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A philosophy of life

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PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction.

Philosophy has been defined as "simply an attempt to give an account of experience, or it is a man's way of looking at things." By experience we mean all the data of life. All the ills and goods that a man is heir to, go to make up his experience. When one asks another if he has ever known of such a thing in his experience, he means his life, his existence. Experience not only includes the conscious life, but the unconscious life; for sleep on an average represents one third of the span of life, and it has an enormous influence upon both our physical and moral welfare.

Macbeth does murder sleep, the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast.

And even the few times that some of us have been under an anesthetic have their influence upon us. So too being hypnotized influences us, and delirium whether

1

Borden P. Bowne, Personalism, p. 4.

2

Shakespeare, Macbeth.

caused by fever or narcotics. But as, in the truest sense, only those data are ours which occur in the conscious state we can ignore the unconscious state and this does not forget what has just been said in regard to their influence. For we are only responsible for what the will assents to, and no matter what may be the subtle influences upon us in the unconscious state or the "sub-conscious" state, it is only in clear consciousness that the will brings entire personality into judgment. Experiments upon those in hypnosis have proven conclusively that character is determined by our conscious states. So then experience may be said to include the items of the conscious life of the individual.

Philosophy is an attempt to give an account of experience. That is, philosophy endeavors to take all the details of experience and build them into a systematic whole, and try to find the meaning of them, to see if they are not the expression of an orderly and consistent mentality. Or, it is a man's way of looking at things. That is it is his attitude toward the universe, or the not-self, an abstract term for conveniently gathering in to one class everything and everybody in the universe except one's self. Thus our task is simple in outline. To find our philosophy of life we need only to go to

experience, which keeps us among details; take these details, observe them; classify them; systematize them; correlate them, that is, find the relations existing between them; and thus discover their meaning. When we have done this we shall know what is the controlling principle in our life, and if it is not the proper one we are in a position to change it. Then we can see what we mean by a philosophy of life: it is the way one looks at things, his attitude towards the universe, and in the last analysis it will be found that this way of looking at things, or one's attitude towards things may be reduced to a single principle.

Now every man has his way of looking at things; that is, every man must have his philosophy of life. He may not be conscious of it, indeed, perhaps the vast majority of men have a different philosophy of life from what they think they have. The Christian religion in its very nature is a philosophy of life, its great contribution was to give men a new attitude towards the universe, and their fellow-men, but it is not at all difficult to find people who pass by that name who have a thorough going pagan philosophy of life. So it is not a question of whether we shall have a philosophy of life or not, but simply what philosophy of

life we shall have. Shall one be conscious of his philosophy and thus intelligently manage his life, or shall he be driven by principles that are simply blind prejudices, and thus be as irresponsible, and more dangerous, than the animals? " The need for philosophy is just the ultimate form of the need for knowledge; and the truths which philosophy brings to light are implied in every rational explanation of things. The only choice we can have is between a conscious metaphysics and an unconscious one, between metaphysics that we have examined and whose limitations we know, and hypotheses which rule us from behind, as pure prejudices do. It is because of this that the empiric is so dogmatic, and the ignorant man so certain of the truth of his opinion. They do not know their postulates, nor are they aware that there is no interpretation of an object which does not finally point to a theory of being." ¹.

The earnest search and the varying results too prove not only the need of a theory of life but that that need is strongly felt by the more earnest of men. The Epicurean's controlling principle of life was pleasure. History gives us the result of that dominating principle as it has been worked out in the lives of men.

¹ Henry Jones, Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Thinker. P.25.

