become aware of a life that is reacting against our pride and conceit, undermining our self-righteousness, showing up our pettiness. Hence we are dismayed that we have so long been self-centred, amazed that we could be so fond of praise, while ever striving for effects, impulsive, assertive, emotional, or cold and distant. With this change of heart the desire to manage others gives place to the desire to serve them, to follow them in respects in which their experience teaches a lesson. Theories break down right and left, bondages decay, idols fall, conflicts cease. New estimates of life put the whole question of evil in a new light, hence new sympathies arise, and a genuine sense of brotherhood.

With the dissipation of the sense of proprietorship over husband, wife, children, or whomsoever one may have seemed to own, there comes a new consciousness of freedom and a higher idea of friendship. There also comes a sense of detachment, so that while one may still be fond of houses and places there is entire willingness to break connections and go wherever one may most truly serve. This springs up in connection with a gradual transfer of interest from outer to inward things. This transfer involves the discovery that there have been compromises without number, not merely between ideal interests and things financial, the spirit and the flesh; but between love for others and love of self, the love which is of the soul and that which is of the emotions or the body. The work of destruction assumes variations without limit according to the individual.

Or, we may call this the period of humiliation, for such it is for most of us. We are brought low, we cry out as did Job, wishing we had never been born; for we see ourselves as we are and do not like the prospect. This involves keen awareness of mistakes, with the realisation that by a law which cannot be broken we are not only suffering for past deeds but have brought suffering upon others. This phase of the discovery is likely to be greatly prolonged for those who dislike responsibility, while those who frankly acknowledge their folly are more quickly relieved. Whatever the resources that remain to be discovered, however many influences may have produced the circumstances from which we suffer, it is imperative for us to face the situation as if we personally had wrought every result. On the other hand, it is wonderful what a burden rolls off when we frankly admit a fault and take even more than our share of blame.

Theologians are fond of saying that one must have a sense of sin before one is worthy to be baptised or regenerated. But this often means over-emphasis, as if a man must conclude that he is wholly evil. This might be to forget that we are children of God, led along a pathway not of our own choosing. We are driven into this humiliation by the discovery of a higher standard with which we inevitably compare ourselves. It is not self-condemnation that sets

us free, as important as this may be; but the discovery that while we are under the law we must suffer, howbeit the law leads to its fulfilment in love. Some of the most striking cases of conversion turn upon the simple fact that the life of sin has run itself out, and has led without any sudden change to a new experience readily accepted because obviously superior.

When a sudden conversion occurs, it by no means follows that a new nature has been born in the converted person. Traces of the changed nature may be discoverable all through the person's life back to childhood, or the nature which now comes uppermost may be called to the surface for the first time. The apparent miracle in instances narrated by missionaries would probably seem less remarkable if our knowledge of the cases in question should increase. The emotional or other decisive experience might then prove to be simply the climax. Then, again, the weeks and months that follow are the real tests. To attribute the change to the "divine grace" as an exclusive principle, operating only in connection with the "true creed," would be as unfair as to explain the conversion on wholly physiological grounds as the cessation of one set of habits and the beginning of another group. Conversion is in some sense a natural experience involving changes in habits and mental processes, but that does not exclude the operation of spiritual powers. The crucial point may be said to be the idea which strikes home and produces changed consciousness, hence a change of will, followed by different conduct. This may result from so slight an incident as the bestowal of a white flower upon a woman of uncertain character, as in an instance told by Mr. Begbie in his striking book, *Souls in Action*. If the thought which the flower suggests leads to the acceptance of a new ideal, hence to a resolution to lead a better life and to successful attempts to do so, no other force is needed save that of the loving sympathy of the missionary of the Spirit who proves to be a friend indeed.

No one, however, who is familiar with the facts of conversion under missionary auspices would make light of the quickening spiritual consciousness which may suddenly cause a profound change. The cases of

which we sometimes hear remind us of the possibility of which you and I are at times deeply aware: the power to become practically another person by rising up and faithfully doing what we know we ought, the power to realise the living presence of God now, to-day, even this moment. For we can readily imagine ourselves always patient, ever gentle, considerate, loving; and all that the change turns upon is response to the Indwelling Spirit, ever ready to transform us into such states as these. Instead of thus rising to the occasion, we distribute in leisurely manner through the years the regenerative processes which might be concentrated if we fully yielded ourselves to the idea. Great sinners appear to have more self-abandonment than we, hence they are converted as in a flash. But possibly we have erred in our classification of "sinners."

Before we consider what it is to be twice-born we should make sure that we know what it is to be once-born. In general, it is to live a merely natural life, as a creature of habits and emotions, caring for the things of the flesh as ends in themselves; it is to be in the stage of belief, a follower, a devotee of institutions and creeds; to be dependent on mere fact, analysis and inference, without insight, possessing a philosophy of this world simply; externally religious, untouched at heart. To be "in process" means to be discontented, in doubt or conflict, awakening into deeper reflectiveness, desiring social enlargement and opportunities to serve. The regenerative process must already be under way or there would be no destruction going on. Sorrow brings the change to some of us, for it compels us to look within for resources, hence to break for the first time with external bondages. Again, it is a reaction from self-centredness and introspective individualism brought about when self-will reaches its limit. Some must be violently shaken and condemned, or otherwise brought to terms, before the change begins. But there is no reason for singling out the emotional change any more than the intellectual response. What we mean when we speak of the new birth is an experience or idea which, appealing to one side of our nature, at length wins its way with all. The new attitude implies a contrast such that the self

can look back on what it was, comparing new and old. A changed attitude means a new centre of equilibrium, hence many responses of heart and will, in idea and conduct.

The ecclesiastic believes that only through baptism and repentance, under the auspices of the church, can the great change come; but investigation outside of the church leads one to believe that it is a law of our spiritual nature. It may begin in a withdrawal from human society preparatory to a life of productive activity. It may start in the plain-speaking of friend or critic. Some are touched when they at last know what work means under degrading conditions, or as a result of philanthropic service in the slums. The quickening impulse may come from within the personality when, after a period of depression, illness, or relative idleness under conditions that take the life out of soul and body, one awakens into a new epoch fired by unquenchable resolves. Love may bring it, also loyalty to a friend. There are so many ways in which people make the change by the aid of nature, books, a rest, a change of work, that it is impossible to classify the causes or influences under a single head, not even when they are prevailingly mystical and indicate an interior vision of an unusual character.

No less significant are the outward signs of rebirth: the altered facial expression indicating newness of life, the outgoing love, sympathy, pity, compassion, and the kindly consideration for others which takes the place of self-centredness. With these changes there is likely to come an increasing honesty of speech, more righteous judgment, less sarcasm and raillery. One dwells on these points the more in these days because we have come to believe that an interior vision is not the sole test of regeneration.

Nevertheless, the discovery of the inner life is in many cases the most impressive sign, for example, when one who has never made a prayer moves the lips for the first time in response to an inward longing to pray. The signs of a deep interior change are as many and as varied as the causes that lead to it. Guidances of an impressive character begin to come, also insights into the spiritual wholeness of life, and a conviction that all events work together

for good. Again, detached phases of the self are integrated, old phases are brought into subjection, or transmuted. One begins to understand much that was obscure, and to explain events by principles not dependent on personal interests. There also comes to those who are quickened more deeply the ability to return to the centre, recover the essential conditions of religious experience. With this power there comes an increasing freedom from external circumstance, contentment with the opportunities life brings. In some cases the matter might be summarised by the one passage, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," hence the love of Christ becomes the watchword for daily conduct. Others would say that it is the discovery that there is one Power, however named, the conviction that God is not alone the prime mover but the sufficiency whose purposes include all activities whatsoever.

How many are ready to go still farther and, having put themselves in conditions where life has free access to them, actually welcome the tribulations required to take from them all that does not pertain to the Spirit? St. Paul bids us "rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience." If we know at last that although there is a law of the flesh working misery so that when we would do good evil is present, nevertheless there is also a law of the Spirit which brings life and freedom, it should apparently make no difference what the transmutation-process brings. For in consciousness we may walk "not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Paul assures us that "the mind of the Spirit is life and peace." The advantage of Paul's statement is that while there is a deep sense of sin, of the lusts of the flesh, and all the forces which a person must encounter whose nature is as strong as his, there is also a deeply impressive, overwhelming consciousness of the love of God, the power of the risen Christ, the strength of the faith created in us by the Holy Spirit. No one is more keenly aware of the struggle with our carnal nature than he, and a man of his ability must have had very much to yield before he could be obedient; yet over all he places the peace of the Spirit which overcomes and fulfils through love. "O wretched man that I am," he cries, "who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" But

at once he says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Again, he bursts out with the exclamation, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God." The great consideration is that we have "the mind of Christ," that we may be transformed through the renewing of our minds from within.

Plainly, the first great sign of the new birth, according to the master apostle, is this consciousness that the truths of the heavenly life are real, the realisation that "the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God." Then indeed may we bless those who persecute us, "bless and curse not." Then in truth may we become fervent, serving God, "of the same mind one toward another."

The chief need for most of us is a working method. We need to be shown how to connect this "mind of Christ" with our daily consciousness in such a way that it shall control our judgments. The marvel of the unsearchable wisdom over which the apostle exclaims is its unceasing manifestation as if ever created anew. There are some minds so constituted that they seem literally to dwell with this perennial upwelling of the immanent Life, bespeaking its wisdom, declaring its love. For them the real spiritual life is not even the regenerative process of which we have spoken, much less the externality of ordinary worship and service; the reality is the upspringing Life itself of which human experience seems a mere product. Hence the clue is taken from the more interior process of thought which reveals truth by flashes of insight. It is no longer a question of sin or suffering, or even of error and doubt; for the lessons which these teach have in large measure been learned. It is still necessary for old material to be shuffled off, for old forces to be conquered; and all this requires time. But life from the centre has begun, and no one who is aware of that life is likely to become enveloped in the transitional process as if that were the reality.

Sometimes in the early morning hour before the activities of the day begin, one attains glimpses of the lives of people, insights that are so much more keen that they throw ordinary judgments out of account. Before this

inward light the disposition or temperament becomes transparent, so that the central motives are seen, also the causes that have led people where they are, and the forces at work tending to overcome the imprisoning conditions. One is able in a measure to turn the search-light of truth where one will, discerning the heart. One is to a large extent an observer of an inner stream of thought whose tendencies are not of one's choosing, and with which one has no disposition to interfere. Thought in these terms is a process of receiving life that quickens, not a process of analysis and inference. A further stage, one sees, would be called inspiration, and one realises what it means to be a scripture-giving personality. In this further stage one would speak, not as oneself, but for the Spirit, not argumentatively but with vitalising conviction.

Out of these deeper insights there grows a mode of life to which the interior process of thought is a clue. As important as it is to detect the interior gleams of light and to judge by them, the ability to listen to these inward thoughts and to live by them is far more important and difficult; for although one sees that there is one Efficiency manifested within all processes, touching the lives of men, shaping them into its uses, guiding them into the fulness of life, yet there are multiform hindrances within the self, so many in fact that the self seems at times utterly worthless. Each in his own right must make the great discovery of this process of reflection, so rich that one would gladly drop everything else merely to observe and listen, and no one can tell another all he would like to know in order to make the discovery. One realises that the trouble all along has been absorption in externalities, in one's own self as if it were really efficient; hence that the great resource is to have few plans, to make few preparations, and to hold oneself open to whatever may be given by the Spirit. The difficulties enter when, turning from the process of reflection for a time, one realises how much there is in daily life that appears to be in entire conflict with fidelity to the divine guidance.

Entire faithfulness to this interior life means complete responsiveness of spirit to the Indwelling Spirit, without desires or ambitions of one's own; entire freedom from anxiety, distrust, annoyance; hence peace and rest at the centre, with openness of heart on all occasions. Such readiness is of course still largely an ideal, hence the utmost we succeed in doing is to allow a few more activities to be brought into line each year. To let the Spirit work through us of its own good pleasure is no slight attainment, since this means willingness to have every so-called social wrong adjusted in God's good time, also the cessation of all impatience and officiousness. It also means willingness to wait when the next step is not clear. Yet one is greatly mistaken in reading the law of the inner life if it does not lead its devotee to work even more steadily than those who adopt external methods of social reform.

Out of this obedience at the centre there springs a kind of service which is constantly subject to misunderstanding; for the man who brushes away hypocrisy and speaks to the point with justice and truth is not always welcome. Yet this is only the negative side of the matter. The positive is that he who listens at the centre discerns the heart and is able to give of "the living bread" that feeds those who have met sorrow, those eager to know themselves and to find the Spirit. Those who thus come have perhaps consulted the clergy and have been turned aside with the dictum that it is not the minister's province to explain individual cases. They have besought their friends only to find that the subject is changed when spiritual matters are mentioned. In contrast with this evasiveness, it is indeed the province of one who has in some measure found the Spirit to do his best to explain individual cases. If one is brought to a difficulty one cannot meet, one must grow in wisdom so as to meet it, listening more faithfully at the centre to hear a profounder message. There is a vital relation with heavenly things into which the soul may enter to gain this greater wisdom. This vital relation includes the eternal order of being, hence it brings knowledge of man's future state. The desire of the one who needs help is father to the thought, and brings its corresponding guidance. The Spirit manifesting through us

quickens the longing in the one person, and the wisdom to fulfil it in the other.

When in personal need the same resource is at hand. Whatever one has to meet, one may commit the matter to the inner guidance, awaiting the developments that will come at the proper juncture. One need not seize hold of the inner process as if it might slip away. Yet something more than mere quietude is called for, as if in one's own might a person were to become quiescent; it is the Spirit that gives calmness and control of the right sort. To watch every feeling and thought would be to miss the true thought. The art of genuine receptivity and co-operation is ever the art that conceals itself.

The ideal is to become filled with disinterested, quickening love, the sort that radiates through the personality and shines in the face. Such love is as willing to utter the truth that touches to the quick as to speak the moderate word that comforts. The one who manifests it holds himself open to express what is called forth for another's good. This is the love that gives life, arousing the dormant feelings and calling back the spontaneity in those who have lost touch with life. It inspires the wonderful thought that if all on this earth could be united in its power the beings who are more advanced than we could lead us in groups, instead of guiding here and there a solitary individual who is striving against odds to lead the heavenly life on earth.

Is this ideal too high for this earth? One does not mean a mode of life to be strained after, as if one were to hold the will up to a standard above the life of common men; but in part a return to life as found among simpler folk, the honest-hearted, natural type, coupled with a thoughtfulness which those people do not possess. Every one of us longs for such a return, typified by those joyful times in the country when we yield our tensions, unbend, and give way to a spirit of play. Ordinarily, we abound in constraints, hampering attitudes; we are unyielding, afraid to let go. Meanwhile, there is energy within us which we might use, pent-up feelings that need expression, capacities that have not been developed. If we can yield the physical organism to the relaxing warmth of the sun's rays, why can we not yield this

structure of habit, preconception, and conservatism which we have reared to our spiritual detriment?

The supreme resource which thus awaits our response is the Spirit which, native with us, is often covered over by layers of conventionality, bondages to things and people. It is not lost, not even in the worst of us, and it is recoverable even in the most creed-bound and self-important. Nor is the human spirit in its childlikeness destroyed, but whatever noble influence has come into the child's life is there in the form of latent associations which may be aroused. To discover and express the Spirit again is not merely to grow, or to experience a rebirth, but also to realise the Spirit as an inseparable possession. Let me then take myself out of the mere whirl of time, and rest in this eternal Reality which knows "no shadow or turning." Let me delve beneath the mere facts of my natural existence, with its complexities, and the inferences by which I have long guided my life; and let me discover once more the pristine intuitions which I have lost hold of for a time. I shall surely find my way back to the spirit within me if I truly desire to be led by the Indwelling Spirit.

Summarising, let us state the underlying principles on which this faith rests.

First and last is the truth that God dwells with us, sustaining and leading us with a wisdom adequate to meet every problem, with power to achieve every victory. Then comes man's ability to become aware of the intimations of the divine presence and, discovering these, to let them grow from more to more. This implies a recipiency even more profound than we can at the moment be aware of, but also a power to know the divine guidance when it has become one with the human spirit. With this there is the ability to check whatever might impede the manifestation of the divine guidance. Granted the recipiency, and the ability consciously to follow the life that develops through it, our entire conduct may then be brought into line.

Then there follows the law on which we have dwelt above: the Spirit leads men through a series of experiences to the individual and social goals for which we exist. There is a pathway of the soul, there are wanderings, bye-

paths, vicissitudes; and amidst all there is freedom to err, to take a bye-path for a highway. But there is also unceasingly present with us the guidance which seeks to turn every error into the truth that corrects and fulfils it, and to overcome every mistaken deed by emphasising the good. Therefore, the significant truth is not the freedom to sin but the forgiving, all-provident Spirit which knows how to meet every instant of waywardness, and to turn every wandering moment into the fulfilments of its purposes.

Furthermore, the leadings of the Spirit include all men as members one of another in a relationship so minute, detailed, and complete that we should not be surprised at any juncture if supply and demand correspond with mathematical exactness. Some are aware of the social promptings which lead them to meet another at a precise moment, or with exactly the word, the deed, or service required. But the majority of people are conveyed along by the divine tide without knowing the meaning of the round of experiences through which they are passing.

Again, there is the law of adjustment such that, for those aware of the existence of the inward light, it is possible to walk by its shining, seeking its guidance for thought, its incentives for the will, its inspiration for conduct, so as to be free from the frictions and conflicts ordinarily besetting those who are unaware. This does not mean the entire absence of suffering, or the cessation of effort to overcome obstacles. Faith is constantly called for, patience is demanded at every turn. The peace which this attitude of adjustment produces is a growth, not a gift out of the air, and to deepen it one must meet new tests. Adaptation to the leadings of the Spirit means, taking matters under advisement, quietly endeavoring to discover the way, and listening for the lowly message which the heart hears in its moment of deepest consecration. Sometimes the way is clear for some distance ahead, and every step avails; again, one is eager to advance but must await developments so long that one is tempted to cast aside the guidance-principle and adopt another method.

There is indeed a rebirth of the soul underlying what is called conversion, baptism, salvation through confession of sins or through acceptance of right doctrine; but we are here concerned with the leadings of the Spirit all along the soul's pathway. It is possible not only to "die daily," but to be born anew each day. This, like the prayer "without ceasing," may be termed the true process of regeneration. It corresponds with the upwelling of the divine life from within the inmost recesses of the soul, when there is need; and in fuller measure with the surpassing gift which we have taken as the standard. The figure of the "upwelling life" suggests that the Spirit insensibly enters our thought whenever there is responsiveness; the surpassing gift far more rarely descends upon us on those great creative days of the soul when we have insights into the territory of the Spirit, realising as in a flash the benefits of months and months of steady advance toward the ideal. To the extent that this life flourishes within us we are lifted out of mere routine into the realm of values, we are less dependent on the thoughts of the moment, less swayed by any present experience. Thus in the end we realise that more depends on what permanently is than on that which becomes. Thus in the end we see that it is not alone a question of our origin, or of the end toward which the Spirit is leading us; but a question of the eternal Presence through whose love we are children of God.

Chapter VIII. The Value of a Liberal Faith

IT IS well at times to pause in our pursuit of life and truth to consider what a marvellous treasure we possess in the Religion of the Spirit, what blessings this faith confers, what opportunities it affords. First there is the inward assurance that the Spirit really exists, not that God is merely believed to exist, or that the Absolute is logically conceivable as a necessity of thought. This means that there are resources on which every one may draw, evidences in actual experience which any one may verify in real life to-day; it means that you and I are ready to put every item of belief to the test by living in accordance with this conviction. Then there is our faith in the divine guidance as revealed by the inner light, made known directly to the individual, and touching with ineffable beauty the moments of silent worship. Out of these guidances the conviction comes that all leadings belong together, that they unite us all as brothers; hence that there is provision for all occasions, a way out of all hardships. This conviction in turn inspires inner peace, patience in awaiting developments, simplicity and purity of heart, moderation in all things, the absence of haste and the desire to coerce or manage people. Surely, there is every reason for composure, gratitude, and contentment.

These possessions of the heart lead to a general view of life. The modern doctrine of the divine immanence strengthens and enriches the older faith

in the Indwelling Spirit. The fundamental emphasis on the inner life finds further support in philosophical idealism with its profound interpretation of the facts of self-consciousness. Then there are the confirmations of recent psychology with its doctrine of mental activity implying the fact that the will is fundamental. To this may be added the new insights we have gained into the power of ideals with the subconscious responses which they arouse. This psychology leads to the placing of more emphasis on minute particulars, hence enables us to give more attention to mental dispositions favourable to spiritual guidance. The doctrine of the inner light is indeed far more than merely psychological, but it is reinforced by the practical bearings of psychology. Our age in general is practical, insists that a doctrine shall prove itself by its works. The theory of the inner light and its effect on the life of the individual is surely a capital exemplification of this practical test.

Again, this is a dynamic faith, tending to make the individual more efficient in everything he does. Taking the clue from the inward fight, with its clarification of the personal life, one is able to adopt more direct means of social service. While this faith quickens moral zeal and awakens a more ardent longing to succour the needy and distressed, the tendency is to employ spiritual resistance rather than external force; hence the reformer's ardour is transmuted into higher forms of power. More stress is put upon the efficacy of love than on visible changes and directly tangible results. The reformer's work thus tends to be of the quiet, systematic kind that aims to achieve far-off ends in the fulness of time. The moral uprightness is no less pronounced than in those who are anxious and disturbed, those who place such stress on external conditions; but it aims to begin with causes, to produce permanent changes. The devotee of the Religion of the Spirit knows how to put himself back into the conditions in which he was aware of the divine guidance, hence when there is need for light he endeavours to penetrate far enough into the inner world to participate in work that is worth while. Moreover, the individual guidance is merely preparatory to its social expression through service, therefore it implies a method of

thought and life. Conduct, not doctrine, thus becomes the final test in a thoroughgoing sense of the word. Active co-operation, not individual enjoyment of the serene life, being the implied principle, a resource is found in this dynamic faith in contrast with the "invertebrate optimism" of those who merely contemplate. Spiritual resistance thereby endeavours to prove its superiority by silent yet constant diligence. The ideal, in brief, is that of a man so filled with the consciousness of the Indwelling Spirit that those who are in need shall feel the power and love even in his presence, and receive benefit through accompanying acts of service.

Surely, these possessions are so great, the privileges so many, that we have reason to look for constant and increasing results. Such a faith should be able to spread abroad, if not as rapidly, at least with greater effectiveness than other teachings. It is important, then, to consider why, with this splendid heritage, the work of living by and inculcating the faith is not always carried forward as vigorously as might be; for here as in other fields there are people who fail to appreciate the possibilities open before them.

It is of course plain that missionary methods are of the past, so far as emotionalism is concerned; yet the Gospel is no less true than when preached with splendid results by evangelists who gave themselves fully to its spirit. The transition to a more rational point of view is incomplete unless those who believe they have firmer possession of the Spirit are able at least in equal measure to quicken the hearts of men. We cannot of course preach "the blood of Christ," we cannot sing the old hymns with effect, nor can we give ourselves to any special terminology as if everything depended on acceptance of specific doctrines phrased in a peculiar way. We have learned once for all that men of contrasted types must be reached by different methods, in various terms, and by workers of more than one school; hence we are unable to give ourselves resolutely to a single mode of service. Unless on our guard, it may sometimes happen that we who possess teachings which the world greatly needs will be found doing almost nothing to spread the faith.

It is an interesting fact that sometimes in a group of people of a liberal type those are working most actively who have brought their zeal from an evangelical field. This suggests the possibility of a more general assimilation of the evangelical spirit in the progressive forms of a liberal faith. It would even seem possible to transcend doctrinal differences and for all who believe in heavenly realities to work together, letting spirit speak to spirit. What is needed on the part of evangelicals is willingness to subordinate everything to the love of God and love for men. Meanwhile, it behooves the liberal to consider still more thoughtfully the reasons which sometimes keep the liberal from working with an earnestness equal to those consecrated missionaries who hold that the soul must be saved while there is yet time on earth.

One result of liberalism in its transitional stage is a diffusion of power which would have been concentrated had one continued to sustain a doctrine deemed the sole representative of Christian truth. When it becomes known that there are various points of view, diverse types of religious experience and thought, and many roads to the goal, it is natural for the liberal to take interest in them all. Hence the concern for souls gives place to the more comfortable persuasion that all men, being sons of God, will sometime be enlightened. Then, too, one may learn of many religious leaders who have exemplified the ideal of self-sacrifice, of many books besides the Bible which have inspired mankind; and for a time this may mean neglect of the faith that "comes not to destroy but to fulfil." Again, modern scholarship inevitably calls more attention to the letter of the Bible, hence to modern critical problems without number; and, unmindful of the Spirit, one may criticise those whose knowledge of the Scriptures does not coincide with the latest researches. Others among liberals who once held a dogmatically orthodox view have not yet overcome their reaction against the church that proved illiberal; hence to mention orthodoxy is to call forth from them a volume of critical comment. Thus the liberal may for the time being draw lines of exclusiveness as sharp as those of the conservative whom he disparages.

So much attention may indeed be given to the intellectual elements of liberalism that the devotee becomes as formal and crystallised as the doctrinaire. When liberalism becomes a habit it may be as dead as the orthodoxy against which it rebelled. The inference does not of course follow that liberalism is thereby proved false. It is a question of temperament, and of the modes of thought or conduct which have become ends when they were meant to be means merely. The devoutly orthodox person who sincerely accepts his faith as final but who unqualifiedly gives himself to the Spirit so that his formalism is no obstacle is indeed an ideal representative of religious zeal. One cannot too strongly emphasise the fact that the example is often set by the consecrated missionary who wholly accepts Christ as saviour and the Bible as the literal word of God, and who is accordingly able to quicken people to whom the average liberal could scarcely appeal at all. Such an appeal shows, for example, the efficacy of the zealous Christian's prayer to the saviour, his conviction that God has become incarnate in one son only, and the power of his devoted love. Yet what all this signifies in the last analysis is the supremacy of the fruits of the Spirit, and these may be supreme in any faith, amidst diverse terms, and among people radically different in type.

When we turn to the liberal consecrated by the same love for humanity we find the same power, with corresponding results. To say this is to admit that the true test of salvation is love for humanity springing from love for God, whether the creed be orthodox or liberal. If the religious spirit has not passed beyond the doctrinal stage, in the case of the orthodox, it is sure to be hampered by narrow partisanship and dogmatism. If it has not passed beyond intellectualism in the case of the liberal, it may be equally narrow and autocratic. What carries this spirit beyond narrowness in either case is that love which thinks first of the brother man in his need. Hence we are almost solely concerned with human types and their modes of response. We might almost say that it is immaterial what the doctrine is, provided that it does not stand in the way but affords a good working basis for the

efficient realisation of divine love, since the human essential is intellectual and volitional concentration dedicated to an ideal.

The corrective of inefficient liberalism is to be found in a return to a more concrete mode of thinking and working. To believe in the Spirit in a merely general sense is not enough; for, comfortably placed in life, it were easy for the liberal to lapse into self-complacency. It is not sufficient to believe that every man has access to the immediate sources of divine power. There is need of a standard centring about the surpassing presence of the Spirit, a way to find that presence in greater measure, a truth inspired by it, and a mode of life to pursue. There is need of assimilation in fresh terms of the great teachings of the scriptures and the Master in such a way that the Spirit shall stand first. Thus the Spirit may once more become concrete, incarnate. Thus the interest which liberalism has for a time bestowed upon man in general may be brought to a focus in the definite consciousness of the day's opportunity for service.

This is practically what occurs when one who has unqualifiedly accepted Christ thereupon gives all the glory to God, throwing the personal equation out of account, and humbly praying to be used by the Holy Spirit. This consecration implies an openness of heart, a willingness to be led which makes the individual truly efficient because less self-conscious. The corresponding dedication of the self in the case of the liberal makes of liberalism a means, and it may become a far more effective means to the end since it is free from the outworn beliefs by which the old orthodoxy was encumbered. Surely, the discovery that in any case the efficiency rests with the Spirit should inspire the liberal to make his less obvious methods as effective as the emotionally spectacular methods that once prevailed. There should be no reason why the liberal cannot as fully give himself to one doctrine as though strictly orthodox. He may give himself to the conviction that the Indwelling Spirit is working through all men for the establishment of the kingdom, that the Spirit works most effectively when there is most consecration; and that it needs every one of us in this vast field of the world

where the harvest is so plenteous, the labourers so few. This means that the liberalising work verging on iconoclasm long carried on by the Unitarians is not the work of foremost importance, as necessary as it may be to overcome dogmatic orthodoxy; but that the Spirit should lead in paths of service, using the intellect as an instrument merely. In the case of the Friends it means more activity in place of an undue emphasis on the inner life.

Plainly, the way lies forward, not back. We cannot forget what we have learned, cannot cease to be liberal and free. What we can do is to find the third or higher attitude which unites the faith of the first stage of spiritual experience with the knowledge of the second or critical stage. We may cease to proclaim the fact that we are liberal and free; and endeavour instead to feel the love, concrete, personal, divine, which touches the hearts of men, whatever they believe and whatever we believe. We should overcome the pride and satisfaction which liberalism sometimes begets, breaking out of the ruts, habits, modes of thought which have turned us aside from the Spirit. We may well seek to be quickened anew, to be put in quickening touch with life, even if this should mean entrance upon a period of destruction in which every one of our liberal acquirements is assailed as liberalism once assailed orthodoxy. Our changed attitude may then lead us to see in all men the divine uniting with the human, although acknowledging the Spirit in Jesus in a supreme sense. We may once more assign the chief place to the Bible among books that reveal the pathway of the Spirit, although admitting the value of other records of the spiritual life illumined by the inner meaning of this one. We may also turn as definitely to the Father in our silent communion as though uttering audible prayers. Beholding in all men the Christ struggling for expression, we may employ direct and constructive methods of service, instead of berating men for their sins.

Doubtless, one of the strong points in favour of evangelical methods is the fact that the earnest worker comes to his task equipped with a system of teachings unquestioningly accepted, hence he is less dependent on the thought of the moment. Even in his prayers and addresses he starts from

and expounds a view already worked out in fulness, applicable to every occasion, requiring only the appropriate text from scripture and the right passage from the prayer-book. On the other hand, the liberal is apt to carry a consciousness replete with questions, with all the uncertainties which this attitude implies. This need not be the case if the liberal has thoroughly prepared himself for his work. Such preparation is in accord with the conclusions we have reached in the foregoing discussions.

As matter of fact the evangelist whose consecrated zeal so impresses us when it is a question of reaching the denizen of the slums, is able to extend his activities only so far as his simple faith reaches. The well-trained orthodox theologian may be chiefly informed in ecclesiastical and doctrinal history, not in life. Acquaintance with the theologies of the past is not for a moment to be compared in value with our modern psychological knowledge, its minute insights into mental life, the light it throws on different types, the opportunities it affords for the understanding of the spiritual life of man. This latter knowledge shows that salvation or regeneration, like any other process that is fundamental, pertains to the whole individual, heart, head, character, social life, and the physical organism. While a simple guidance might lead the worker to make a direct appeal to another's heart, in the long run there is need of that knowledge which solves the problems of the deeper life. The demand for this knowledge becomes the more apparent when we realise that our inner nature has more than one root, that we have varied experiences explicable not by the thought of the moment but through wide knowledge and the comparison of types.

It might then be possible to exaggerate the importance of the immediate presence of God as cognised by a given individual. If in that presence there is the life that applies to and quickens us in the hour of need, there is also the constancy which knows no variation. The first is discoverable through present experience, the second requires thought. Lovers of the divine wisdom are apt to neglect one or the other of these great principles. The fulness of spiritual efficiency calls for consideration of them both. There is

no feeling, no experience that tells so much about God as may be learned by comparison of successive experiences and the truths which they teach. The supreme revelation of personal experience is subject to correction, is surely open to enrichment, when put in relation with the Gospel, and in the light of God's messages through the centuries since the time of Jesus.

Earnest Christians long believed that God was so far changeable that He would alter a plan, or interfere with the course of events when besought to do so. Indeed, the underlying assumption of many a prayer sent up to heaven to-day is that God may be dissuaded, as if He were subject to passing caprice and insistent demand. It was not until our modern day when emphasis began to be put on evolution that a firm philosophical basis was found for the immutability of the divine nature. Now, we argue that if the sum-total of energy operative in the cosmos is ever the same, the laws universal, the system of things uniform, there is every reason to fold in God the ultimate Being in whose changelessness all this regularity is founded. Hence in our day we have dispensed with the local views of God's kingdom that prevailed before men believed in the immutability of law, we have learned to penetrate behind appearances to reality. In the case of the divine justice, the facts interpreted so as to show that God is eternally just are far indeed from mere appearances. We believe in the mercy and love of God not because the experience of the hour makes these qualities plain. Oftentimes we look forward even to the future life in order to believe that all men shall receive their due at last. In many other respects our thought takes its clue from considerations very remote from the present. It might be laid down as a general principle that he is best able to read the present guidance who is least in subjection to facts and appearances close at hand.

In Chapter III. we did indeed conclude that the presence of God in the experience of to-day is more real than the divine existence in the past. Yet we emphasised the highest moments spent in that presence, those capable of yielding a criterion. Again, we saw that much depends on our ability to interpret experience, and interpretation supposably summarises the best

that we have learned in a lifetime. If the Spirit is a universal Essence tending to quicken all alike, then it is temperament, habit of thought, mode of life, which differentiates the presence for each individual. We like to believe that God also has a purpose for each of us, and that the guidance of the hour corresponds to the need of the hour; but we discover this purpose through years of experience and comparison, through the tests of faith, and the thoughts that lift us out of the present in a vision of life as a whole. Thus the one who grows in knowledge of the divine purpose becomes less dependent on the mere present, lives more in the realm of ideals, hence more in the realm of constructive thought in contrast with transient feeling.

Perfect receptivity and obedience would be required to render a man open to guidance so that he would know its full import in the present. In actual life we are not always receptive in the same degree, and much thought is required to make allowances for all the factors that may influence our consciousness at times. To adjust ourselves to this world, we adopt means to ends, we make engagements, and settle many matters to the best of our ability. Subject to being misled in our zeal, our unreadiness, or our personal desires, we learn only through mistakes and fluctuations. Our best guidances often apply rather to the next move than to the morrow; and whether or not we have the willingness to follow where faith shall lead depends to a large extent upon our principle of interpretation. The guidance of the hour is not necessarily the sole authority but may be acceptable chiefly because we are able to connect it with many promptings that have gone before. Thus if we keep in touch with life we may ascend from the hour to the year and to whole periods of our experience, from the mere experience to its meaning, the law which it exemplifies, and the universal principle which may be taught to others.

The inspiration of the moment is most likely to be of pure quality if there has been long and faithful consecration. The value of such utterance increases according to the intellectual and spiritual equipment which the speaker brings to the service. One who speaks effectively as prompted at

the time contributes more subject-matter from his own life and thought than is commonly supposed. We eulogise intuition, inspiration, and revelation largely because our psychology is imperfect. If we knew the natural history of intuitive utterances, we would place more emphasis on the quietly reflective thought which gradually gathers its data and awaits a fitting occasion. To say this is not to discount the immediate and untrammelled utterance, not to discredit intuition; but to reject the old-time severance of the heart from the head. Both into intuition and into thought, into feeling and will, we put whatever we are and whatever we know. Any of these may alienate us from the Spirit, any may unite us.

The inference follows that if we would be more faithful to the divine love and wisdom, we must prepare not merely to think but to listen, not alone to receive but to give. By such preparation one means not only philosophical study but the equipment that comes through many personal contacts with the world. We have seen that in the case of the missionary who quickens the man or woman of the slums and summons the soul into spiritual life it is love that is the greatest factor. Next to this undoubtedly comes breadth of experience. The one who has touched the life of sin at many points and sunk so deeply that vice has run its course, becomes very efficient when consecrated by a new birth. The knowledge that one has tried and failed, finding all modes of life wanting save one, gives great power. Thus one knows the ins and outs of the slums, the subtle temptations and spells, as well as the way into freedom. One is thereby able to make Christianity a living faith through the life that now is, through personal sympathy. Likewise the physician or nurse of whatever school who has suffered much and keenly, and learned the meaning of such experiences, has a knowledge which enforces concentration and quickens direct helpfulness. Again, one who has passed through the tribulations of the inner life and beheld their law acquires the vitalising energy that touches the heart of the fellow-sufferer. Next to this personal knowledge of experience one would place knowledge of mental processes. If we know the human mind, the best lines of approach,

the probable responses, the way to instil ideals, we ought to reach people of the most varied types, whatever the belief or need.

For example, there is the deeply significant fact already touched upon in Chapter VI. that the mind functions on different levels, hence that one can learn to disconnect from the lower selfhood and connect with the helpful influences of the higher. Then there is the law of selection through which the mind all the while pursues what engages the attention, enlists the will. Further, there is the law of use and disuse which shows that if we would overcome certain undesirable tendencies we must concentrate on those which ought to survive, conjoining them with other worthy tendencies, persistently centring the attention upon our ideal; and allowing undesirable tendencies to die out through inattention. Further still, we have the law of subconscious response, namely, that time is required for the assimilation of fertile ideas and of activities set in motion for the purpose of generating new habits. Finally, there follows what may be called the law of success; if you would insure the victory of ideas and tendencies which you have selected for survival, keep your eye single to them, pursue them with a quietness and constancy which does not for one moment admit the possibility of failure.¹ Wisely to employ the above laws is to avoid lines of approach to another's mind that might lead to mere argument, and to find common ground on which to build through appeal to the heart. To approach a man in the Spirit is to evoke the Spirit. A man's knowledge may thus be the instrument of his love, not his love the prisoner of his knowledge.

The more intimate one's knowledge of human types and human processes, the less need for theology and church history. For he who knows how the mind functions has the due to the sort of belief a man will espouse. Thus we have always with us the temperamental Calvinist—autocratic, rigid, narrow, arbitrary, dogmatic, self-assertive—the temperamental ritualist, the Quaker, the emotionalist, and the self-centred. Knowledge of these types and

1. These laws I have considered in detail in *Human Efficiency*, New York, 1912.

processes enables the liberal to engage in genuinely fundamental work, in contrast with the devious pathway pursued by the doctrinaire. For it is not primarily a question of sin and salvation, but of interior self-knowledge; a question of life, of direct appeal from soul to soul. Hence one sees the very great advantage enjoyed by those who are truly liberal.

Two clues point the way to the power required for this more direct service, corresponding to the two roots of our spiritual nature. First, as we have seen, comes the life of the heart with its sympathies, its compassion and tenderness. He who is open within, whose love is unchecked by theoretical considerations and other constraints, will instinctively and readily appeal to the affections of the one he would serve. Out of this sympathy there develops an expressiveness on the part of both partners to it such that the one who needs help is led freely to speak while the other is prompted to respond. This unburdening of the heart is a necessity of our nature, and no experience is more important at a certain stage of inner growth than the one in which it proceeds without stint; not in mere self-confession, but with a disclosure of the inmost aspirations. This free expression opens the way to the wisdom which applies to the occasion. Sympathy inspires love, then intuition, and soul speaks to soul without obstacle.

The other clue we have found in the understanding. If we know the place and use of the intellect so that it does not intrude, we are able so to give play to it as to draw upon any experience or teaching which may be of service. One does not then listen simply to gather facts from the other's confession, then proceed to draw inferences inductively. This would be to invert the order of life, and to be limited to the sphere of one's own thought. The spirit is the rightful leader. It is the understanding that enables us to pass beyond the mere guidance of the moment.

The affections when not united with wisdom, we know, readily become impulsively emotional, so that what we do on the spur of the moment because our sympathies are touched we may regret when sober second thought intervenes. If too scientific and careful, our action loses life and is of

little avail. But the leadership of the heart or spirit and the detailed support of the understanding open the way to the full reality. Hence our plea in the preceding chapter for more knowledge of the stages through which the soul passes, for more preparation to meet the occasions of the Spirit. In those who have the discernment to find it, there ensues a higher mode than either that of the heart or the understanding as commonly regarded. This we have found to be the inward life of thought in contrast with our ordinary external thinking, by the aid of conscious inferences and the ideas that come and go by mere association.