The Stoics made virtue the dominating idea, and life became a struggle to them. Duty was their watch-word, and their devotion to it cost them dearly many times. But it is not difficult to judge the conditions and progress of states if we know which idea dominates the people. Of the Epicureans Eucken says: " But all the shrewdness,cleverness and amiability it possesses cannot compensate for its fatal lack of spiritual productivity."² Of the Stoics the same author says: " They produced fruitful results which extended far beyond their immediate circle and their own time. Early Christianity drew in large measure from the Stoic ethics; the modern Enlightenment also fell back upon the Stoics; and, notwithstanding all the differences in intellectual conditions, such men as Hugo Grotius, Descartes, Spinoza, and even Kant and Fichte, display kinship with them. Not only have individual works of this school become a permanent part of the world's literature, but the whole view of life here developed has maintained itself in history as an independent type of a manly and dignified sort." ² In short these two schools are quite modern and familiar to us; the debate between the duty and the pleasure ethics is simply the continuation of the old struggle between the Epicureans and the Stoics. But the point is that whether we look back into history

¹ Rudolf Eucken. The Problem of Human Life, p. 85

² Eucken, Problem of Human Life, p. 95

or look around us in contemporary life we can see the influence a theory of life has upon a man and through him upon civilization.

To take an illustration from contemporary life is better perhaps in order to more clearly see and feel the thought. Jules Payot¹ in his book that has passed through its thirtieth edition in French, earnestly and strenuously protests against, and goes on to prove how false is, a theory of life propounded by a celebrated physician. Payot delicately omits to give the name of the "celebrated physician". But here is his dominating principle of life:" The passion of love (physical passion,he means) holds the most important place in life - when one reaches a certain age, when the only hope one can entertain is not to descend the path that leads to old age too quickly, then one recognizes that all is vanity save love." We will not stop, as Mr Payot does, to prove the theory false. Mr.Payot is writing primarily for French college students, and his condescending to refute the assertion is pardonable, but such in the present case would not only be a waste of time, but an insult to the reader, and for the writer it would be ominous. The author of such a suggestion immediately becomes repulsive to us, for having become acquainted with his chief end of life,we wish to shun

1 Jules Payot, The Education of the Will, p.323.

that life. Now take a life that is dominated by a thought far removed from this, and how different every thing becomes. We feel as if we have come from a miasmatic swamp to a clear pure breeze of the mountain side. Cornoro, who admits that once he held in act if not in thought the "celebrated physician's" theory of life, but at the age of forty made a complete change, speaks of the outcome of his changed philosophy of life quite differently from that anticipated by the physician. The physician has a dread of old age. So to keep life from becoming the vanity of vanities he must seek to satisfy what he is pleased to term love. Cornoro when he was an old man, at the age of ninety-five, writes of his theory of life, which he has tested for fifty-five years, as follows: "Oh, how glorious will have been this life of mine! So full of all the happiness that can be enjoyed in this world, and so free - as it truly is - from the tyranny of sensuality, thanks to my many years, has been driven out by reason! For when reason reigns, no place is left for sensuality, nor for its bitter fruits, the passion and anxieties of the mind accompanied by a well-nigh endless train of afflict-¹ing and sorrowful thoughts." Cornoro's last discourse reminds one, in its panegyric of old age, of Browning's Rabbi Ben Ezra; and his explanation of the richness,

¹

Louis Cornoro. La Vita Sobria. Fourth Discourse.
Eng. Tr. The Temperate Life. in The Art of Living Long
p.108.

blessedness, and advantages of old age are the same as Browning gives us in AT THE "MERMAID" :

Have you found your life distasteful?

My life did and does smack sweet.

Was your youth of pleasure wasteful?

Mine I saved and hold complete.

Do your joys with age diminish?

When mine fail me I'll complain.

Must in death your daylight finish?

My sun sets to rise again.

This testimony of Browning who Thompson, the author of the most pessimistic of poems, THE CITY OF DREADEFUL NIGHT , admitted had mastered life, might be supplemented by that of Robert Burns who, Robert Louis Stevenson says, "had trifled with life, and must pay the penalty. He had chosen to be Don Juan, he had grasped at temporary pleasures, and substantial happiness and solid industry had passed him by." ¹ Burns' own testimony at the age of twenty-seven, in AN EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND. is in harmony with Stevenson's words.

It depends upon your theory of life when you see a thing as holding the most important place in life or as a servant to be mastered, whether you call it love,

1. Robert Louis Stevenson, Some aspects of Robert Burns.

or the tyranny of sensuality.