We have arrived at this deeper result in this way: Each of us is aware of a contrast or conflict between higher and lower phases of the self. The one counsels us to be righteous. The other conspires with inheritance, habit, and society, to keep us where we are. Looking more deeply into the contrast, we find that the old forces pertain to the life that is external, to the flesh and the world. The higher life seeks to come forth from within, express itself in faith and love, touching the face with sweet serenity. When the heart is united with the understanding in the right order, the result is a fine degree of control such that one can hold still at the centre and listen in a profounder way. The self moves forward with the spiritual tide, not with the uncertainties of the sailboat, not with the nervousness and noise of the motor-boat, nor with the drifting quietude of a canoe that is borne down the stream; but with co-operative adjustment. There is no uncertainty if we are convinced that the Spirit lives in and through the soul. There is no nervousness if the central peace has found expression through the conduct of the whole organism. The noisiness of impatience, restlessness, and the desire to manage others, cease with the discovery that the Spirit is taking its own sure time. One no longer drifts because no longer subject to the mere experience of the moment. Merely to hold still would be to gaze in wearisome sameness at the play of one's own perceptions, imprisoned within the head. Merely to think would be to analyse facts, reason, arrive at generalisations. To think with insight filled with life, free at the centre, is to discover the finer revelations of the

Spirit. This, I say, is a unifying process, one that brings into the light whatever we may have experienced that bears on the need of the hour, at the same time disclosing the wisdom of the newest hour of the Spirit. It is thought that brings into view the permanency, the law, the truth; it is the life of the hour that makes the wisdom of the past real. Reality is indeed the living present, revealed as the tide of the Spirit courses on its way. But so rich is the living reality that all the wisdom of the years is required to apprehend its beauties. It would be futile to attempt to reduce the revelation of the Spirit to anything simpler, or to seek a simpler clue for spiritual service. Now we must listen, observe, and obey; again, we must survey the whole, note the parts, co-ordinate the several phases of our thought. Now we must seek the solitudes of the Spirit; now emerge into the throng, ready to serve and be instructed. The disciple of the Spirit is as ready for the one as for the other. The surpassing peace which signalises the departure of the storm may be the forerunner of the next tribulation, just as the mists begin to gather even on those rare days which intervene after rains and snows. Ceaseless change is the law of the Spirit, only through change is the Spirit real; yet the more deeply we enter into the changes which time discloses, as we sweep down its complex stream, the more truly we may dwell in eternity. Extremes meet, and "the way up is the way down," as Heraclitus long ago said. The Spirit's way is inclusive, broadening, enriching—that is the great fact. The supreme need for us finite beings is to check the little attitudes, thoughts, and deeds of the exclusive type which, accumulating, bring our wills in conflict with the divine. The tide that is in the affairs of men must be taken when the current serves. Whatever there is in us that makes us still want our way is a check put upon the Spirit. What is true of our inner life is true of our larger relationships. There are many types of men travelling on many roads. We know not how many ways there are of reaching freedom and full self-realisation. If I meet my brother so as to help him follow his way without intruding my own, I ought to be able to believe in and co-operate with any number of social groups. The problem of co-operation is not solved unless

through willingness to live and let live. When I know for a fact that all things are working together to the ends of the Spirit, that all men belong together in the republic of God, then indeed may I learn to check all intolerance, coerciveness, and impatience, giving myself each day and hour to the work which the Father has for me to do.

Chapter IX. Inner Peace

NO PASSAGES in the Bible are more full of promise than those in which the peace of the Spirit is offered to the faithful soul. It is said, for example, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Jesus persuasively says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." When promising the Comforter to the disciples, Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Meeting them for the last time, the Master said, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. . . . Receive ye the Holy Spirit."

In the spirit of these great passages it is well to deepen our hold upon the everlasting realities, the faith and love that make for peace in the world. We may commune as people might far up on the mountain-heights, above the confusion and noise of the world; or by the sea on a summer's day, when the tide gently flows in upon the shore, while all around abides an atmosphere of warmth and quietude. Or, again, we are like dwellers in a distant age before the epoch of record-breaking, with time to be moderate in all our ways, to enjoy life in undisturbed repose. Just now we are not concerned

with wars or rumours of wars. We are looking far back of external conditions, seeking the inward peace without which we can scarcely do the least thing to further the growth of peace in the social order.

Some one has said that there is little peace in our age. One might add that courage is required to step aside from the onrush long enough to consider what peace is, and to refresh our consciousness we are compelled to place ourselves in imagination in an age when life was simpler. Our age entices us to join the great race for position, wealth, complexity, and steadily increasing speed. Year by year life is made more luxurious, while new schemes for passing away the time are constantly added. Steadily the accelerated pace of the modern world intrudes since the days of the subway and the automobile. The increased cost of living adds one more reason for keeping the pace of the age, and he who steps out of the train of modern life is likely to be immediately distanced. The books of the day are produced and forgotten with surprising rapidity, and there is a tendency to shorten the time devoted to education. Thus the great game goes on, ever on, with incessant striving after a higher degree of organisation.

We hear men say, commenting on these conditions, that they would rather wear out than rust out. So would we all. Most of the time-saving inventions are serviceable, and few of us would care to return to the days of stage-coaches and sailing-vessels. We all look forward, aware that the greater the temptation the more glorious the victory may be. Under fair conditions, it should be possible to dismiss more cares from mind, making full use of modern contrivances. If peace has to some extent been lost, there never was a time in which there were more ways to secure it. Our problem is to maintain inner peace while using our powers to the full. It is not necessary to wear out at the centre, however great the speed maintained on the surface.

Our age is a time when every one likes to be in the current of things. Hence the movement towards the greatest centres of activity. Even theology has felt and in a measure responded to the tide, and young men who formerly prepared for the ministry in a lonely seminary, now study where they may

observe the movements that make for social reform. He who would really know life must be where it is most eventful, informed hour by hour, rapidly adjusting his thought to the insistent mutation, the hurried drive and hum of things. He who is alert may be able to contribute his share, while he who cautiously reflects may be too late.

All this is in a measure good, and many of our most efficient men are representatives of it. Some of these, too, are the best poised, least likely to be disturbed by sudden fluctuations. In life there is strength and promise, and we are all believers in efficiency. Yet it is well to bear in mind that this zeal may outdo itself. The world is not a mere stream, and evolution does not explain everything. He who would understand the cosmos must learn the immutable laws that everywhere obtain, the energies that are for ever conserved, whatever the frictions and cataclysms. Likewise with the human world: what most avails is knowledge of types that persist, characteristics that survive all changes, habits that defy all inroads upon them. This knowledge is not acquired while one waits for the car, or between courses at dinner. The swifter the rate of change on the part of those who adjust themselves to the insistent flux, the greater the need for calmness of judgment founded on dispassionate reflection.

It is not life alone that avails, but assimilation, wisdom. God is here in the thick of things; heaven is still a possibility in this modern day, and people abound who lead us as directly to the Father as did the solitary prophets of old. Yet he who never breaks away from the onrush will scarcely find that peace without which life were indeed vain and empty. What avails is not mere contact with life as it passes, but the composure that abides, and a scale of values which keeps pace with the increasing complexities.

In the face of admonitions to change the economic order as soon as possible, and the zeal of those whose judgment is external, nothing is more important than to lift our eyes to the heavens, deliberately cultivating inner peace. Do not be disconcerted if partisans of reform make light of your interior world, as if you had no right to seek poise and control. The time

may come when these critics of the serene life will turn to you for rest and comfort. The balance of power is not with those who are driving themselves and coercing others from point to point, but with the thinker who sees origins and goals. The agitator has his place, so has the reformer of whatever type, but the man who shall explain life in the light of immutable laws and eternal values is the one who will set men free. The agitator is a partisan of one class as opposed to another of whose rights he is probably ignorant, while the reformer is apt to be provincial. What is needed is the man who understands human relationships in contrast with those of a sex or of a class. All real changes proceed on fundamental grounds, and relate to all the people.

The best thought can scarcely thrive amidst disturbing external conditions, hence the more insistently we are bidden to enter the whirl the more reason for remaining on the heights. If the church should ever become chiefly institutional, the poor tired workers of the world will turn elsewhere—wherever there is a man or woman whose presence brings peace, or a home where restfulness abides. Hence, there is ever reason to be loyal to our ideals.

Peace is not first external, civil, or even social; it is a state acquired by or quickened within the individual. In so far as the individual really attains it he will be able to carry power into the world. Such peace implies not only serenity and trust in the present, but the power of adaptation with a far look ahead. It springs from experience ripened by wisdom, and is furthered by knowledge of the impulses which actuate humanity. It is dispassionate, takes little notice of panics, is not disturbed by the ever-varied forms in which ancient human traits break forth anew. It is measured, stable, considerate, inspiring sympathy and radiating quiet joy.

A great psychologist has said that there will always be war, since contending passions will ever rage within the human organism. This is indeed tracing war to its source, but this statement does not take into account all that occurs in the inner world. Out from within proceeds whatever defiles us, to be sure, and we have little reason to expect peace save so far as men master their

interior forces. It is well to acknowledge that man is passionate, impulsive, emotional; noting that he lives rather in his instincts and propensities than in the domain of reason. For we may then centre our activities and hopes at the crucial point. Yet here it is that we are gaining most light in these psychological days. With the extension of knowledge of the human mind we may anticipate an increase of intellectual influences, more interest in the ideals of a temperate life. Knowing by enlightened experience the nature of the powers to be mastered, we should be able to help our fellow-men more effectively. Granted that we are strange beings, creatures of habit, moods, and emotions, we need not remain so. In a secondary sense at least our dispositions are alterable, and when our self-knowledge increases we shall make more headway. The discovery of impulses within me that are likely to spring into conflicting action would naturally lead me to choose between them, and to seek opportunities which will call the nobler into expression. If a creature of habit, I am also a maker of habits, and more depends on my earnestness than on the routine which might otherwise enslave me. My emotions will give me less trouble when I understand them, and give play to a carefully selected few. If I would reform the world, I might well begin by setting an example of moral efficiency.

When our self-knowledge shows what is really the trouble, we may steadily cultivate the mode of life that insures control, beginning far enough back to triumph over the unruly members in our way. With the highest end in view, we would naturally take sufficient time for reflective thought to make constructive headway, steadily preparing for the greater contests to come. In such contemplation there is power, a conserving of our energies. There also comes, in due course, an insight into all intruding activities, so that one looks ever more deeply into the inner life, far beyond imprisoning self-consciousness. Moreover, to attain this centre of reflectiveness is to permit all nervous hurry and restlessness to run itself out. For there are many activities which readily subside when the centre of interest is lifted above them. The stronger one's quiet hold upon the ideal, the less one need be concerned

with processes of growth. When experience philosophically articulates itself one begins to be a master, able to command an inner quietude that "looks before and after."

The hurry and complexity are from without; peace and simplicity are from within. Even our nervous activities are relatively external, like the pulsations of the city's life brought in by the channels of the senses. One does not begin to be truly at home until one has penetrated beyond the most intimately subjective nervous activity to the deep centre of contemplative thought. One thinks of the centre as profoundly calm, however disturbed the surface may be. Simply to regard it in this fashion is to begin to be inwardly still.

In contrast with the restless, driving sweep of things in the great play of life, one seems to hear a calm voice saying, "Be still, and know that I am God." What a wonderful utterance! How it brings a person to judgment! Be still, that we may realise the steady march of forces toward the great goal, forces as silent and moderate in their achievements as those whose effects we behold when we look into the starry sky at night, lost in contemplative rapture. Why should we rush and strive, urging ourselves so insistently, and driving others? Why are we so anxious, concerned, disturbed? Why add so many activities to the great forces which steadily fulfil the purposes of God? Surely it is the underlying forces that avail, and we might simplify life to obedient co-operation with these universal powers, taking their course for ours, trusting where we cannot see.

By inner peace, then, one means a spirit of repose founded on knowledge of the cosmos, on centrality of character, and on faith in God. We may consider it both as a spirit to be sought on occasion, and as an ideal to be approximated through increase of knowledge and that superiority over circumstance which brings the mind into possession of the eternal values. This peace grows through conscious effort, and it is also a crowning gift not to be had for the mere asking. It would indeed be in vain to cry peace! peace! when there is no peace, or advise men to be reposeful who know not whither to turn for food and shelter. Yet, like all great possessions, it

begins to be ours when we care sufficiently for it to cultivate the mode of life which secures it.

The first great discovery is that it can be found within. To some this means too much emphasis on the subjective, and this seems wrong when there are many people in distress in the world. But one need not become self-centred. More frequently the objection means that one is unwilling to look his own presentment in the face to see why one is not at peace. The more insistently the frictions of life produce their wearying effects upon us, the more plain it should be what peace is in contrast with this external warfare. Resorting to one device after another, exhausting the possibilities of the external world, turning from society in despair, some are driven by sheer necessity to seek peace within. This reaction need not mean pessimism or renunciation of the world; yet to a degree he alone knows what peace is who realises the hollowness of many mundane things, hence by contrast the blessedness of heavenly wisdom. Some know peace only when they have wandered far and found it not, until at last it is discovered at their own door.

But it is not always when we turn from the world that we find peace. There are times when to mingle with the throng in the busiest thoroughfare is the best way to come to oneself, hence to find the calm inner centre. To-day I find peace on the lonely pine-clad hill; but another time it is the sea with its magical influences that brings it to me. No sooner do I set foot on the shore than I seem transported into another world, from which I view my troublous days in calm perspective. Such seasons of meditative recuperation send us back with new joy in the mere fact of existence in this splendid world. They show us that we are not as miserably placed as we thought, never far from friendly protection. They restore lost fragments of our selfhood, making us whole again, and to be whole is to count life a blessing in all its forms.

Again, it is not nature which thus assuages our pain but the friendliness of a congenial household, genuine in its hospitality, inspiring kindness, gentleness, love, uniting all within its portals in a spirit of good fellowship and cheer. It need not be an externally quiet home, where one interest is

supreme. It is more likely to be one in which vital issues are attaining solution amid the discussion of diverse points of view. But it is a home in which a man of insight lives, one who sees through processes to ends; or where a woman presides with serenity over the household, turning the commonplace into beauty, and spreading a sweet effulgence over all. Indeed, peace is seldom mere identity of interests, or a state of harmony maintained at any cost. Happiness is undoubtedly an accompaniment of it, hence it implies harmony at some important point; yet peace is rather the fruition of adjustment than of contentment. Those who inspire it see their way through the emotional life into the quieter joys of the heart, and have in a measure passed beyond mere enthusiasm and zest into a condition that is well founded in the understanding.

The hour in which we analyse these matters is never more than a means to an end. When at peace we are absorbed in efficient performance that gives genuine satisfaction. Hence we know that many fellow-mortals will never find peace until they work with heart and hand. Their very restlessness is a sign that they must be productive, giving progressive expression to the life that stirs within them. Consequently we realise afresh that no one shall give us peace except ourselves. The consolation of the best religious creed means little until we think.

In a supreme sense peace is the gift bestowed on those who have really found God, and know what life may become through obedience to divine law. In this sense it is indeed the goal of all merely finite endeavour. Hence it is simplicity itself, the centralising power that makes us at home in the cosmos, no longer looking for an ideal world more perfect than the one in which it is our privilege to live. For this insight shows that the cosmos truly is moral, despite the apparent injustice which makes men question whether God exists. Furthermore, the realisation that we are all members one of another in an order that cannot be outwitted, in a beneficent system by whose forces virtue can conquer, helps us to be a person in a new and

profounder sense. Yet the insight can never be regarded as complete unless God be found with, not apart from the striving world.

That is, the gift of peace is not that of a change of heart alone, but is bestowed by deepening experiences and insights which show that the universe is one. A change of heart and creed may bring peace that lasts for years, yet doubts may intrude, followed by years in which this peace is mainly a memory. An experience which brings peace this year may be a source of misery the next. What is needed is a discovery of the unity of the self which reveals the unitary system of the world, enabling one to contemplate with equanimity the alternations of life's contending forces. The peace that surpasses understanding can hardly come until we possess understanding.

Some would say that the ideal representative of peace is the person of placid face and sweet serenity. But such placidity may be largely temperamental, may never have been greatly disturbed. Faith is a source of peace, but faith has degrees, and must endure the tests of tribulation until it be transmuted into reason. Serenity implies most of the elements of peace, however, involving the absence of anxiety in regard to financial contests, domestic difficulties, and other struggles of the world. The interior conflicts that keep us from being serene are the real disturbers of our peace. Serenity also implies freedom from morbid self-consciousness, self-centred loneliness, the eccentricities of a peculiar temperament, and the exasperating contests of belittling subjectivity. The cure for all these disturbances of the inmost selfhood is the consciousness which lifts one into a large world of faith, and to know that world is to experience true serenity. He who is master at the centre, serene amidst circumstances which would ordinarily be wearying and depressing, is in a sense master of the whole of life.

What is the greatest disturber of our peace? Many would say it is the warfare between lower and higher forces. There are several ways in which this conflict might be expressed. Some would deem it a contest between evil spirits and heavenly powers; man stands between and is torn asunder until he chooses once for all. Others hold that it is a conflict between old

forces and inheritances which are struggling for life, and the power of the new self. Still others would describe it as a warfare of the flesh with the spirit. Whatever the terminology, everybody is aware of the conflict. Whether or not external forces participate, the scene of action is the inner life. What then are the powers working within us for our betterment, and whither do they lead? Let me put before the mind an ideal concerning their activity and my co-operation, and I shall be able to identify myself with the ideal rather than with the process or the dissipating powers of my old selfhood. Even if my experience be intimately related with those I love most in the world I am still concerned with the ideal man that is in the making, not with the friction involved in drawing still more close to my fellows. Understanding these frictions of progress, I say, Speed the time when, in fulness of charity and tolerance, in kindly sympathy and joy of heart, I shall go forth to my friends as one consistent person. Thus at one I should be able to find peace.

Again, it may be the sharp contrast between my ideals and the world which most greatly breaks in on my peace. Apparently the sordid world does not appreciate my genius, hence it disturbs my creative activity by imposing merely practical demands upon me. Looked at from another point of view, however, my genius needs obstacles to overcome, and I must be well-nigh defeated if born to succeed. If I understand the situation it inspires peace within me. If I have also attained the more serious religious stage of human experience I am willing to be misunderstood right and left, to be rejected and even persecuted.

Every one, however poorly endowed, and whatever the vocation, may begin to enjoy the peace which no circumstance can take away. What is needed at first is an occupation sufficiently congenial to serve its purpose for the time. The fact that I am doing what you now see me doing—whether I am clerk, banker, teacher, lawyer, or what not—vindicates a correspondence between inner need and outward opportunity. Well for me then, if, instead of bemoaning my fate, I ask, What has brought me here? For when I understand the principle of attraction I can learn what elements

within me led me to these circumstances, and what I must do to change. The way to a more congenial occupation lies through, not around the conditions now confronting me. It were vain to expect to secure freedom by merely changing the circumstances. Wherever I go I carry what I am, and burrs of the same species will stick to me so long as I merely pick them off, blaming the people who allow burdocks to grow in my pathway. First, I must change the interior attitude, present a different front to the world. Then nothing will keep me from my goal. With this consciousness it does not so much matter what we are doing, or what our environment is. Peace comes with the productive activity through which we gradually make objects of beauty of these crude lives of ours.

Likewise in regard to faith and knowledge; what is needed is a working principle which suffices for the present. Such a principle is implied in Tennyson's lines,

We trust that good
Will somehow be the goal of ill.

We know not how, we know not the time, or what shall yet be done; but we are willing to proceed from day to day, with our eyes on the ideal. We may not be able precisely to define the end which should be sought, or make a persuasive statement of our faith. We may have only the dimmest conception of the immanent Life which ever bears us on. Our faith may waver from time to time, or suffer changes with the alternations of adversity and success, misery and happiness. Yet if our faith enable us to maintain a general direction, if it can be brought into play on occasion, it will serve its purpose, becoming more rational as we proceed.

The battle is half won when we cease to rebel and complain. For when the decisive idea dawns upon us we forthwith begin to make changes and hence prepare the way for genuine inner peace. If lonely, we begin to seek the companionship of others, first of all by serving those who are in need,

drawing nearer in sympathy to the heart-hungry. If ill, we begin to observe the inner and outer conditions that foster health, we stop worrying, we conquer our fears, and begin to expect the best. If unhappy, we consider under what conditions happiness is likely to be added while pursuing another end. If desirous of converting others to our faith, we see plainly that we must begin by living what we preach. As a matter of course, we make less noise in the world, although we may be no less zealous in a quiet way; for we are now endeavouring to do that which is really worth while. Again, we realise that what is our own we need not pray for, but that it is at hand. We also realise that what we have to give to the world that is worth while we need hardly advertise, since it will speak for itself. Hence we depend more on the silent, tireless forces that bring what we deserve and what we earn. We are no longer troubled lest some one deprive us of our rights, lest some more enterprising person express our thought before we have opportunity.

Beginning to experience the sweet spirit of peace in place of the worries and anxieties that once consumed us, we seek to gain real influence in the world by first-hand contact with life's realities, no longer content with what other men have said about them. Thus we see that individual experience is what puts the fire of conviction into one's words. Hence we are more sincere, frank, honest. Knowing that character avails even above composure, we courageously meet the situations which develop our higher powers to the full. Hence we constantly endeavour to learn by doing.

Thus we learn to put the elements of peace in the right order. We see plainly enough that one must have poise, inner control, and equanimity. It is also clear that one must have a definite interest or life-work to pursue. No doubt it is well to prepare for the coming of inner peace by persistently putting the mind into an attitude of rest and trust. But there is a great difference between preparing for peace and actually feeling it. When an experience comes that deepens peace in the still places, it brings poise as a consequence, inspires equanimity, fosters inner control. Really to arrive at the inner centre is to have peace as a matter of habit, as a co-ordination of

many lines of development. Then one realises that peace is itself a generator, a source of power, creating many results which were once pursued as if obtainable by themselves.

We find it impossible, therefore, to speak of inner peace in full measure without reference to the quickening experiences which make us aware that there is Another than ourselves who guides us. The contrast at times is deeply impressive and significant when, at the end of bitter conflict, of soul-yearnings, we are lifted from utter weakness and doubt into renewed life. Throughout the struggle we seem like a house divided against itself, drawn by personal ties in one direction while on another side of our nature we remain true to the ideal. Little credit is due the finite self that it endures the conflict to the close. What stands out above all else is the realisation that the Life which bore us safely through these experiences had the same meaning to reveal as in all previous struggles. When we see this working together of all the great moments of the soul, a new trust and deeper repose descend upon us. Verily the self has been in process of creation in these crucial times, and we have been brought nearer the divine love.

There is much that we can do to prepare for the great peace of the Spirit. We may turn from the anxieties of lower levels of thought, seeking inner quietude in place of the nervous frictions that distress and render us impatient. We may moderate our emotions, master our fears, find higher forms of expression for our propensities, elevate our appetites. Again, we may be more considerate, more tolerant of our brothers, seeking the meaning of their struggles, judging in ideal terms instead of by the appearances. As true knowledge grows, and conviction takes the place of belief, peace will come. It is within our power to make headway, silently, steadily. At length these efforts will sum themselves into a method, when we realise that at every juncture the divine guidance is at hand. But above all, peace is a gift of the Spirit: our part is to observe and be faithful; it is God who bestows peace upon us.

In the solitudes of nature, in the silence of the night, one seems to hear again the thrilling voice of Jesus: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Assuring his followers that he has overcome the world, Jesus speaks not alone with the power of God but with the strength of the human being who has met the severest adverse influences and the greatest temptations that ever beset the soul. Thus the peace he gives, the peace he promises as the reward of victories, reveals the union of the human with the divine. For he who can truly say, "I always do that which is pleasing unto the Father," possesses the surpassing peace. Hence the assurance of peace is that of one who knows, who has lived and achieved, and who therefore is able to speak with authority. God and the son of man are made one in that moment of supreme peace, God and humanity are united.

Chapter X. The Inner Centre

I WOULD that a superior mode of expression might be mine in turning to this theme, for I would write of the power and love which surpass ordinary understanding, and are known by experience rather than through intellectual analysis. I would lead to the sources of spiritual peace that each might know the surpassing gift of the Spirit. Yet in a sense this is a vain wish, for the moment of supreme communion with the Spirit is the moment of solitude and individual consecration when one is largely oblivious of the spoken or written word—"the flight of the alone to the Alone," Plotinus called it. But I would at least speak of that which may be uttered, so that each may turn to the solitudes, and in the silences of the Spirit test what is put down here, renewing the sacred inner experience in fuller measure. The surpassingly beautiful reality of which one would write were it possible to convey it in words is the higher type of consciousness which spiritual communion reveals. What is public and may be discussed is the knowledge of life and the methods which aid the soul in the attainment of this inner communion.

Everything depends, for those who would grow in realisation of divine realities, on putting matters in the right order; for we need right ideas to pursue right methods. Oftentimes, writers on spiritual meditation

speaking as if the decisive power were vested in the human will, as if all the conditions of spiritual communion were controllable at pleasure. We read books in which the most explicit instructions are given to those who would acquire concentration, inner control, and the transcendence of external circumstances. Every step is carefully traced from the lowest to the one next to the highest, but the great essential is omitted. All this is of value, yet if one seeks communion with the Spirit allowance must be made for a higher factor. Self-consciousness, attained by the practice of silence, may be a hindrance unless it can be surrendered at will. The divine presence cannot be summoned at pleasure, but is added as gifts are bestowed upon "the pure in heart." We may indeed pray for the descent of the Spirit, steadily preparing ourselves for its shining light and quickening life; but the prayer is not the cause of that ineffable moment when the Spirit "bloweth where it listeth."

Endeavouring to start aright, let us ground our consciousness in the thought of God as eternal, self-subsistent, supreme. Thus to begin is to realise that one stands as it were at a centre; there is no beyond, no higher goal. One looks forth from this centre upon all being. From this centre will go forth all the power which shall accomplish ends in the world. For there is no other reality, no second power. We have arrived, we have made the great discovery, we possess the heart of all realities. Or, rather, this is the Reality that possesses, "in whose thought all thinking is," in whose love all love is embraced, from whose peace all peace goes forth. Our thought as it attains this height is not so much our own as the infinite Thought which imbues our finitude, reveals the spiritual unity of beings and things. To be filled with this thought is to see that in so far as there appears to be another reality, this that is spread around or beyond is merely the sphere of manifestation of this central Life.

Thus we turn to the cosmos with new insight, to the invisible cosmos of the sons of God, thence to the world in space and time. We see that there are distinctions between God, the world, and men, without the least

separateness between them. God indeed possesses objectivity, but the world of self-manifestation is indistinguishable as a reality apart from Him. There are indeed real finite beings; these are not to be confused with one another, or with the world; yet these have existence within the divine Self in a manner as intimate as the relation of our thoughts to the mind that possesses them. God's purpose made objective in process of realisation is so far one with Him that the divine life in its ceaseless pulsations is the actual Spirit, at the same time the actual life of the world. There is nothing between the inmost heart and the outermost expression save the mediating conditions which organise the Spirit in orderly forms.

Placing ourselves thus at the centre, we behold the universe; whereas men ordinarily think upward from nature or man to God. As our thought moves outward we behold the Spirit going forth into creative activity, then mounting through all "the spirals of form." Thus we behold natural things and events first as divine purposes in the realm of interior causation, then as outward activities, down to the lowest level of the physical world in all its force and vigour. Still looking from within outward, we turn to the heart of man, in childlike purity and obedience, learning afresh what it means to be made "in the image and likeness of God." Wherever we turn we carry this inmost consciousness, beholding all things and events grounded in the Spirit.

We are not thinking in spatial terms. To be at the centre is to consider higher grades of manifestation than those that suggest separateness. God regarded as a centre of purposes, with a heart of supreme love, is higher than God conceived as a centre of forces or the ground of cosmic substances. Forces and substances do indeed reveal God, but their place or meaning is discernible through the spiritual idea. To be all-encompassing love, God must be far more than substance or force; He is also the wisdom that organises all purposes, the guiding principle of all forms of life. As all physical types of motion are said to be modes within one cosmic energy, eternally conserved, so we may carry the thought farther and say that this

primal energy is itself a mode of the life of God; whose attributes are also manifested in the modes of the understanding and the will; "whose centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere," since all things exist in Him.

In the image and likeness of this central Self, we exist, we live, and think. What we are as creatures of experience we must indeed learn from experience. But we are now endeavouring to discern the permanent reality within, to regard the finite self as grounded in the centrehood of God. Unless there were a persistent self enduring throughout the changes that make up experience, we should be unable to cognise these changes and relate them to the central Self.

The old idea of man as made out of the dust of the ground was associated with the physical form, and was thinkable so long as God was conceived as an absentee Being. Taking our clue from God as Spirit, invisible and omnipresent, we turn to man with a radically different idea, dwelling on the external verities rather than on temporal processes of creation. We start with the divine centre as eternal. We turn to the inmost centre of man as immortal. Grounded in this thought, we may look forth upon temporal things as growing ever afresh from one perennial source. Thus there is a respect in which man is already eternal, in the purposes of God, even before he is consciously immortal. As God clothes Himself with the garment of the universe, so in lesser degree we may say that man takes upon himself visible form through the activities of the Spirit within him. That which enables us to have experience, to respond to its presentations and think about life in systematic form, is this eternal Self of selves. First is the eternal Centre, then the finite centres, then the mentality and the experiences which give opportunities for each centre or self to be an individual. Then there is the instrument of consciousness, the brain, with its nervous system, and the organic life of the body. A further look outward brings us to the bodily organism as a member of the natural world. Thus we pass from the inmost Centre to the most external manifestation; the Centre that is "nowhere" is within each of us, while the universe is spread around in space and time just

as if you or I in observing it were literally the very heart of the great cosmos itself.

Consider what it means to be clothed from within by the divine Life, to be constituted in the spiritual image of God. This means that the divine Self is reproduced in us in individual form, that God is made personal in you and me. The divine Self, we have seen, is not simple, as if characterised by a single quality, such as love; but is the ground of the various qualities or attributes, the essence of all that the cosmos reveals as a spiritual whole. Unable to say all that the supreme Self is, we realise that it must be the basis of the infinite wealth of personal life which finite selves reveal; for we may infer the richness of the source from the beauty of its expression. God is at least love and wisdom, the giver of peace and sustainer of all endeavour; His thought comprehends all events both in the light of their origin and their meaning; His heart is the one heart in which we are members of a single family, though separated by individuality and experience.

We are indeed unlike God in several respects, for we deem Him "the Giver of every good and perfect gift" while we receive according to enlightenment. Nevertheless, the same reasoning yields the clue—the thought of the self as sufficiently comprehensive to contain the various qualities which it manifests, able to participate in the wonderful gift of life. God who knows the universe as a system, so reproduces His mind in us as to enable us to cognise the world as it passes before our consciousness. Each individual looks out upon the same universe in the same mode of thought, yet each in a different world with his own eyes. I think about and rejoice in my world because founded in Him whose mind encompasses the world and holds me within it. The present event in my consciousness is also existent in the divine world of events. I know what is real and true because I live in God who possesses the universal whole which I know in part. At my heart the divine Life flows. Mirrored in that eternal stream which I in part apprehend as my own, as I look in wonder and mute reflectiveness, I behold the great world represented. There, if I look long enough and faithfully, I shall see all

that is spiritually essential. There, too, if I look attentively, I shall apprehend the difference between my finite selfhood and my ideal self fulfilling a purpose in the divine order.

Life at large is a co-operative relationship between God, the realm of human consciousness, and the environing world common to all. If we mistake our merely self-assertive experiences for the true self, we fall into the notion that we are independent centres of life, and can have matters our own way. If we stop with finite consciousness, we miss the thought of divine communion. But, again, if we stop with the self we miss the world of social beings. Truly to find the centre is to know man in all these respects as the home of consciousness, the meeting-point with God.

When we mistake self-assertion for true consciousness, we wander into side-issues, becoming so imprisoned that we are like another person; hence the tribulations that disturb us as if a hostile power were at work from without. Not knowing that we are shut within our own self, we struggle and complain, finding fault with others, looking far for the cause. But if we have once learned the difference between the whole and the partial self, we may acquire a method of returning to the centre.

The contrast is readily seen in the case of "the blues," or any other mood in which our consciousness is confined to a small world, when we drop the head and draw into a shell as it were. In the attitude of joy we lift the head and look aloft into a large world. Knowing the contrast, we may send forth our thought as if becoming one with the universe, glad to be alive in this present life with all its blessings. Observing the response when we thus aspire, we may learn to put ourselves into the attitude of receptivity. We need not trouble that we lose hold and wander far afield. The essential is to return every time we wander. The return shows by contrast that all through our tribulation there was a cross-current setting in against the inner tide in whose face the world is mirrored. To be centred is to move with the divine tide; to depart is to become a lesser self, howbeit we may sometimes think in our assumed independence that we are enlarging the self. Possessing an

apparent independence, some of us wander as far as we can into the side-streams of consciousness. Thus we live long in the play of external life, in an artificial comedy or tragedy, mistaking external things for primary realities. Thus we worship the god of dress, money, or luxury, well-nigh forgetting the spiritual life.

Meanwhile, if we have in any degree known the things of the Spirit, these beckon us to return. Or, if we have known nothing of the Spirit an inner struggle may go on, a struggle that is a complete mystery to us. Back of the struggle, if we could read it aright, would be found the divine Life steadily drawing us on towards the inner centre. For, however enticing the side-issues, the divine stream of love and wisdom never ceases to flow; we are ever borne along, whatever we do.

Usually we are so absorbed in our side-streams that when any one offers us wisdom we insist on the right to understand the situation as it appears in our insurgency. Hence we ask many questions which cannot be answered—while we are enveloped in the play, complaining at our lot, insisting that God has dealt unfairly with us. Such are most questions concerning justice, the atonement for sin, the nature of evil, and the degree of reality assignable to sense-experience. When at last we break free from the play, we may still behold the experience through which we have passed, as we might a landscape when we reach a mountain-summit. The experience which meant pain while we were enveloped by it will appear in such a different light that we may wonder how the same self could therein have wrought and suffered. I do not refer to the changes which death brings but to the awakening which may come even in the flesh to those in whom the eternal type of consciousness is born. Nor do I mean that this external life is sheer illusion, as if due to the veil of our own ignorance. The natural world really exists, it is no dream. But there are degrees of reality from the lowest to the highest level. The lower or natural level cannot explain the spiritual. But when we understand spiritually we shall understand the natural, too.

Clothed with the consciousness of peace, we may adapt ourselves to the stream so that it shall flow harmoniously within us. Such response implies not only knowledge of the main stream of life and its side-issues, the reality and the play, but ability to act in adjustment with the influent life. Our conflicts are due to the fact that we are carried along by life's stream while trying to maintain a direction of our own. Torn between two points of view, there seems to be no resource until the central insight shows the relationship of external experience to the inner centre. Then we transfer our attention from the process to the Power, from the frictions to the product.

The struggle—so we sometimes insist—is the reality; it is mere fancy to allege that there can be peace, or that there is a centre of power which commands the situation. To have our way seems the only course worth while. Hence we experiment, now adopting material standards, now evaluating life as a merely finite possession. But forthwith we realise that only at the surface have we been troubled, while enveloped in the events of the day. The pain was indeed part of the reality of life, and even the least of the side-issues emerged from the central source; yet we now understand the pain through its fruits, we apprehend the part in the light of the whole. The integrity of the self remained despite the struggle, and with it everything that was most worth while. One would not then underestimate the realities of experience, but dwell sufficiently on the change to make sure the illuminating clue is revealed. By "reality" one here means life viewed in spiritual wholeness as a gift from God, and by "the play" any experience in which we are centred in the process. To live from the centre is to be aware of a superior light shining upon the pathway revealing what is essential and significant.

The inner centre is the basis of poise regarded as a balance of energies acquired through moderation and the quest for inner peace. Again, it is discoverable through equanimity in meeting the vicissitudes of experience, through the philosophic temper, and the patient reflectiveness which concerns itself with ideals amidst disquieting conditions. Our composure is also deepened by consciously pausing to attain interior stillness, not alone

through the victories we are compelled to win by persistent effort. Control is more complex and demands not merely the composure which enables a person to think before acting but the knowledge which shows what to do, what is under our control, and what not.

First in order in such knowledge is the truth already emphasised, that the spiritual life is in a sense "a gift," not to be controlled any more than we would crush the heart of a child, or deaden our sensibilities through incessant analysis. Then, too, our own selfhood is in a way a gift which God will make complete through this round of experiences over which we have so little choice. Hence one wills to preserve the gifts of the Spirit in pristine purity, guided by the divine wisdom, touched with tender compassion, imbued with gentleness, inspired by a contagious joy. Control properly begins with the regulation of the moods, passions, instincts, emotions, and the other adverse activities which impede either the incoming or the expression of the Spirit by their excesses and sensuous enticements. The keener our insight into these states the less power they have over us. In due course it is within our power to overcome all interior friction, worryment, anxiety, excitement—through the growth of that inner peace which the Spirit quickens in us. Control of these states means more energy for the mastery of thought, hence command of the brain.

In contrast with the usual play of thoughts, so little in control, one apprehends a more illuminating consciousness, commenting as it were on the play of life. Again, when contemplating a certain course of action one submits it to this inner tribunal, as if laying it on an altar to be tried. If it be burned away, one sees that it was not of the Spirit; if it withstand the test, one deems it worthy of execution. Thought, instead of dictating its point of view, becomes the Spirit's agent, noting distinctions that grow finer and finer, until the choice of a single word may be of moment. Word by word the mind endeavours to keep harmonious pace with the Spirit.

If you would become aware of this inner activity of thought, simplify life and begin to acquire this central control. If you cannot at first apprehend

the great peace as an experience, if you do not apprehend God as love, try the approach already indicated by endeavouring to think from the idea of God as ground of all life, then work from the idea to the experience. This centre of yours is infinitely near the divine heart, you may receive and manifest love even though you do not feel its inflow. Think then of love as entering your heart, eager to find expression, although frequently checked by your attitude. Consider this situation long enough to realise its full significance, and thence find the way into greater responsiveness. Gradually you may turn every cross-current so that when tempted to express hate, anger, impatience, to be uncharitable or unforgiving, you will turn to the divine sources and manifest love instead. Thus you will become aware of the right attitudes of receptivity and expression where formerly you were sustained by the divine love but did not know it. The central fact is that the divine love never ceases to be present within the heart, however great the absorption in one's mere self.

Again, the soul's deepest struggles are clues. Ordinarily we judge by externalities, but a day comes when we begin to discern the heart. The person, for example, who is outwardly unresponsive may be contending with a heavy load of problems, longing to be free but unable to come forth. The right word may touch the heart and give the needed quickening. Thus one grows in power to reach others in so far as one discerns corresponding processes within oneself. This sympathy is also fostered by throwing off the veil of conventionality, usually concealing the inner life, and showing more plainly where we stand. It is not of course necessary to publish every thought and sentiment, but when we acknowledge the real situation to ourselves, and perhaps to a confidential friend, we shall gain in power and insight. The more we live from the centre, seeking to give the best that comes, the more we shall grow in power to utter the truth that makes free. What this truth is we shall see more plainly in another chapter.

The ideal of life from the centre may be stated as follows: God is present in the soul as life, life changes like a descending stream and presents

different fronts to view. These phases relate to the situation at hand, the passing circumstances of daily life, viewed in accordance with the spiritual values. The surface of the stream, with its varying aspects, represents our consciousness of events and our passing thoughts from moment to moment. The divine Spirit imbues all and carries all forward. We do not know at what point the Spirit enters afresh, or with increased power; we know the resulting activity pointing through guidance to the opportunity of the hour.

These distinctions are important because it is difficult to avoid deflecting the divine stream into our own uses. If we believe that the idea comes first and the power afterward, we are likely to pounce upon the incoming experience with a favourite idea, seeking to organise the influent life in a form which may in reality be too meagre for it. But, putting first things first, if we recollect that life comes before knowledge, that love stands above ideas, we may await the course which the divine life shall take, permitting love to take the lead. We may then begin to understand after we have lived, postponing conclusions until we have had decisive experiences.

It may not be that God moves upon each of us with respect to every detail. It would seem more reasonable to hold that the divine guidance applies to the spiritually essential, leaving the details for development along the way. Indeed, explicit guidance is vouchsafed in as slight a degree as possible, since so much depends upon the wisdom which we must learn from experience. He who is moving with the divine Spirit will be able to carry out the details to the uttermost.

To-day, for example, I awaken from refreshing sleep into the joys of a new series of hours to be spent in the company of God. The early morning hour is a sacred one, and I try to return to the sources that I may once more feel the touch of the peace which knows no disturbance and no cessation, the love which is without bounds and never faileth. My return is with the heart and readiness of the child, asking nothing that might imply the intrusion of my own will; for I seek the Spirit in its purity, "in the beauty of holiness." While at rest in the great presence I am not thinking of the problems of life,

or seeking to grow in power for a specific end. My return is literally to the pristine sources, as if I were not to emerge into external activity until specially led to do so. What I seek above all is the guidance which should take the lead. To apprehend this wisdom is to be imbued with the consciousness of inner meanings; for I know that if I respond to the central quickening I shall be able to discern the rest. Consequently, when seeking this central Life I endeavour to settle into reposeful oneness with it, to envelop my selfhood in its quickening presence.

Yet my return is not for my own sake alone. I trust that the day will bring me into close accord with my brothers and sisters. Accordingly, I seek to go forth into the day's activities with deepened consecration to the ideals of service, more kindly disposed and gentle, more charitable and sympathetic. I seek to go forth not as my mere self as if personally I had power to be spiritual, but as a child of God, an instrument of power. I am eager to spend my time in ways that are worth while. Mayhap I shall be called on to utter words that will bring disruption, but if so I know that the strength to meet the test will come. Surely he who gives himself to the divine guidance will be led to touch the issues of life more deeply. He who resolves to live in the reality of life rather than in the play will hardly be able to serve two masters.

When we have thus returned to the heart of surpassing love, resolved to live in and for the reality, how easy it is to slip back into the play, as if that were life and not its mere additions! No sooner do we pray to be more gentle and loving than the opportunity comes to be quite the opposite. Usually when we succumb we scarcely know the temptation as an alternative until we find ourselves enveloped in the play. Something we have gained at least if we know that the externality is a play, if we know the way back to life from the discord that is death and destruction.

If you would be guided from the inner centre, pause and listen in quiet expectancy, returning to the inner stream of life. If you are checking this life at any point, condemning portions of your nature, first remove this hindrance. If displeased with yourself because you give voice to sarcasm, pettiness,

pride, anger, and other undesirable emotions, find a way to express the same power in nobler forms. You will make great headway in overcoming interior disturbances when you cease to rebel against the course life is taking within and around you. This is no small attainment, since one often begins to feel dislike even before one has half observed. One is helped by the reflection that they are happiest who have an increasing range of likes and a decreasing range of dislikes. He who is prepared to move with the day's events, whatever they may be, will spare himself so much friction that he will be able to surmount the day's difficulties with composure. Rebellion and impatience belong together. He who is bent on controlling the emotions that impede the divine Life will scarcely have time to be impatient.