Well by this time we see it is plain that a philosophy of life is quite important, and it may make all the difference in the world to us just what philosophy we adopt. But the question that forces itself upon us now is, can we get a philosophy of life that is certain, and one that we can hold with full assurance? If we turn to those who have made a special study of just this problem the outlook does not seem bright. That we must have a philosophy is inevitable, but that we can get one that will satisfy the demands of the soul is not so evident. Eucken's THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN LIFE AS VIEWED BY THE GREAT THINKERS FROM PLATO TO THE PRESENT TIME, is a history of the philosophies of life, and yet he says in conclusion: "For after all the weary work of many thousand years, we are to-day in a condition of painful uncertainty, a state of hopeless fluctuation, not merely with regard to individual questions, but also as to the general purpose and meaning of life." Now our purpose is to show that this is absurd; for it is pessimism, and pessimism is absurd in such a world as ours.

1. Eucken: Problem of Human Life. p. 565.

Chapter II.

The Basal Certainties.

The preceding chapter closed with the assertion that in our world pessimism is absurd. Humanity will have none of it; as Alexander Pope says, "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." But better still Eucken himself does not look upon the world in any such hopeless way as his words naturally suggest. If he did he would stop writing philosophy. So he tells us in the last lines of his book that,"despite all complexities of the present situation we may conclude our historical survey¹ without any gloomy forebodings." He could not but see the absurdity of closing his book with the words quoted above, for those words are gloomy, and if the outcome of such a book as he has written is gloomy then it is lost labor. But it is always so. Mr Seeley felt a similar embarrassment when he finished his able work on natural religion. He said that life needs so much knowledge and science gives us so little, that what he offered in his book must seem to his readers to be offered in derision. Natural religion, he admitted, failed to bring the infinite and the eternal into human life, and the outcome of this is that the affections "die of their own conscious feebleness and bootlessness." But he sees

1. Eucken, Problem of Human Life. p. 570.

the absurdity of ending a book in such a pessimistic way. So he says, "Supernatural Religion met this want by connecting Love and Righteousness with eternity." He actually leaves the problem here. The few remaining lines are questions. "If supernatural religion is shaken how shall its place be supplied?" Well Mr. Seeley's book was written to show that its place was shaken; and at the same time he admitted that natural religion can do nothing. Seeing the absurdity of closing his book with such despair, he shrewdly drops natural and supernatural, and closes with the question, "can it be doubtful that if we are to live at all we must live, and civilization can only live by religion?"

Now to those seeking a philosophy of life these very able gentlemen become quite useful, but they are most useful in their failures. They both know history, and Eucken is a good philosopher, but with all their knowledge derived from the study of history and of philosophy they can end their books in nothing but faint and vague hope. But no fruitful and satisfactory life can be lived upon a vague hope. Men, however, must live, and they must have, as we have already seen, a philosophy of life, conscious or unconscious; and men have lived and are now living, and not only living, but living triumphant lives; and if so they must have had a

triumphant philosophy of life. And in spite of the great learning and excellent minds that have failed in the past, we return to the practical certainties of the world to see if we can find the secret of a triumphant life. We shall try to shun the pits into which so many of those who have failed have fallen. Mr Seeley's book is based on the assumption that modern thought has shaken the foundations of supernatural religion; and Prof. Eucken, in his Christianity and the New Idealism, finds that the modern mind no longer takes to the idea of the Incarnation, it prefers to come to God directly. This abounding faith in the infallibility of the demands of the modern mind would be admirable and beautiful if it were bestowed upon a more stalwart object, and if it did not ignore about all the canons of investigation. It never occurs to such faith that the modern mind might make demands that are absurd.

Now we are not so anxious to inquire into, much less submit to, the demands of the modern mind, but we are anxious to know the essential demands of the mind of man as they have made their cry for satisfaction throughout the ages. Then we believe the way to get our philosophy of life is to turn to the theory of knowledge to find out what these essential demands are as they are seeking satisfaction, and we shall turn to the experience

of the individual and that of the race for their concrete expression. We shall try not to be influenced in the least by what has become the order of the day; for the order of the day is not the slightest evidence of truth, some pragmatists to the contrary notwithstanding. In the past and at present some of the most absurd things possible have been and are sanctioned by the order of the day. And on the other hand we shall not stand in awe of formal logic and the great bugaboo, demonstration. But we shall look into the human mind and seek to find what are the essential, universal, and abiding demands, and try also to discover its unvarying laws, if it has any. And we shall look into history to see if these essential and universal demands have been satisfied. If we discover that these universal demands have been met to the extent that nations have become enlightened and powerful and individuals have lived lives of serene satisfaction and died triumphant deaths, then we shall conclude that the philosophy of life that makes such possible is the true philosophy. This is the practical test of truth and, in practical life, it is equivalent to demonstration.