If it is not events but people that trouble us, we will naturally ask. Why is it that our associates irritate us? What is it in ourselves that is not under control? Surely these disturbances are in our power, too. To find the centre is to penetrate beneath all these disturbances and to find God, whose presence is love and peace. Thus to find God is to be lifted above all pettiness, to be made large and whole; to find Him is to be impelled outward into the love of service, with the joy that loves to give of itself. To find the centre is also to come to judgment, ignoring nothing, making no shallow claims, indulging in no procrastinations. It means to bring our thought to date, to square all moral accounts, assessing them with reference to the milestones we have passed. It also means the calm outlook on the future, whatever it may bring, with readiness to meet all that is wise for us. To find it is to be brought closer to our fellows with the realisation that some have needs which we can meet.

Finally, the discovery of the inner centre means deeper insight into individuality, the growth of courage, self-reliance; for although we learn that there is but one Efficiency, we realise that to live from the centre is to be no weakling, but to stand forth manfully. We have access to the highest sources of power at this centre. Nothing stands between us and the realisation of our highest ideals. There is no higher authority than that which is thus revealed.

This is the centre where all roads meet, where one becomes more of a man, a better member of the human family, and a stronger son of God.

Yet always there is the one condition: he who enjoys these gifts in large measure first offers himself in humility and obedience, willing to be led. First there is calmness at the centre, quiet thoughtfulness, interior listening. To apprehend the great peace afresh, to rest in the Spirit—this is the beginning. Then there is the enfolding, sustaining love which goes forth from the heart of God into the hearts of men. Again, there is the wisdom that accompanies and guides the divine love. Finally, there is the vigour, the power of accomplishment, and we behold the Spirit in full operation. On the human side there is the same order: first there is the receptivity, then the quickening affection, next the idea, and at last the active response of the entire being.

The thought of the divine presence is never complete while we contemplate God as impersonal life, like the sunlight everywhere diffused. God is indeed manifest in the sunlight, in the energy that fructifies in the plant and attains the level of free motion in animal life, as we have acknowledged in another chapter. But through man God expresses life as love and wisdom. He becomes individuated, personal. Hence it is through the union of the human with the divine that the circle is made complete. To find myself and to find God is thus in a way the same discovery, to love God is to love mankind. God is made complete through the manifestations of His love in personal form, man becomes complete through God; and in this conjunction man is united with the race. Thus the discovery of the inner centre involves the acceptance of our criterion, the surpassing presence of the Spirit as at once the test of our human experience and the clue to the power of God in Jesus.

Let us therefore realise that thus to find God in the inmost centre is to be touched at all points of our being, made whole, ennobled. The trouble often has been that we were imprisoned in parts of our nature, cut off, separated in consciousness, absorbed in physical life, or swept by passion

and emotion, and shut within the brain. The resource, when we learn this fact, is to return to the thought of spiritual unity, that we may feel the quickening power of the divine love. The result of this discovery of our integrity will be a sense of freedom, expansion, growth, with joy and peace that we are again thoroughly alive.

Above all I would emphasise the fact that to feel the presence of God is to be made alive, to move with the current of experience at the point where there is opportunity for a process of regeneration. The point where we have struggled most, condemned most, seen God in least degree, mayhap excluded the thought of Him altogether, is the point at which we should now see His life in fullest degree. Let the divine power enter there, become one with God even in your contests, and you shall indeed find His love and wisdom; for you will then transmute condemnation into love, struggle into obedience, separateness into unity. When you have left the seclusion of your inner world to join in work with your associates, carry the same consciousness, feel no separateness, be one in spirit with your brother and your sister.

The meaning of all this is of course for the individual to work out, adapting himself to the activities at hand. But here is the principle that applies to all cases. Return to the Father's house of many mansions where there is room for all. The Master has been there before you and prepared the way. Why are you troubled? Why have fear? The Master has ascended the scale of life to the height of complete union with the Father. Now we know the way, now we know the truth, best of all, the life. Jesus came that he might lead us into life, that we might have fulness of life. His spirit shines as a light in every human soul, or will be found shining there by all who observe in quietness and confidence, while the darkness of ignorance disperses, and the mists of illusion vanish.

Chapter XI. The Fulness of Life

WHEN WE turn to the impressive scenes of scriptural times which stand out because of the great powers they typify, we are apt to idealise the past to the neglect of the men and the opportunities of the present. It is easy to believe in the signs and wonders of a distant age, to hold that there was a time when man communed with God directly. The golden age either dawned when life was simpler and men were innocent, or will come in the future when human nature shall be greatly changed. We seem unable to bring ourselves to the point where we see in the living present as much that is sacred, ineffable, and true as in those blessed times when the chosen ones are said to have walked with God, implicitly obeying His will.

It is not then in the spirit of laudation of the past that the reader is invited to consider a number of scriptural passages, but because we are aided in our efforts to win the highest goal by placing ourselves in imagination in scenes which exemplify powers which we would acquire. The kingdom of God is here now in fulness and glory, for those who have eyes. There is life and guidance for all who through a change of attitude make themselves ready to receive. It is the life that now is which is significant, however much importance we assign to a revelation which gives the clue. What is needed

is the quickening which shall enable us to read the message of life as it writes its wisdom in our experiences to-day.

With these points in mind, let us turn to those scenes in Acts which were so memorable in the lives of the first followers of Christianity. We read that people were so filled with the Holy Spirit that they "began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Again, we read that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul, and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.... For neither was there among them any that lacked... and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need." The apostles "spake the word of God with boldness." Wonders and signs followed, and the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of hands. Then comes the deeply suggestive statement that even while "Peter spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word."

Whatever the speaking with tongues may have meant, we may interpret it as the unhampered expression of the great consciousness of the Spirit which stirred within that faithful multitude. That works of healing and other impressive consequences should occur we may take as matter of course. For the prime fact seems to have been that the gates of receptivity were wide open; the Spirit was admitted into the whole individual. Hence the usual restrictions and limitations were forgotten. Each expressed himself according to his gifts. As the Spirit was one and included all, so men and women were one in interest and conduct.

The apostles gave the clue by their fidelity, unity of purpose, and work; because their hearts were "right before God"; because they were "full of grace"; and because, as was said of Stephen, they "looked steadfastly up into heaven." Again, they led the way by obediently following the guidances which were made known at critical junctures, by going forth to meet suffering or undergo imprisonment with the same faith that strengthened them when addressing the multitude.

Consider how deep and compelling must have been the realisation of the Spirit's presence on the part of those who thus took the lead. Consider, too, the eagerness, the absorption in one interest which must have characterised those who listened, on whom the Holy Spirit fell because they really heard. There must have been a unity of thought, will, and deed seldom equalled.

In what does the fulness of life consist? What does it mean to give ourselves in entire obedience to the Spirit? We know that Jesus took the little child as a symbol of heavenly receptivity, and that he chose as followers men from the common walks of life. But we are apt to forget that he was especially compassionate to those whom the world most sternly condemned. It is incumbent on us to make new estimates of life and of human nature if we are to realise what this plenitude means. We know, too, that the New Testament declares God to be love, that Jesus emphasised love above all else. But have we an idea of love such that we open wide the gate and let heavenly affection flow through us into the hearts of men?

In these striking passages we find that the social emphasis is everywhere paramount. It is what the entire multitude of men and women respond to that is worthy of record. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul." "Day by day," it is recorded, "they continued steadfastly with one accord in the temple...they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God." The disciples moved about among the various groups not as individuals with separate purposes but as one man, disinterested, eager, responsive. If condemned, imprisoned, or stoned, they met persecution in quietness, forgiving their enemies. Hence their followers were more and more impressed, while they themselves were "filled with joy and the Holy Spirit." Their one interest was to carry to Jew and Gentile alike the glad news of Jesus' teaching.

As we read these impressive records we realise how remote, individual, subjective, and critical we have become since those times, how difficult it would be for us to yield ourselves so that as one person we might be swayed by the teaching and influence of an apostle of the Spirit. We are doubtful

about the signs that followed, or the rescuing of an apostle from prison when all the doors were locked. Paul's conversion is reduced to a psychological change of heart on the part of Saul, the persecutor. Is it possible for us to have any sort of experience corresponding to this realisation of the Holy Spirit? Can we ever again yield ourselves to the fulness of the incoming life so that with one accord we shall respond with all that we possess?

The prime difficulty seems to be that we have become exclusive, we have raised distinctions around the entire horizon of the Christian life. We think we must have the right modes of worship in appropriate places, led by duly appointed officials who zealously guard all the conventions, preserve and defend the letter of the faith. Within our social life we have set apart certain times for ecclesiastical observances, while the remainder is given to worldliness. Within human nature we have separated certain faculties, as if God had no access to the rest of our selfhood. Even this carefully distinguished spiritual nature of ours is covered with qualifications and bound by authority.

When we turn to the utterances and deeds of Jesus, comparing them with the acts of other men, we find that he scatters distinctions while others rear them. Students of the Gospel have found it difficult all through the ages to state what the Master meant, for any one could quote texts and lay claim to teachings in behalf of apparently well-founded views. The remarkable fact is that every man may prove his doctrine by appealing to Jesus, every sect can lay claim to him. Jesus mingles with all classes, addresses or includes them all; and turns from the healing of the sick to the forgiveness of sins as if there were no difference. Plainly, he intended his teaching to apply to all, and to bear fruit in the conduct of all, especially the downtrodden and rejected.

Whatever the apparent ambiguities, the teachings of Jesus are clear-cut and incisive. The fulness of life is twofold. In heart, in attitude, Jesus is outgoing, compassionate, loving to all; he forgives to the last limit; he gives without stint, sacrificing all, giving his own life for his cause. In the same spirit the disciples and apostles give and forgive, enduring persecution

and denying themselves. This is as true of Paul, who is more intellectual in type, as of those in whom the emotions are in the ascendant. But there is a great difference between the Christian attitude towards a soul in need, and the doctrine which must make its way amidst a confusion of tongues. Jesus responds to those whose faith is strong, he enters the towns where faith prevails; and in every way proceeds according to principles. He neither forgives sins nor heals diseases at random, nor is he in his comings and goings led by the feeling of the moment. Always he utters the word given him to speak, doing the deeds given him to do, fulfilling the divine purpose which inspired his coming. The universality of his teachings is not, then, that of vagueness or mere generality, but that of the highest standard which corrects and fulfils other standards. The key-note is love, and the Spirit, not the letter, is everywhere the clue. Those who sympathetically responded to the life he gave, to the love radiated by his presence, carried out his teaching as a life; hence the impressive scenes in which the Spirit fell on all who heard. But from the day when the teaching began to be interpreted by the letter the foundations were laid for the controversies and ambiguities which have perplexed the world.

It is clearly out of the question to grasp the intellectual element of the Gospel aright unless we divest our thought of many assumptions and interpretations which began with the time of St. Paul, and return to the Master, taking our clue from the divine love. That love is outgoing to all, recognises all men as brothers, thereby fulfilling itself in human attitudes and hearts. But it is guided by wisdom, it is manifest according to law, in orderly form. Hence while it is expressed in unutterable tenderness and compassion, a compassion which everywhere implies democracy, brotherhood, it is always with recognition of the actual conditions of men, their hypocrisies and deceits, their false beliefs and sins. There is also constant recognition of the laws and conditions of human development, and the processes of regeneration, the pathway of the soul.

The little child is taken as symbolical of heavenly receptivity because its purity and responsiveness of heart typify the inmost attitude of implicit acceptance, but the child is not made typical of life's fulness. Mary Magdalene may well be typical of this same unqualified responsiveness; since she yielded all in her sin, when touched by the Spirit she now as fully gives herself to the new life. Yet this does not mean that the harlot is the true angel. There is hypocrisy to be detected, the false prophet must be exposed. There are any number of subtle temptations to be met. These, together with the persecutions to be encountered, require the strength and courage of mature thought and will.

The attitude of complete responsiveness consists of a number of elements corresponding to the manifoldness of human nature and the complexity of human life. First, there is the divine life in its universality, environing the hearts and minds of men. Within the compass of its wisdom all the needs, events, and goals of human life are so included that all are members one of another. But within that same wisdom the guidances that pertain to the individual are also included, hence the prayerful soul discovers the guidance which applies to the hour. Full responsiveness means that one feels a new sense of life, a consciousness of the living presence. Thus the Spirit becomes real and concrete for the individual, the individual realises its power for himself, the Gospel becomes a living revelation.

Again this responsiveness brings a new consciousness of love, not in a merely general sense, but with reference to specific opportunities at hand. General it is in a sense, since it draws us closer to all our fellows. Yet just because we have yielded ourselves thus fully to the Spirit, ready to express whatever is called out that may be for another's good, this love will assume different forms on different occasions, according to the individual needs.

We often miss this point. We say that love is love, that there is nothing more to say. But the divine love as guided by wisdom is selective, precise, both purposive and dynamic. A more interior or heavenly vision would reveal laws and connections of which we know nothing. Could we see these

hidden powers we should know why apparent coincidences take place, why people are drawn together. The inmost providences would be seen applying to the essential needs of men in the long run, hence bestowing many an experience which would seem remote from the divine love. To be willing to be God's agent in carrying the fulness of life to another would surely imply a readiness to say and do much that we would not ordinarily associate with the divine love; for we would be led to convey power which would touch and stir.

Complete responsiveness to the divine life is sometimes taken to mean mere receptivity, self-abandonment, or acceptance. But simply to relax all control, remove all restraint, might be to drop in the scale, in radical disorder. The fulness of life in the spiritual sense is the opposite of this; it is a lifting up, an aspiration that brings every part of one's being into right relation. It begins, it is true, with receptivity. But everything depends upon what we look for when we become receptive. Mere abandonment without an ideal avails but little. It might lead, not to spiritual ends, but to the riotous democracy advocated by many in our day who are followers of Whitman and various phases of feminism.

To be sure, there is a great deal in us which needs to be relaxed, especially if we are officious, autocratic, imperious. But self-abandonment is not an end in itself. What we need is not mere freedom but regeneration. The abundant life does not mean mere sacrifice, although self-sacrifice is an element of it; it means consistency, order, concentration, the realisation of the type. Therefore mere diffusion of power means nothing. The same is true of unqualified democracy, or mere equality between the sexes.

The reasons commonly assigned for this unqualified abandonment are that the will or the intellect interferes, that society has departed from nature, or that the masses of the people are neglected. But the moral should not be the negation of the intellect, the denial of the will, the mere espousal of the common types through a return to nature; the moral is, penetrate to the sources, that you may apprehend the Life which puts every power in right

relation. The intellect is not an interference when it becomes the instrument of the Spirit in the manner we have pleaded for in the preceding discussions. The will yields sufficiently when given to a definite guidance accepted as divine. Merely to return to nature is to relapse into a life of feeling, from which we must slowly react by working our way back into human life in its fulness. The one-sidedness of this sort of existence was shown the world once for all by Rousseau by his utter servitude to the passion of the moment, and his fictitious idealisation of the childhood of the race.

Jesus teaches men the ideal of entire openness in one direction only, that is, the heavenly direction. He also exemplifies the ideal by giving with absolute freedom and love. Not even when brought to those whom society had most emphatically condemned does he withhold his life in any degree. Hence our imperfect speech is taxed to the utmost when, in words of wisdom, of peace, compassion, and sympathy, we endeavour to do justice to his forthgoing love. Limited as we are, we can scarcely penetrate far enough into the realm of pure life to grasp even the idea of this full acceptance of men; for it would mean insight into the most interior life, the forgiveness which compasses every sin, the all-embracing providence of God. But, realising that the life comes first and quickens the soul, subsequently to be followed by the assimilative responses of the whole personality, we may at least appreciate where we cannot comprehend. Thus dimly discerning the ideal, we see how different it is from the sort of teaching which often passes itself off for Christian in our day.

But if we react against the alleged fulness of life which consists in unlimited expression of the passions, we take no less exception to the interpretation of the Gospel which has made of it a doctrine rather than a life. In their zeal to defend Christianity against the encroachments of falsities and sins many earnest followers have become stern and rigid in their formalism, essentially Calvinistic in temper. These are as one-sided in their way as the flexibly emotional people in theirs. It is perhaps harder for them to attain the fulness

of life than for the emotional, just because of this essentially unyielding structure of doctrine, with its implied attitude of stern positiveness.

The larger due once more comes into sight when we recollect that immortality is brought to light, as well as genuine life in the present, by this Gospel teaching. To rise to the magnitude of this idea, one is called upon not only to estimate the activities of the self in relation to the present life, but to bear in mind the eternal values. Thus we turn to the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, not simply as we considered them in Chapter IV.; but from the highest spiritual side, in a life so dedicated to the Good that for the moment no other value seems to exist. The zealous Christian has often erred here. He has been quick to condemn the world, more ready still to disparage Greece and everything for which it has stood in Christian history. In contrast, we are reminded once more that the purposes of God are rather larger than the petty plans attributed to God by men. So rich indeed are the ideals of the world that only by espousing now the Greek ideal, and now the Christian, now pursuing Beauty or Truth as an end, but again almost forgetting these, can we even approach the right working conception of the eternal values.

Whatever one's interests or vocation on earth, however, whatever one's type, there is a message for every living soul in this eternal aspect of the ideal we are considering. We cannot be thinking of many other matters when endeavouring to realise what Jesus meant by bringing life and immortality to light. We are wholly lifted above mundane ends for the moment. We are lifted into the spiritual world as the sphere of our truest selfhood—the self we shall become in entire fulness in contrast with the fragmentary, inconsistent life we so often lead amidst society to-day. We become aware afresh that the inner life is by far the most real life, and our outer life little more than a preparation in comparison. What a vision is unfolded as we try to apprehend the power that went forth with the words which were spirit and were life!

Could we have stood in the Master's presence we should doubtless have been aware above all else of this surpassing life which would have

awakened in us the consciousness of immortality, the desire to serve as the Master served, accomplishing works which should convey this quickening life to hungry and sorrowing souls. Out of this consciousness would also have come a regenerative impulse which would have made us aware first of our shortcomings, then of our possibilities. Out of it, too, would have come a creative prompting, a sense of leadership in the case of those specially gifted.

Thus from the thought of Jesus as giver of life, able to touch whom he will, summoning them into power, we turn to the thought of the Father as immanently active in the souls of men. On the one side, one thinks of the life-giving Spirit, abounding as the sunlight in the warmth and peace of a joyful day in late springtime; on the other, the definitely equipped and eager soul, able to do a work and perform it well. The divine Spirit gives the sufficiency, the power; while the human self, made individual by possession of a heavenly purpose, gives the form, the concrete efficiency. On the one side man cannot be too open, receptive; on the other he cannot be too definite, constant in pursuit of the goal which above all others benefits the individual in question. Thus the fulness of life calls for a consistent endeavour which brings the whole personality into oneness. The central idea having taken hold of the mind, the intellectual life can carry it out in its plenitude.

The difficult transition for most of us is from the thought of the individual self invested with divine power to the larger consciousness of the self as a social being. We are able to think of the self as an inner centre representing the divine life in individual form; we distinguish temperament and personality, pressing forward to the idea of the immortal individual. Further still, we grow in composure, in the power of paying attention to the changes taking place within us in contrast with the mental readjustments and physical responses. Finally, we are able to distinguish between the play of life, with its externalities and eccentricities, and the reality which expresses life's true worth, as indicated in the preceding chapter. But there we are likely to stop, unduly absorbed in the self, contemplating our relationship with the love

of God. Surely the test of the fulness of life is the love of man which follows the deepening consciousness at the centre. It seems fairly easy for people in a simple age thus to yield themselves to the social consciousness of the Holy Spirit's descent; but for us with all our interests, our inhibitions and complexities, the victory over self must indeed be a great one.

In view of the possibility, however, that a man shall be so full of the Spirit that on all who hear his words the power of God shall descend, we need to realise afresh what man's true, full nature is. Imagine the Holy Spirit descending on such a man as the rays of the partly concealed sun are sometimes seen through a rift in the clouds on objects far below. But think of these rays as coming in rhythmic intervals, quickening the heart in pulse-beats of life, then taking form through the affections and the understanding. What is called revelation would then be the intellectual apprehension of these descending rhythms, while love would be the quickening power which goes forth to accomplish deeds of regeneration. On the part of those who receive there would in turn be a corresponding openness and response, although farther removed from the central source. Thus we may conceive of the divine life as mediated in gradual descent from person to person.

This gives a different view of the spiritual life from that ordinarily held. It implies the idea that man is an agent in a spiritual sense not often considered. It places emphasis on the divine efficiency, yet shows that no spiritually minded man attains his true estate until he turns directly to the heavenly sources, not merely to Jesus as he appeared when he walked on earth not yet glorified. Hitherto the faithful one has been a disciple, he now becomes an apostle, seer, leader. He takes his clue not from what the Master was seen doing, or from words Jesus uttered, but from that which is directly given him to do.

How may we in this far-off time do our part towards attaining this stewardship? By first learning as a fact of inner experience that the Spirit is mediated to us according to our receptivity. Simply to recognise the possibility is an important step, for it involves new estimates and points

of emphasis. He who attains this consciousness in considerable degree is heaven-taught, knows by inner revelation that the soul is capable of receiving divine power. The work done in him which proves this power may at first be a great surprise, since he may never have deemed it possible thus to receive the divine light by direct descent.

When returning in thought, therefore, to those impressive scenes of old in which the Holy Spirit is said to have fallen on all who heard, let us with those faithful devotees endeavour to give ourselves in entire fulness to the Spirit as made manifest in the living present. If we have any infirmity, any condition that blocks our spiritual progress, we may specially look for a response in that quarter. We may well expect many signs to follow, even the speaking with tongues—with the words of the Spirit. The Spirit ministers to the whole individual, it comes to sustain, to guide, and to quicken. The Spirit ministers to the social whole, too, and it may again fall on all who hear when there shall be an equivalent community of interest, an equal zeal for one's neighbour, and for the values of Christian love and service.

Chapter XII. What is Truth?

WHAT WOULD Jesus have answered, had he responded to the great question put by his famous judge? Is it possible to enter sufficiently into his spirit to answer in sympathetic terms? His answer would have come in words of life far exceeding in power any which our feeble lips might utter. Yet with the record of his life and teaching before us, we may undertake to construct at least the form which his spirit might have imbued, had he made reply. We need not be concerned with the disputes which have sundered men according to their espousal of diverse creeds and systems of authority. For it is rather a question of the practical consequences in our life, provided we have insight into the living gospel.

To ask this searching question is to impose a limitation such that we have already departed from the abounding life into a mere phase of it. The universal life, descending into us from on high, is the truth, at the same time the revelation of the way, the perfect attitude of responsiveness, and the guidance which points to the efficiency of spiritual service. It is impossible to sunder the truth from the Christ. You shall not know what the truth is apart from this whole of which the intellectual principle is an abstraction. Acknowledge this efficiency, put no barrier between your activity and this the incoming tide, and if you live by the Spirit you shall know the truth or

law which first of all is love. Every line of power is traceable to a single source, every provision depends on the same will. Complete acknowledgment means to credit little to the finite self, to yield all without thinking of the reward, howbeit the human will that manifests obedience shall receive all that the heart could desire. Yet to start thus with the centre whence all power and wisdom spring, really to find heaven in unity with the Father's love, is to become aware that this love involves both the eternal and the temporal order, both the individual and society. Hence there is no stopping-place in the inner life of man. The truth concerning the foundation of our human selfhood in the image and likeness of God is at the same time the truth that sets us free from every error, from the separateness which keeps us from unity with nature and with our fellow-man. It is impossible to know the law without apprehending the love.

Truth is not first a human judgment, looking outward to nature, and referring upward to God; but is an imbuing life entering into man by the heart and later revealing its substance through insight, and the clarification of the pathway of experience. To regard it in this way would be to find that truth is a progressive revelation making its content known like a running commentary advancing only so far as we have met contention and won the victory. For as the Master's love is followed by the sword, not peace alone, so his truth undergoes controversy. The advance is not in straight lines, but in spirals or by zigzags amidst the sharp turns of which the glorious vistas of heaven are sometimes lost. Each man should be able to read the commentary, because having walked in the way he is obedient to its impartations. Other men's reports of truth would then be acceptable only so far as confirmed by this interior revelation. Would this mean the exaltation of the individual so that agreement would be farther off than ever? No, because all men walk the same universal way of life, and the first obligation imposed on each is obedient listening, so that truth may declare its import and its law. Just as each of us now apprehends and knows for himself the truth that two and two make four, using this principle of addition freely without subservience

to book or authority, so we should be able to grasp moral and spiritual truth, relating it to every item of experience, and freely advancing along our way.

Does this approach to the nature of truth omit the most important consideration, do you say? Must one first recognise Jesus as the special son of God in appropriate doctrinal terms? Even if we grant this, what is the universal consciousness which shall ensue? The Holy Spirit is universal, while the individual expression of it is one instance merely. We are undertaking to penetrate far enough to find the Spirit as the one encompassing heart which knows no separateness. In the life and teaching of the Master, however you regard him, the Spirit is still one. So is it when the consciousness of its presence falls on all who hear, giving them a deepened sense of brotherhood. It is one so long as heavenly love abides, and leads the way. It might be one even in the thoughts of men, as each goes forth to be himself in fullest measure.

The universal meaning of the incarnation would appear to be this, that God manifests His life in individuals; and each man is true to the incarnation when in attitude and heart, in will and thought, he recognises the supremacy of the Spirit. To acknowledge the way and walk in it means far more than to believe in the Master as the historical redeemer. For one shall turn in humility and constancy to the ever-presented guidance of the Spirit. The acknowledgment of Jesus as personal saviour is a step, not the culmination. The culmination is a work of years, as the human self goes forth to more faithful expression.

To apprehend this greatest of marvels as a life is later to be prepared to know what is truth in the universal language of the Spirit. To Pilate one might then say: "Behold, God lives with men in the Master here as never in all the ages of prophets and of men of low degree. With his coming the kingdom of heaven is wholly at hand. He comes not to reign as kings and other rulers command. He comes not externally to command at all, and cares naught for earthly power. Those who anticipated the coming of the Messiah recognise him not, although suspecting that his mission strikes at the root of their authority. But we know him, for we have seen his mighty works, we have

heard his words of power; and as we stood in his gentle presence, full of compassion and tenderness, we felt his surpassing love. If you demand first to know the law before you have felt the quickening of the love, you ask what is impossible. His truth sets men free, but not until they have known him and begun to follow him in the way which for him is the cross, and for some of us the path of persecution."

Furthermore, the truth of the incarnation is seen in the readjustment of details. When God is made concrete through man this divine self-manifestation means the imbuing of little things with heavenly love and wisdom. We know in this age as never before that really to apprehend the Spirit and be faithful is to realise the Spirit in each item and event. For we now know that the true universal is the filled universal, not an abstraction. That is why our age is at once scientific, social, and practical. See this law with respect to the cosmos and human society, and you will realise that it is no less true for the individual and for philosophy.

Again, there is an impressive confirmation in our age of the great emphasis placed by the Master on life. The truth about man, as one thus apprehends it, is not found in any proposition which centres the interest apart from the actual processes of daily experience. To permit the Spirit to descend upon us is not to absent ourselves from the flux of concretely given events. The triumph of modern consciousness is that it is able to find traces of the divine even in the most commonplace, and to discern the immanence of the divine love where hatred and strife abide. Never shall the victory be complete until the whole of life be included. This is the supreme message of the Christ, this coming of the divine life which draws us as one person into accord. The true universal is not only concrete but lives and creates along the way. In this sense at least, truth is still in the making and we are not fully aware of it until we pass through the experience in which it is made known.

As there is an inner light which guides us along the way, so there is in our passing experience a truth which we may discern if we consult life rather than theory. This is the meaning of the soul's travail which we are so often

compelled to wrestle for, depending on faith until we can plainly see. The struggle would be less intense if we had a method of procedure, if we realised that every moment of experience is grounded in the life of God and cannot be otherwise understood.

For most of us it is easier to think of the far-off divine ideal, immutable in the mind of God, the truth that shall be true of us sometime, than of this immanent meaning of experience. It is inspiring to reflect on perfection, and we help others most by dwelling on the ideal element in them, refusing to identify them with the crude processes and imperfections of their daily life. Yet there are times when the truth about one's present standing is the central consideration. Jesus, even with his abounding compassion, exposes self-righteousness and hypocrisy in all its forms, calls a blind-guide a blind-guide, warns his best-informed followers that they may be deceived by false Christs. The truth that sets men free applies to the total situation, clears the air by compelling man to face himself, at the same time holding out the most splendid promises to those who are thus ready to be absolutely sincere.

Nevertheless, the truth which best applies even to the darkest of present situations, and to the most external phase of life, is the spiritual truth of man's permanent being. Some effort is required to see the force of this conclusion, owing to the fact that we have drawn manifold distinctions around our nature, as if the powers of goodness had access to but few.

The Christian world has not always seen this distinction. It has dwelt on the hard truth, the stern law of righteousness, hence has emphasised the dogmas which limit and exclude; it has dwelt on the dark fact of sin, the wickedness of human nature. The return to the day when the Spirit fell on all who heard is a return to the love rather than the law, to the essential goodness of man whose imperfections the Christ makes whole.

Consider the implications of this great idealistic truth, confirming the Gospel of old. I know what is real around and about me because God already possesses my selfhood and my objects of thought and will in their fulness. The slightest moment of sense-experience is a gift from the mind of

God, if I cognise it truly and see it whole. I cannot will even in behalf of my selfish interests except through possession of a purpose whereby God is carrying my life forward to unselfish completion. Thus to see all things and events in God is the only way truly to see them. The sentient experience gives me the objects in the reality of feeling, hence common-sense is right in clinging to experience as directly apprehended, obstinately refusing to put up with abstractions. Hence it is that every now and then history witnesses reactions in favour of empiricism and a pragmatic view of truth. But what I feel, what it is that stirs within experience and makes it real, thought alone can tell me; therefore in the end idealism is right. You must go to the highest sources, see your experience grounded in the life and purpose of God, in order to apprehend it as real or true at all. Hence spiritual truth is in the last analysis the most practical.

This means that while participation in actual life is essential, while we must look there for incentives, for love, we are not exempt from that other situation which requires effort, namely, the demand that we shall think. We commonly regard the victory of the will as the more difficult, and perhaps it is. Yet many there are whose lives in large measure conform to the promptings of the heart who have not yet conquered the inertia of the understanding. The foregoing discussion gives a new incentive, for it shows that when we think we participate in the mind of God, and every idea is grounded in His wisdom. This lifts reason out of the narrow limits of merely cerebral effort.

Truth, I have said, is not merely a human judgment. This would be crediting the self with too much power, and the difficulty would be to emerge from the confines of finite self-consciousness. Truth comes first by life, and what may still be true we never can know until we have lived. Thus accepted as a gift, it develops within our consciousness as fast as we express it. Effort is required for the same reason that exertion is demanded at any point: we make a thing our own only by putting ourselves into it. Yet if the above considerations are sound, we should assimilate synthetically before we begin to analyse. Too often we begin the other way. We say. Show us the prints of the nails

in foot and hand, give us the objective evidence, and we will believe. Yet the study of history and of the human mind should have shown that nature proceeds in the other order. Discovering the world, we later find things in it, then persons, finally ourselves, first as bodies and long afterward as souls. Fully to analyse we must fully possess. The whole commands and creates the part, not the part the whole.

The moral is, begin by observing far more extensively, await occasions, listen, follow, in the outer world as well as in the inner. Go to the sources for yourself, live many-sidedly; for otherwise your thought will be meagre and your truth incomplete. But another moral as surely follows. Turn back from intellectual evaluation to life, lest you become crystallised and formal. For truth is a statement or explicit relation concerning life. It is really true if your statement conform to real experience when further comparisons are made. Truth expresses the law of being, that is, the order or system. It is exact, satisfactory, if it correctly represent the vital order, our supreme interest. Hence we know its import by seeing what lies beyond it. Our chief interest is not the report of experience, not even the formulated purpose or ideal; but the life which gives truth its being and inspires us to perennial accomplishment.

It should not be regarded as a hardship that when we go in quest of truth we deviate into side-issues, now revering the head above the heart, and now yielding too much to the persuasions of emotion, personal influence, or an institution. The way of truth is long because of its infinite richness. There may not be such a thing as truth regarded as an end in itself. But well for me if I sometimes pursue truth for its own sake, defending the rights of reason to the uttermost, steadily refusing to lower my standards in behalf of mundane things. For once let me be thoroughly loyal to truth and you shall find me pushing my way past all discouragement and all doubt, past mere argument to that eternal region where heart and head are one. Truth needs all these side-lights and controversies, it needs persons and institutions, austere devotion and infinite discrimination. Its master is like the great builder who

rears the cathedral which shall last for ages. In the end, artist, seer, poet, and truth-seeker conspire to attain the same goal.

Where love of universal truth prevails there is naturally less interest in special terms than in the common spirit which has the same message to reveal through all. We respect the special formulas, since as I have insisted, truth is concrete, and the true universal is filled. Hence there is no fact without significance for us, no person whose insight is not esteemed. But in the mind of each specialist who reveres universal truth all facts and laws converge to constitute the greater truth, just as the artist who really creates beautiful forms surpasses his art and makes a contribution to truth and goodness. There is no truth apart from particular forms and facts, any more than there can be a genuine statue without stone, carved in lines of beauty. But there is also no truth without the self that observes, analyses, and compares, rising from item to item, from events to laws, and from laws to knowledge of the whole. The self in turn is grounded in the God who possesses the whole, who inspires artist and scholar alike to work for the same high end. Well may the Spirit fall on us in reverence and humility when we realise that in rearing the structures of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, we are working together with God to create the ideal cosmos.

How shall we attain this standard in actual conduct? By first realising the truth of our human situation in the twofold manner for which I have pleaded. There is for me at any given moment two supreme considerations, the fact that my life is eternally founded in the being of God, that I am a co-worker with Him in the labours of the ages; and the fact that just now a vital process is going on which enables me to advance toward my ideal. The truth about me is ideal, it relates me to the universal and is at the same time compacted with the experiences of the hour. I am known in God's cosmos for what I would be, judged by my inmost attitude. It is my purpose which gives reality and unity to my life. All else is secondary and instrumental in this fair field of nature wherein I exercise the powers of my soul.

If I know myself in these fundamental terms I should be able to judge my fellow men righteously. Hence instead of taking my clue from appearances, I should pause to apprehend the inmost quality of the one whom I would aid or with whom I would labour, I should endeavour to know the grade or type of spiritual life seeking to express itself in its purity through the individual in question. For I may rightfully assume of my fellows as of myself that each is struggling to let the Spirit find full access and attain complete expression, but that in each there are impeding conditions and centres of friction. The struggle may not be a conscious one, my brother may not know that the Spirit is nigh, but may be wholly absorbed in the evolutionary process. My part, however, is to be loyal to the ideal element, faithfully believing that my fellow-man wishes to be universal.

If I truly discern the heart I am likely to understand the impeding conditions no less truly. I am guided first by the spiritual quality behind, and by appeal to this I inspire my brother to press forward to victory. But I hold myself open to speak whatever is called forth from me concerning the frictions and impeding conditions, telling him frankly if need be precisely what I think. The word of power that brings him to judgment may be just as needful to him as the sympathy and love which win his heart.

Is this not the method of the Christ? Repeatedly we find the Master turning from towns and from people that are not ready, condemning the dishonesty which checks and the hardness of heart which impedes, yet responsively meeting each one who is ready according to his faith, his longing, or desire. He chooses his followers because of inner fitness, he associates with men and women because of their need, whatever the company he keeps, and when he pardons, heals, or utters the freeing word, it is with respect to the inmost condition. He refrains from condemnation and from self-defence on the occasions when the world might ordinarily most expect adverse judgment or defence, and to those who have "loved much" he speaks with a compassion and responsiveness nowhere else expressed. Here we have revealed a system, a consistency which involves no compromise with

outward things, but spreads surprise right and left. How high a standard it sets for those who would be loyal to the truth of the heart! It everywhere implies fidelity to the whole, ignores no facts, acknowledges the present imperfections of human nature; but always with that utter consecration to the ideal which calls consistency out of conflict, manhood out of temptation, the soul out of defeat.

What a vision is this which reveals all the darkness yet transfigures everything into light! Rather different is it from most of our methods, doctrines, systems, and schemes for salvation or reform. It brings us to our senses at last, and shows the magnitude of the opportunity which life affords.

Chapter XIII. Social Co-operation

IN WHAT sense may we as children of a new time take that remarkable twelfth chapter of *Romans* in which St. Paul bids his readers "not to be fashioned according to this world," but to be so transformed by "the renewing of the mind" as to "prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God," and yet wherein he counsels them to take their practical clue from the structure of the "human organism?" Can we find a principle in the apostle's teaching which will guide us through the complications of the modern movement towards efficiency? Let us answer by first considering the meaning of efficiency in the modern sense, then turn to this chapter for the unifying clue.

Ordinarily, we employ the term "efficiency" with reference to the husbanding of physical resources, the saving of time and money; we at once think of the "time-planner," and of the rich employer whose wealth will be increased when each artisan shall be trained to use all implements to the greatest economical advantage. Yet efficiency in the commercial sense is the barest beginning. There remain the vocations, such as teaching, writing, the household arts, the sciences, the fine arts, and any number of occupations in which it is the quality of the work done that avails, not its supposed value in money. Efficiency in the human sense means doing the sort of work for

which one is best fitted; and doing it well, with wisdom in the use of human power, with considerateness for others, hence with charity. Every man by endeavouring thus to become efficient accepts limitations, specialises, works with and supplements other workers, leaders, or thinkers. A man becomes efficient by becoming more conscious, by using his mental equipment with greater control, more repose. The next conscious advance is towards co-operation between efficient individuals and groups.²

Thus efficiency reaches beyond one's own welfare and success even when the individual is on the alert to obtain the conditions that secure personal well-being. Ostensibly founded on a competitive basis, it forthwith enlarges into the social field, with regard for the interests of all concerned. Thus co-operation proves to be efficiency carried to a higher level, it implies the working together of partners or members in an organism, each one contributing his share for the benefit of all, and in turn aided by his existence in this mutual world. It once more becomes impossible to understand or estimate the individual apart from society.

Nevertheless, it is doubtful if we ever see the relationship between the individual and society in its true light until we overestimate either the one or the other. So many theories come into view when we look at life in a socially objective sense, that the rights of the inner world not only appear to be lost sight of, but endless confusion enters into the plans for social amelioration, and moral reform. Then, too, people do not agree in regard to the place of art or the pursuit of truth. Some would at once shape all activities in behalf of the social good, before giving the creative spirit an opportunity to show what it can accomplish. Others insist that just as there is no art for art's sake, so there is no truth as an end in itself; but all men should from the beginning explicitly serve the cause of religion.

With this wealth of considerations in view, in an age deeply concerned with social issues, one can do little more than to outline a way of thinking

2. I have elaborated this view in *Human Efficiency*, chaps. i.-iv.

which enables us to find the essentially spiritual principle amidst this contest between the individual and society. From the present point of view there is in human nature and in the divine purpose a pluralism of incentives or promptings. As we have repeatedly noted in the foregoing discussions, human nature does not spring from a single root, nor is the universe so limited that all interests must ultimately be absorbed into one. There are several ends eternally worth while, such as Beauty, Truth, the Good; and several ways of reaching each end. If all these shall serve the Good at last it will be because goodness is so varied that it requires the co-operation of activities so widely unlike that their devotees scarcely realise the connection. The individual will always be of supreme worth, and self-expression will be relatively speaking an end in itself. All things will work together towards unity, and yet the many will not be sacrificed to the one.

The ideal in social terms is organic unity. The need is not for a collectivism of all types, but for a fellowship of individuals in which there is entire willingness to recognise personal differences and gifts. We are "members one of another" in a number of respects, strong here, weak there, standing in need of co-operation not merely that the whole may be served, but so that each man by contributing his share shall realise his true nature as an individual. Thus in a measure we transcend both the individual and the social whole. Determined, with the great apostle, to "know no head but Christ," we are lovers of an eternal ideal, hence in a measure free from temporal considerations. Yet as thus spiritually free we realise that we cannot give the best of which we are capable save through service in this social world of space and time. If we pursue the True as an end, if we endeavour to produce for the sake of Beauty, if we give and serve for "love's sake only," it is still with the realisation that we serve both ideal ends and persons. If we adopt a social program tending to make the lot of man better on this earth, it is with the realisation that all earthly attainments are secondary to the eternal values.

While the modern conception of society as an organism did not exist when Paul addressed the Romans, we may adopt the apostle's teaching as an ideal for our guidance. It plainly involves the view that there are several roots to our nature, and various ends that are worth while; for it turns upon the conviction that we have different gifts. Then the practical inference follows: If we have the power to prophesy, "let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching... he that giveth, let him give with liberality"; and so on through the other interests and professions. Again, in the chapter preceding Paul's great discourse on love we have a more explicit statement of the same principles. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all." That is, God is the efficiency in whom these gifts are founded, from whom the power comes. Then follows the practical inference once more. "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal. For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit." The enumeration is far from complete, and it does not include all the gifts which we deem most important. But the significant consideration is that "all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will."

Again, the physical organism with its members is taken as the clue, and one is asked to consider the state of affairs if one member should claim to be independent, or if a single function such as seeing or hearing should prevail. "God hath set the members each one of them... even as it pleased him... giving more abundant honour to that part which lacketh; that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it." It is with profound significance that the unsurpassed chapter on love follows this statement of the social principle, as if when all is said the essential without

which all this were nought is love—the fulfilling of the law, suffering without limit, enduring everything, never seeking its own, yet never failing. However limited and local the apostle's references may have been, we know that the principles are universal, and that our problem is to secure their realisation.

When we turn to the actual state of affairs in human society, we are reminded that in many respects we seem very far from being "members one of another." Indeed, it is easy to fall into the notion that we are independent, self-sufficient. The self-preserving instinct is strong within us. It is not without reason that Hobbes and others insist that man is primarily and originally self-seeking, that man joins with his fellows merely because it is to his advantage to do so. Nietzsche goes so far as to condemn the whole Christian structure by which we have reared our beliefs in methods of gentleness and self-sacrifice. In general, the lovers of universal freedom the world over appear to be pursuing an ideal which leads to self-sufficiency. Is it not incumbent on us to be a law unto ourselves? What is law if not an external restraint imposed upon us until we shall become able to maintain the self as an independent being? Surely, it is the privilege of each man to think and prove for himself, to go to the supreme sources without mediator.

Yet we know with what a storm of criticism men like Hobbes are greeted when they insist that man was originally and is primarily a war-making individual seeking his own interests. In the end, we see the more clearly that man is by nature social, despite the fact that men combined very early for the sake of self-protection. Under varying conditions men have always had reason to band together, to secure their food in common, to fight together and govern themselves in conjunction. There are many respects in which this combining was for selfish reasons, and in many periods of human history the selfish rule of the few has been paramount. But this should not blind our eyes to the fact that social tendencies are far more fundamental. Aristotle long ago assured us of this. In our day the truth is unassailable. External and historical considerations show it, psychology verifies it; and science in general proves it. Despite the power of the few who have assumed to rule

mankind, there has been an advance in the realisation of essentially social ideals. The evidence is overwhelming when we take into account the point at which the race began, when we recollect how each of us began existence in this world.

Born helpless babes, and long dependent on a few people for sustenance, shelter, and life, our dependence does not decrease with the years but extends to vast numbers of people. The primary instinct is not to pursue our own ends, or even to combine that we may secure our own welfare while apparently serving others; the gregarious instinct is original, central, decisive. If after a time we take advantage of our neighbours that we may achieve personal ends, it is with adaptations and concessions right and left, and always within limits which we cannot transcend. On Robinson Crusoe's desert isle we might indeed revert to the stage of non-moral existence, bearing with us merely the memory of what it meant to be human. But consider how many and profound the relationships would be discovered to be were one sufficiently gifted to trace every relation to its source. For not even language is our own, and we are indeed fortunate if in the course of a rich lifetime we can add a few happy phrases to our borrowed reconstructions of the speech which others have taught us to employ. Our feelings are indeed ours, but the more we keep them to ourselves the less we understand them.

We are reactive beings, to be sure, and in a sense each makes an individual contribution. But who taught us to discover that we had a self if not the dear mother, the kind father, and the good nurse, whom we first became aware of as moving things, then as somehow different from one another, finally as other than ourselves—the self which we at length set over against other selves and which we cognise only by contrast? The self creates nothing originally. It finds its being amidst this wondrous round we call "life," it is the recipient of perpetual and multiform gifts, rendering the best account it can of an experience which unfolds like a panorama whose mechanism is unknown. The emphasis is never on the self with its gifts or contributions,

but on the world, chiefly the human world, with what it bestows, its tender services, its infinite care, on all that makes life continuously possible. If we choose we may perhaps remain an oyster. But to be a man is to be social, and although we may respond to this law unwittingly it is always with the adaptations and the penalties without which we should be unable to survive at all. Surely, it is time to pause in the great onrush towards individualism to ask ourselves what manner of life we should lead in view of our nature, our heritage, education, possibilities, and indebtedness, to say nothing for the moment of other obligations.

It is unquestionably a fact that there are many gifts yet one general human life in which they are exercised. Observe a company of people in the country during the summer, for instance. Some naturally take to gardening, others fell trees and prepare wood for fuel, while others exhibit skill in management. Within doors, both men and women as readily take up parts of the work which they can do well. Where there is freedom and spontaneity, each finds his place, and there are types enough to meet the several demands. Then when the time comes to linger around the board, to sit by the open fire and discuss some theme of consequence, these same people as quickly divide into groups, or reveal points of view, according to their type, training, or profession. If no autocrat interferes, and if no over-practical person intervenes with the insistence that the daily tasks shall be put through with a rush, the conversation assumes a fruitful form, and is highly instructive. The description is incomplete unless we note that each one contributes his part during the day by doing minor things at least which he does not like to do. If no insistent member should ever break in upon the scene it would not be true to life. But, granted all these conditions, we have an earnest of the ideal state, one in which each is contributory, in which no one is unduly coercive, and where all share the results of the day's toil. Given more complex conditions in the city, each of these people will still further reveal native bent, talent, or genius. Thus we shall have the necessary trades

and professions, the arts and sciences, manual and brain-workers, and those skilled in executive matters.

Deep within the consciousness of every human being who has attained years of thoughtfulness and is orderly, you will find a desire to adopt one of these vocations, or contribute something to the arts and sciences—allowing for the fact that inertia is also a potent human factor. Question the men of affairs you meet, and you will find any number of them who are free to confess that they do not care for business in itself, but would prefer to be engaged in one of the activities that are permanently satisfying. Meanwhile, having families to support and actually engaged in a line of trade, there is nothing to do save to continue. These practical necessities might have been differently fulfilled had there been an early adjustment between eternal and temporal interests. With more recognition given to ideal interests, each should be able to contribute what he can best do. This would mean that the vocations would decrease in number, since many now make their living as parasitical users of others' wealth, or by persuading people to buy what they have no need of, while untold thousands wait on these purchasers of luxury. In any social order the homely things would of course require attention. But such a group as I have pictured shows how readily and happily men and women meet the necessities of the day when there is no compulsion. It is not then that we dislike work or the routine that so often becomes irksome under forced conditions; it is coercion, servitude, inability to realise the complete self, that galls the human spirit. Work passes off well, and there is time for ideal interests, when the consciousness is such as I have indicated. What complicates the situation is the introduction of any number of activities that might be dispensed with were people awake to and absorbed in their native tasks.

It is the ideal element added to the common duties that makes our natural existence supremely worth while. It is as much a part of human nature to take the lead in these ideal matters as to select the homely tasks. Hence, we repeat, human work is both qualitative and quantitative. There is work

that does not at all depend on time, energy, or the materials used; while other work must be done under precise conditions and may be estimated in dollars and cents. The work of the composer, the landscape painter, the thinker, teacher, or writer, is so far removed in type from that of the carpenter, the farmer, or the merchant, that it is difficult for members of one group to understand those of another. Hence the only way thus far has seemed to judge all work by external standards, and let the brain-workers adjust themselves to the situation as best they may. Yet in all types of work there is or should be the ideal value, and in time it should be possible for all types to work together for essentially ideal ends, whatever the mundane necessities.³

If there were general recognition of these matters, our habitual attitude would be somewhat like this: Reflecting that men are by nature of diverse types, and that each should be working with a will at that which he can do efficiently, while also pursuing ideals, we would not be working to reform the world; but we would be developing side by side, each according to type, ready and eager to make an organic contribution. Sparing ourselves the thankless task of trying to redeem those who do not wish to be patterned after ourselves, ceasing to complain and to give way to adverse criticism, we would endeavour to fulfil our appropriate functions effectively. Inhibiting all bitterness and officiousness, we would strengthen our co-operative endeavours by mingling more sympathetically with our fellows, observing them to learn what they are fitted to do, and assisting them to achieve their types. Next, we would probably seek to attain consistency between the systems that prevail in the home, the school, the State-house, the university, and the church. It would then be possible to help the sons and daughters of men to begin in early youth to achieve the type, granting to each the privilege of being what the inmost self ideally seeks to be. With consistency in these matters, we might at last control the over-masterful commercial

3. See *Human Efficiency*, chap. vii.

world, and make genuine headway in conquering human selfishness. The world of business once conquered, we could strike at the remaining luxuries, eccentricities, and the lassitude of those not even at that late day awake to their true privilege.

All this is a way of saying that nature itself is organised on the co-operative basis. The case of the physical organism is merely the most obvious example. The human mind illustrates the principle as well, with its perceptions, volitions, emotions, and ideas; its feelings of pleasure and pain, memory-images, strivings after ends; its subconscious after-effects, creative processes, rational constructions, and moral evolutions. Our tendencies, desires, and moods, together with the conflicts between our lower and higher natures are so many and so diverse that we sometimes despair of attaining consistency. Yet, although many, the members of our mind belong to one self, and the problem is the assignment of work to each so that all shall co-operate in the life of reason. Co-operation between the psychical members is what we mean by "self-control." Co-operation at the centre of the individual's life insures the moral order. The more complete at the centre the more complete is the life of the individual, and the more likelihood that he will fill his appropriate place as a member of the family. The family, we agree, is the ideal basis for enlargement into the state and nation. In vain do we endeavour to attain the right reconstruction unless we begin with nature and the self.

Thus considering the inter-relatedness of the mental, moral, and social worlds, one would naturally pursue one's meditation as follows: "Here I am a human being, a member of a family into whose hospitality I was born as an innocent and dependent guest. I had no choice in these beginnings, I have little choice and power now. But I am overwhelmed by the thought of the multitude who daily labour to give me sustenance, to shelter and clothe me, to sustain my mental life, and make it possible for me to enjoy the advantages that minister to all sides of my nature. Truly, I have reason to be grateful down to the foundation. The whole world is mine through the

generosity of my brothers. I am bound to these by numberless links, sorrows, joys, opportunities, and moral relationships. Slight indeed is the part I can repay. I am persuaded, however, that I can be of service, now that I have in some degree learned my dependence, and have begun to be touched by gratitude. Let me then do my part, adding more from year to year. Let it never be said that I work for duty's sake alone, but because in the mere joy of existence I seek to brighten the lives of my fellows, contributing my share to the world's work. If all should endeavour thus to serve, the kingdom of heaven would come indeed."

There is a sense in which the individual becomes more separate as evolution proceeds, until finally we come to the genius who appears to think the world exists for him. Thus Goethe has one love affair after another, at the expense of young maidens; and forthwith proceeds to produce a new story or poem. Time was when the king or the general seemed to hold that the world was an arena wherein to exercise his own powers. Yet the more we learn about great men the more dependent we find them. Oftentimes it is the multitude who labour that the great man may be great to whom the reward is really due. In our social age it is becoming more difficult for any man however talented to rise above his age—the age of wide-spread distribution of knowledge and power. The great man in any age is not one who creates wonderful works of genius out of his head; but one who is uncommonly open to what the masses feel, who interprets his age. In our day increasing numbers of thoughtful people are able to do their own interpreting.

It is no longer necessary, then, to prove that no man is separate. We now turn naturally and readily to the conception of an organism as the ideal of what society should be. Critics have indeed pointed out that the illustration is incomplete, since we are by no means bound together in a biological manner like the members of our body. Yet each of us is limited in such a way as to suggest that each has his function, that each is an organ of life. Now, the province of an organ is to serve the whole without intruding its

own function upon the activities of others. Certain organs are necessarily more important than others, there must be a head, and a source of supply; while the others work under the guidance of the head, carrying forward the processes of assimilation and production. Hence the concept of the organism if carried out to the full involves a scale of values, adaptation of means to ends, a prevailing purpose, and a common life which unites all the members. There can be no dead level in an organism, hence no respect in which one function is as good as any other. There is inevitably a greater and a lesser good, and the lower must be subordinate or the higher will not be realised. We are apt to forget these qualifications when we employ this concept, as if society were somehow less highly differentiated than a physical being. As matter of fact, all that the biological concept suggests is required and far more. Certain functions in human society are bound to be more important to the end. Some men must have more power and take the lead. Other functions are sure to be for ever secondary. Moreover, men differ in capacity, in the actual area of the brain to be cultivated; hence no ideal is applicable which assumes that they can all think and work alike, or earn the same reward. Therefore, men and women naturally fall into a scale, according to types and powers. It is the glory of some ever to labour at the common tasks. Some never aspire to ascend beyond these. In the end, however, they may suffer less; for with the greater power comes the greater capacity to endure sacrifice, to make heroic struggles and win herculean victories.

Does this reasoning mean that the welfare of the whole is so far supreme that no man can realise himself save by fulfilling one of the well-known functions that keep the organism intact? Must we ever be thinking of service, duty, and subordination through obedience? Say rather that if a man desire to engage in a special work, say in the sciences, this interest will be found contributory, so that there will be no clash between individual and social interests. His explicit motive may be the pursuit of scientific truth, and he may be so far absorbed as to forget that everything exists for the sake of

practical good. But forthwith while working in his laboratory he may make a great discovery of value to medical science or to some other practical science. Plainly, his scientific absorption is justified. Hence there would appear to be reason for including the widest number of motives possible, allowing room for experiments and novelties without end, and for pioneers without number. No thought of ours can as yet compass all the ends for which mankind exists, and no conception is large enough to summarise even the ends already known in such a way as to prove that they pertain to a single organism. The best that can be said is that society as an organism is growing. What it shall yield no one can tell. Each age calls for a new classification, each restates the eternal values. No one knows what you or I can do until we have tried, nor shall we truly know until the experiment is completed.

It is necessary to endure a certain strain between the individual and society, just as we adapt ourselves to the tension between progressives and conservatives. Every party must be off-set by another, every tendency must be at some point counteracted, every voice occasionally overruled. Society exists for all the people, yet no government by the multitude has ever proved a success. The aristocrats will appear whatever precaution is taken. An abuse corrected here may reappear there. Yet on the whole there is progress, by degrees so slight that even when we consider long periods of history it is difficult to discover actual headway. For everything gained that is new an equivalent is given, and for the most part all that we can confidently state at times is that changes have ensued. In a measure we are equally well off under any discoverable condition, that is, until we attain years of discretion and correct external abuses by modifying our own attitude.

Society is a pluralism of forces and types so rich in diversities that we marvel that it can hold together. The first implication is that there is room for all, and that diversity even to the danger point is a good. The second implication is, that this diversity being a fact, each group owes it to the whole to contribute its organic part in a splendid manner. If the tension between the individual and society, between groups and groups, did not exist, it

might be impossible to attain the greatest good. If, as Emerson assures us, "society is a conspiracy against every one of its members," we must see that society does not outwit us.

At heart, there is probably no warfare between what I would do and what is demanded of me; since all gifts are from the same Spirit, and one Life actuates us all. Therefore I need not be troubled because I profoundly wish to indulge in this chosen work which takes me temporarily aside. Nature accords me the right to believe in myself, and society will find a place for my gift when it is wrought. Let me work with a will, accomplishing my end as well as it can be attained, and I shall not only contribute this particular product but give of my own life to those who catch my enthusiasm or consecration. It conditions change and I find myself transported to another clime, let me adapt myself to the new conditions and continue as if nothing had happened. I need not greatly trouble over the wrongs of the world if I am doing my part to contribute what I can. Nor need I be distressed that people care so little for the eternal values.

Very far we have travelled in our study of these questions from the commercial efficiency which seeks to obtain a few more foot-pounds of energy from the labourer, and from all schemes for social reform which involve a reconstruction of society for the benefit of a single class. In so far as either tendency leads to the extreme, we need an ideal of social co-operation so formulated as to include the spiritual values. To understand the principles underlying the vocations, arts, and sciences, is to pass beyond private grievances to essentially human considerations. No social reconstruction can be satisfactory which does not include all types and essential needs in a genuinely human spirit, with due regard for brotherhood.

To be sure, the class leader may be needed to win recognition for the special interests of his group. Extremes beget extremes, and the more autocratic a group becomes the more vigorous will be the reaction. Hence a French revolution is required to put an end to an ancient regime. Hence a reconstruction is in process in our day because of the enormous power

of the trusts. Meanwhile, you and I who endeavour to take a broad view of our social situation are chiefly concerned with the principles which will insure human welfare under normal conditions. Whatever plan must first be tried before the present changes shall be complete, we are convinced that social co-operation is the end for which we should strive. One need not spring from a class of workers who have been wronged to understand the real situation. As brain-workers we may be as profoundly aware of the vital issues as the manual labourer who has been oppressed by capitalism. The intellectual worker is not likely to have a grievance because, understanding the forces at work, he does not expect a change until, through social evolution, it can wisely come about, in view of all the influences that enter into our social existence.

The true brain-worker knows that we are spiritual beings, hence that the social regeneration which the divine Spirit has in process for us cannot be for a merely external end. He knows that in deepest truth we are "members one of another" in the republic of the Spirit. Next to the thought of God as the great All-Father, no idea is more important than this; for it implies a philosophy of the brotherhood of man, it calls for love of the neighbour. Hence one's conception of social co-operation begins from within and from above. It begins from within, since all growth or development is from a centre; and the individual must come to judgment, be touched by love for his fellows, before he can discern his proper place in the social whole. It begins from above, since the social order is founded in the divine order, the efficient causes are spiritual; and it is the creative Spirit that is leading us through the social issues by which we are beset into the larger social order yet to be. What we need above all is steady, persistent, convincing emphasis on this, the divine aspect of the social process, that we may never attribute causal efficiency to environmental factors alone, and that we may ever co-operate with what we believe to be the divine tendencies in the society of which we form part. Granted this inner vision, granted a conception of the surpassing presence of God, we may indeed discover traces without

number of the divine activity in those common things of life which otherwise would seem sheer obstacles. Our part is to cling to the ideals of justice and freedom despite all semblances to the contrary, while steadily working to better the conditions of our fellows by taking our clue from the spiritual ideal.

Chapter XIV. The Presence of God

LOOKING BACK over the ground which we have traversed in this volume, let us summarise certain of the principles which have come into view, with reference to the divine presence as a criterion. In order to interpret the various types of faith it is necessary, first, to have sure knowledge of one system or type of faith, a system which one knows well enough to realise where one stands. For example, one may well undertake to grasp Christianity in something like thoroughness of detail before turning to the study of another religion. This would mean from the present point of view the endeavour to know the original Christianity of the Gospels, prior to the various theological interpretations which have been read into it, also insight into the inner or spiritual meaning of the Bible. Too many in our day espouse an imported faith without realising that they never have truly grasped their own. To know another religion, one should carry within one's consciousness an essentially spiritual standard, that one may look beyond the letter to the Indwelling Spirit as the source of all religions.

In the second place, it is important to have a method of thought, that one may start with clearly ascertained facts and proceed to general principles. By this one means not the usual sort of thinking, but thought "with the spirit," from the inner centre; thought guided by spiritual insight and tested by

reference to inner experience, and the realisation of the divine presence. Thus one may think in terms of truly fundamental principles, gathering evidences of divine guidance and divine purposes. Third, knowledge of human nature in psychological terms is imperative, that is, knowledge of the types of inner experience, the nature of the subconscious, the part played by belief, emotion, and the will. In Chapter VI we have seen that much depends on one's theory of the inner nature of man. The fourth need is for knowledge of the experiences through which people pass on their way to universal faith, such experiences as conversion, and the deep inner changes which show that there is "a pathway of the soul." This knowledge will help us to discern the stage of development attained by those whom we can serve, the degree of enlightenment, and the type of thought. The test in all these matters is of course one's own insight into the inmost realities of the spiritual life, an insight which depends on present openness to the inner light; not on the memory of past experiences or on others' records of their insights.

Fifth, knowledge of the forms of thought in which spiritual teachings are clothed, such as creeds, theological beliefs, the letter of the Bible, and philosophical systems; for if we would lead men into the Spirit we must understand the limitations and values of the letter. This knowledge will naturally be associated with the psychological principles mentioned above. One will connect Calvinism, for example, with a certain type of mind, noting the rigidities and dogmatisms of the personal equation. A wholly different type will be associated with a practical interpretation of Christianity, with warm-hearted love for all mankind.

Finally, there is need of a practical working faith by which to test in daily conduct the principles that prove most acceptable. This is the most important consideration, since the best evidence that can be given of the divine presence must be substantiated by experience. The sermon on the mount involves such a faith. If one is endeavouring to live by the teaching that whatever we have need of is already provided by the Father, and that one's part consists in fidelity from day to day, each week and month will

yield profound evidences of the spiritual law. The simple teaching of the Friends concerning the inward light, with its deliverances or guidances ready at hand in time of need, implies such a faith as we mean.

Equipped with these principles, one will no longer accept supposedly spiritual teachings merely because they "appeal" to the sentiments, because one "likes" the person who expounds them, or because they confirm ideas already believed. If already in possession of a system which meets all theoretical and practical needs, one will endeavour to make it more explicit by singling out its cardinal principles and studying their relationships. If universal, one's principles will be found verifiable by reference to the literature of the ages, therefore not dependent on any one mode of statement. Thus, like the statement that two and two make four, they will stand for an ideal science everywhere accessible to man. In so far as one understands such principles, they may be thought or applied in any connection, and be put to the test by reference to the inner consciousness for which we have pleaded. Thus each devotee of the Spirit will tend to become "a church in himself," bearing within the soul a "dictate" or standard concerning the True, the Beautiful, and the Good.

Moreover, this empirical or practical method as we have considered it involves a social corrective. Instead of approaching life with a theoretical scheme which apparently predetermines whatever one shall find, one approaches social questions by "doing," by putting things in motion, working at that which is at hand, working with others; then comparing notes, endeavouring to learn the right principles through study of actual conditions. The basis of such co-operation is unity of spirit, mutual love for the same ends growing out of mutual tasks; recognition of diverse views, gifts, types, individuals; and readiness to contribute that which one can do best, with the realisation that it has necessary limits yet is no less essential. This basis further implies the ideal of a life well founded on the earth, with constant regard for the rational conditions of human existence, yet with an eternal or spiritual end in sight as the highest incentive. Each one should

then do his own work well, making a fine art of it, and thus endeavour to fulfil the normal functions of natural life; yet each should live and labour as an essentially social being, never permitting private ends to intervene, or to intrude upon the genuine fellowship of the Spirit. Otherwise stated, salvation will be attained through the ideal which Professor Royce has so strongly pleaded for in terms of "loyalty to the community."⁴ Love to the neighbour will thus be a sign of the genuineness of love to the Lord.

There are two clues, then, which lead us in the direction of a universal spiritual science, the intellectual and the social. The intellectual makes clear the principles, supplies a criterion, while the social guides the way to the true type of conduct. To entertain this ideal of a science is not by any means to underestimate the individuals who have led the way until the dawning of our social century. The time may come when, following the social clue, we shall find a new element in the Bible regarded as not merely "the word of God" in the intellectual sense but as the record in essence of the entire spiritual history of man, culminating in the ideal of brotherhood. It will then be a question of the entire spiritual universe as revealed by the greatest of books. We will turn from the recorded word to the spiritual world immediately environing us to-day, and find in the living Spirit the source of the great universe thus made manifest. The whole system of things, and particularly the human race, may then seem to us to be the incarnation of God. We shall then revere the prophets of the Spirit as we already esteem the pioneer scholars in the field of science. The greater the scholar, the more steadily he maintains the universality of the truth to which he has called attention, regarding himself as the humblest instrument of the wisdom which all may verify. The greater the prophet the more truly he stands for the universal union of the finite spirit with the Supreme Spirit. The prophet may indeed so far reveal the way, the truth, and the life that he can in all sincerity declare himself the incarnation of the Father. But when the last word has been

4. See *The Problem of Christianity*, New York, 1913.

uttered in behalf of the prophet the main interest is the universal reality thus manifested. The "way" is all that is claimed for it if all may indeed walk in it, taking up their crosses to follow the Master; "the truth" is true in case all by equal fidelity may know it; and "the life" is complete for those who obey the injunction to be perfect even as their Father in heaven is perfect.

The ideal for each is to start with experience as we find it, including the lowest and the highest elements, then interpret experience in the light of principles which actual analysis reveals. If we appear to have assigned too much value to individual experience, to the self with its whims and eccentricities, and the needs of individual salvation, we must make allowance for these personal equations. But the same should be true of any custom, or doctrine which we have acquired through inheritance, education, or the acceptance of authority. It is as important to know when the self hinders as when it aids. Escape from it we cannot. No one should expect to make headway in the universal world who has not fundamentally reckoned with it.

Authority is accepted by you because you believe in yourself or your experience, however eager you may be to make light of the personal equation. Although handed down through the ages, your creed as believed by you is so nearly your own creation that you cannot understand it apart from personal reactions. Even in the case of the most unthinking person the creed fits the believer and is adopted on grounds that could be made explicit. Our part as students of human nature and philosophic truth is to make these personal factors plain. Only by becoming aware of our presuppositions can we understand the intellectual structure which we bear about within us. There were tacit judgments by which we accepted as real and true what we now believe, and all our beliefs have had a natural history. That history is as important for us to know, on the one hand, as the processes of thought, on the other, by which we now scrutinise and reconstruct. For better or worse the nature of things makes itself known in our consciousness. What we wish to know is this universal nature as all men cognise it, despite their varying notions and moods. Hence you and I may be regarded as any

self contemplating inner experience in the manner in which this experience conceivably exists for the entire race.

This objectivity of thought, it may be said, is possible with regard to such matters as chemistry and the other special sciences deal with. The scientific man must of course divest himself of all peculiar opinions and learn to know nature as it exists for all. Likewise with all branches of rational thought, the main interest is the discovery of the nature of things. This is especially true in the ethical realm, for of what value is an ethical principle unless disinterested? But that which interferes with scientific acquisition, namely, inner feeling, personal sentiment, is especially dear to religion. Science cares little or nothing for the individual, but is concerned with types, groups, laws, systematic classifications; whereas in the spiritual life individual experience counts for everything, and religion is naught without emotion. In fact the long warfare between religion and science shows how far removed the spiritual life is from the sphere to which rational analysis applies.

In striking contrast with the uncritical point of view is the modern assumption that religion can be made rational, adapted to the mature mind. In the face of all doubts with regard to the ability of science to deal with the phenomena of the spiritual life, the students of science have steadily carried the scientific method into the religious realm, so that it has merely become a question of the line of approach. The greater the number of points of view the more reason for employing the method found so fruitful in other fields, namely, the comparative method.

Time was when even in regard to the myths of the world a sharp distinction was drawn between the classic myths of Greece and Rome, and the *Vedas*, on the one hand; and those of savage peoples, on the other. It was stoutly insisted that there could be no connection between the myths of uncivilised lands and those of the Indo-European peoples. But students of comparative mythology broke down this distinction by examining the myths of various peoples to see what light they might throw on those of Italy, for example. The result was the discovery that human nature is the

same in its myth-making as in all other respects the world over, that is, the same myths have widely prevailed.

The same results were obtained when scholars with equal freedom from prejudice investigated the religious customs and beliefs of the world. It used to be supposed that the tribes and nations were without religion unless perchance they had come in contact with Christian missionaries. But the views concerning primitive peoples that once held sway have given place to the conclusion that in all times and among all peoples the human spirit has expressed itself in religious forms. Scholars who have taken pains to live among savages, one with them in customs and interests for the time being, have discovered native expressions of the religious spirit, and given accounts of their investigations that have put out of date the former assumptions in regard to the exclusiveness of religion. Religion is a part of human life and may be expected anywhere. If it assumed crude forms among primitive peoples, the same is true of civilised peoples. Religion is still backward in giving rational account of itself.

What philosophy now undertakes to do is to begin with human nature and experience as everywhere found, treating the religious life together with its manifold expressions as part of life in general. There is a religious nature of things, just as there is a moral or an æsthetic nature. The religious interest is one of the forms of reaction in the presence of the cosmos for which human life is everywhere notable. Inasmuch as this interest is part of life as a whole, what is needed is a general view of human experience in the light of which this specific interest may be understood. Thus we were led in Chapter IV to a general view of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, assigning to religion the highest of these eternal Ideas.

The change in emphasis from theological doctrine to religious experience is one of the profoundest changes of our day. Formerly it was supposed that certain great doctrines were handed down intact, and that these produced the spiritual life of man. In the case of individuals, the resulting experiential processes of regeneration and the like were supposed to come about

because the individual had accepted the right doctrine. This assumption is still made, to be sure, in our day. The child, for example, is supposed to be instructed in all respects so that he may later enjoy the full benefits of right belief. Hence the idea is put before experience, creed is revered above immediacy of life. Indeed this order of things prevails in so authoritative a manner that many young people have no opportunity either to experience or to think for themselves before the supposedly correct ideas are instilled into their minds. But historically speaking, men must have had spiritual experiences long before they had moral codes, creeds, sacred books, and ecclesiastical institutions. By the time the priests began to collect the unwritten laws and arrange them in a code, and formulate the traditional teachings in authoritative modes, religious belief was already ancient and had begun to be crystallised. The priests have held sway through insistence upon the letter. The struggle back to the Spirit has been a long one.

The external forms may of course be studied in a helpful manner. Thus in our day we have such aids to draw upon as archaeology, ethnology, sociology, and comparative philology. Each of these sciences throws light on the religious nature of man, and in accordance with their data the student may gradually approach the heart of the subject. Then there is the history of religion in China, India, Persia, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, and other lands. The study of religions by the comparative method begins at this point. Theology of course bears profound testimony to the existence of religion, and one should not despise it merely because it has so often been allied with traditional authority and with crystallised modes of thought. It is a question in each case of the religious life without which these special sciences would never have come to be. The danger lies in mistaking the crystallisations for the vital processes which left these traces in passing on from stage to stage.

The radical difference between a theological and a scientific interpretation is this: Theology ordinarily assumes that there is both natural and supernatural religion, the latter being authoritatively revealed, while the former is due to "man's unaided thought." The philosopher points out that all religion is part

of man's reaction in the presence of impressive phenomena. In the so-called natural religions he finds the same principles which characterise those called supernatural. In fine, one phase of human life demands a spiritual origin or basis as truly as any other. It is impossible to account for the simplest facts of self-consciousness without examining as deeply into life as one must in order to account for revelation. Hence the old distinction between the natural and the supernatural utterly breaks down. It is all supernatural, if you please; for unless we have more than nature to start with we cannot explain nature in any rational sense of the word. Or, it is all nature, and the ultimate question is, What is the nature of things?

The assumption that so-called natural religion, science, and philosophy, are due to man's "unaided reason," while "supernatural religion" is due to revelation, would be like the statement that God was Father of the Hebrews only, while all other men had earthly parents. There is no "unaided reason," no unaided moment in human life or thought. Unless God existed as universal Father, men would never have come to believe in Him, to seek His presence in prayer or worship. Unless men already possessed the Spirit within them, they could not find it in cosmos or Bible. Possessing the Spirit, men do indeed "feel after Him if haply they might find Him," the universal Father of the race. The special teaching thus utterly loses its significance unless universalised. Yet, as we have seen throughout this book, "unless one carry a criterion of the divine presence down from the heights one has no way of avoiding the assumption that one thing is as good as another on the plains below.

Let us see, then, if we can find a type of imagery devoid of objection, and suggesting the universality of the presence of God as the cause of thought, life, philosophy, and religion.

One of the most deeply impressive sights in certain of the smaller European cities, such as Cologne, is the dominance over all buildings and monuments of a great cathedral. In size, height, and majestic proportions, the cathedral not only rises above all else, but is the centre of a multitude of structures,

giving its name to a multitude of activities and industries, and organising the municipality into a noble type of unity. One can scarcely approach the cathedral city or the cathedral itself without an absorbing sentiment of reverence. Once in the great square from which the impressive structure rises, one is constrained to pause in reflective admiration to gain a sense of the majestic whole before drawing near to study it in detail. Thousands have worshipped within its walls, revered by them as sacred, other thousands come and go during the days and weeks extending into the centuries. Out of respect for these earnest worshippers, if for no other reason, one pauses yet again to make sure that one's attitude is right. Once within the hallowed walls, one is lifted in sympathetic imagination by the common spirit of those who have knelt in silence there, or participated in the many services which its aisles and transepts have witnessed. The presence of a single penitent bowed in prayer, or attendance at one or two services, would not evoke such reverential sentiments as these. But to feel the touch, as it were, of the general spirit which has accumulated throughout the decades is to be lifted above mere time and space in contemplation of eternal ideals. It is not a time for controversy, or for reflection upon the unenlightened ideas that have found expression there. One thinks rather of the patient labour of successive generations of men who planned and reared the massive structure, carving each of its statues, designing its stained-glass windows, and painting the pictures it contains, not merely as works of art, but far more as works of worship. One is carried back to the early centuries of the Christian era, then on down through the ages of struggle, darkness, and dawning enlightenment, to the history of this particular building. Thus the cathedral itself, by its wealth of suggestions, enables the mind to disengage itself from mere details and survey vast stretches of time. The very structure is a witness to man's belief in the existence of the eternal order. By its aid one triumphs over the pettiness and the separateness which have hindered men from entering into full appreciation of the everlasting realities of the heavenly kingdom. Seated within the cathedral, after one has wandered

about the aisles for a time, one is able to gather many impressions into a rational whole, rising above the particulars to the universal idea which includes them. Hereby the visible in a profitable way typifies the invisible and enables the mind to grasp spiritual wholes with great definiteness.

In a similar manner one might well approach the supreme subject of the presence of God. Not that one should work the mind up to a pitch, and pursue the great idea in an ecstasy of compelling emotion. Not that God is remote from the common marts of life, or that the tourist's attitude in approaching an ecclesiastical city precisely exemplifies our ideal. For one is eager to know the God of calmness who is discoverable in the clear light of day, without mystery or special persuasions, after doubt has enjoyed full opportunity to exercise its sway, and suffering has revealed its many meanings. The subject of the divine presence is not only worthy of all that is in man, it unifies long reaches of thought and impressive phases of varied experience extending far back into early life. Just now one is intent on doing the subject justice, bringing the eagerness of the traveller who is yielding himself to the tourist's life to the full, and studying the cathedral in the light of all that he knows about art and religion, combined with the measured reflection which quiet repose in the cathedral inspires. Whatever one may say by way of precise definition and analysis, there is a sense in which the subject appeals deeply to the experience of those who have stood in the presence of the majesty of God, and who therefore know what the signs mean when one refers to the unutterable peace.

It is well, then, to take off one's shoes in Oriental reverence, acknowledging the surpassing beauty and the encompassing love. He who is unaware of the spiritual wholeness of the great idea can scarcely hope to appreciate the details in their true light. Men and women have laboured to formulate a definition and failed, just as individual worshippers in the cathedral have remained within the narrow confines of experience. Ordinarily the theologian insists that the great religious ideas are debased by attempted definitions. Yet one may rise above all these failures in a compelling moment

of thought, realising that while no conception of the divine nature is adequate, each idea of Him contains a measure of truth, each is intended to express this surpassing whole to which one turns in humble acknowledgment. Thus to ennoble the attitude and elevate the heart is not, as the skeptic might insist, to create the Deity whom one is about to worship; but to attain the receptivity, the humility, and filial response needed to do justice to the great idea in any of its phases.

At other times the mind is rightfully engaged with lesser matters, with inquiries into the nature of human powers or the reactions of human conduct. Each of these is in its way a survey of the whole, even when the conclusion seems inevitable that God is man's idea, changing with the growth of theological conceptions. Yet each is in a similar sense disappointing, so that one frequently exclaims, "The Being whom I mean is far beyond all this." Thus when conscience has revealed its authority, intuition its centralising insight, faith its vision of possibilities, love its ideals of conduct, peace its surpassing depths, and reason its marvellous constructions, one is still dissatisfied. The difficulty is that the mind cannot at one time summarise the subject-matter sufficiently to produce a conception of all that makes its appeal in the reflecting mind, to the adoring and serving heart. Hence one turns to experience, to the endeavour vividly to realise the living divine presence, with the hope that it may complete what thought has imperfectly begun. It seems as justifiable to prepare the mind for the unusual coming of this realisation as to make sure, in other connections, that reason is accomplishing its task with utmost thoroughness.

Two considerations greatly aid the mind in this regard: the fact that the experience of the divine presence is universal, and the no less profound fact that this presence is an interpretation, a rational construction. That is to say, the divine presence is not limited to particular times and places, certain types of men, or authoritative channels of communication; but is signalled by the aspirations of men throughout the ages, corresponds to a need of human nature. Again, human thought has been doing its part

in all these ages to articulate the universal presence. The heart and mind have worked at a common task, and various types of men have added their temperamental visions. The fruits of these efforts are within our possession, and we may assimilate and add to them. They imply an awakening of spiritual consciousness in the soul of man which is attributable to nothing less than the activity of God Himself, compelling belief as it were, regenerating the life, bestowing new objects upon the mind. The same sources of power and conviction are open to us. What we need is an illuminating clue which shall give us confidence, and lead beyond the narrowing limitations of our thought.

There is a witness of the Spirit which makes its content known to us even though we have no clear idea of the way in which its gifts are bestowed. It does not appear to be merely immediate, like an independent or objective reality just outside our selfhood; but is united with our life through the agency of conscience, the promptings of the heart, the creative power of reason. It is not simply mediate, as if we arrived at the barely formal idea of the existence of God through philosophic reflection. Apparently we know this witness only through thought, in terms of the idea, by interpretation of experience; yet without a compelling experience which seems to transcend all relatedness would we ever possess the facts which give content for thought? Is it not necessary always to assign the prior place to the heart or inmost centre through which the human spirit is quickened, that we may have a sufficient cause for the subsequent thoughts about the existence of God?

To you God's presence may be a supernal love commingled with a life of service, suffusing the days and weeks with a sweet peace never to be analysed, and seemingly foreign to all rational thought. To another it may be a scarcely imaginable feeling which rare souls of wonderful endowment apprehend in supreme moments, a feeling never coming within the compass of the life of ordinary mortals. Again, God may seem discoverable only in and through the daily life of common humanity, in no way subject to special

endowments. There is no objection to any of these references to the divine presence so long as we remember that the Spirit is individuated in every human soul, and that each has a right to characterise the ineffable presence as he will.

The witness of God's presence is precisely this ascending purpose of yours by which you strive towards Him, now doubting, now obeying, again clarifying your thought; and insistently penetrating behind appearances to discern the heart of life. Do not sunder His witness from these, your most vital and intimate strivings, as if He were foreign or objective to these; find Him amidst the very processes which touch your soul most deeply. For the conviction that compels, the heart that adores yet in humility confesses its weakness, the purpose that gives unity, the individuality that stands forth with power, the genius that masters—what are these if not the very channels by which God finds access to you, the instruments by which His work is achieved? Through these He is made one with you in ways which you cannot discern because absorbed in the work at hand. When these function you are performing your task, finding your proper place in the world. It is only in retrospect that one can discern the implications of the divine presence, on the one hand; and those of the human spirit with its social affiliations, on the other.

Far be it from me, therefore, to say what the presence of God shall mean to another. Each must approach as he would draw near the great cathedral, in the humility which his own consciousness inspires. The psalmists and prophets, the apostles and the Master have told us in their way what the great presence means. The poets have sung and the philosophers have interpreted the presence in their fashion. There is a wealth of imagery and thought to draw upon. Again, there are the dues afforded by the most consecrated souls we have known, the greatest hours of worship. One may gather hints and ideas from all these sources, and develop them into a general view of the divine life. Or one may begin at once with the study of one's own inner experience, turning to the Bible, the poets, and

philosophers, in search of dues to the right interpretation. What one means to say above all else is that there is a fundamental difference between mere externals or mere ideas, creeds, institutions, and modes of worship; and that inmost region where the soul is intimately united with God, a region which in a sense is ineffable and peculiar to the individual. What the poet has said concerning truth applies even more to the divine love, as the source of this deepest element of human life.

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whatever you may believe.
There is an inmost centre in us all,
Where truth abides in fulness; and around,
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
This perfect, dear perception—which is truth.
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
Binds it, and makes all error; and to know
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without. Watch narrowly
The demonstration of a truth, its birth,
And you trace back the effluence to its spring
And source within us; where broods radiance vast,
To be elicited ray by ray, as chance
Shall favor.

This heavenly source of life and wisdom within the soul of which the poet sings is surely the first consideration in our whole study of the divine presence. The Spirit must be known by the individual to be known at all, and there will always be a sense in which the individual's experience will be incommunicable. The spiritual life grows from the centre and depends

on the degree of inward enlightenment. True prayer is of the heart, God is worshipped from the heart if worshipped "in spirit and truth"; and it is he whose heart is touched who most faithfully loves his fellow-men. The love that is indeed of God goes forth to prove its origin and its worth by the longing to share its joys and beauties. The truth that is discerned in the inmost centre is the truth that brings freedom, the universal truth which all may know. The self one truly learns to know within is the same self that is learned by contact with the external and social worlds.

Whether we employ the terminology of the Hindoo who adores all men as one Being or Self, or worship side by side with the most devout believer in the Deity of Christ, the spiritual result is ever the same. Each one with a voice touched with reverence bespeaks the same Father. Whatever the distinctions drawn or omitted, each distinguishes the quality of the ineffable Essence from ordinary thought and life. Thus both may clasp hands in the cathedral of the Spirit in brotherly love and fellowship. Since all men are one Self, "and That art thou," says the Hindoo, all men should be treated as yourself: you should not injure or wrong any one, since in thus committing an injury you would be doing wrong to yourself. All are "members one of another," says the Christian, and "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The ways meet in our cathedral. As we turn from the cathedral, let them never fall apart.

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