When we look into life or experience to find the surest item of knowledge to begin with, what confronts us is "the self itself as the subject of the mental life and knowing and experiencing itself as living, and as

the one and the same throughout its changing experiences is the surest item of knowledge that we possess. " 1

Some may say they doubt the existence of the body, but the knowledge of the thinking self is immediate, and even in its doubts prove its existence. Each thinking self then is known to itself in immediate experience and all other persons and things are known through their effects. Thus we have at least one item of knowledge that is independent of assumption. And it is a certainty, very fruitful in its significance, but perhaps not just in the direction one might expect.

The first thing that is evident is that this certain knowledge alone is utterly barren. If I am to confine myself to absolute certainty, then I am shut up to myself, and all I know will be the thinking self thinking. But as a matter of fact this is not true, for as soon as I say the thinking self thinking, **there** must be something to think about. And what I think about are the **data** of experience. And by experience we mean the " world of objects, so far as they can be the subjects of a real or possible experience. " ² But before this world of objects can be known to me, I have to pass from certainty and make some fundamental assumptions. We cannot move in thought until we admit not only the existence of **the** I but that of the **WE**. More than this,

we must admit that there is a law of reason common to all and binding upon all. Thus we get community of thought. Then finally we must admit that there is a world of common experience.^{1.} These carry us into the very depths of metaphysics, and if they can be proven, we do not hold them because we can prove them, but we try to prove them because we hold them. Now the three assumptions involve the assumption of a system; that things form a system, and that this system is one, is the deepest conviction of reflective intelligence and the supreme presupposition of organized knowledge."^{2.} This being an unshaken conviction, although it is an assumption, we immediately find that our problems become to be clearer.

Being a system, it is a unit. Now we are to look into the nature of this system. But as the fundamental characteristic of a system is unity, our shortest cut is to find out what is the nature of unity. In experience we find plurality of things and of persons. By a unit we mean that which does not admit of division. But matter is capable of infinite divisibility, and so unity cannot be found there. On the other hand, "the free and conscious self is the only real unity of which we have any knowledge and reflection shows that it is the only thing which can be a true unity."³ This abiding self

1. B. P. Bowne, Personalism, p. 20.

2. B. P. Bowne, Theism, p. 51 3. Ibid p. 174.

that can gather the multiplicity of the items of experience together and recognize them as its own, and throughout all its development recognize and identify itself as one and abiding is the only unity of which we have any experience. Unity is to be found in thought. Logically then, the unity of the material must be sought for in thought. In experience we find nature multitudinous, but as soon as we begin to think of it we find ourselves using such words as world, universe, cosmos, nature, etc. And the simplest way to find out why we spontaneously do this is to go to the problem of interaction, and we find that all explanations of interaction must be found in unitary being. If we say things are mutually independent then to speak of their interaction is a contradiction. Then they must be dependent, and thus they must rest upon some independent unity that is the source of all their movements. But we have seen unity can be found in thought, and thus it is independent thought that is the cause of interaction.

But persons interact as well as things. We live in a social world, indeed, a world of social solidarity. We are even conscious of a perplexing paradox: we feel that we are free, responsible for our actions, yet we are continually reminded by the stern things of life how frail we are, and how our life, for good and for ill, is

bound up in the lives of others; and when we look deep into our being mystery there is greater than anywhere else. The body is a perennial wonder, and it is about as mysterious as it is wonderful. We make sweeping generalizations that seem to be self-evident, only to have them overthrown by the simple facts of investigation. For example, we have heard it said, and that by physicians too, with an emphasis that would brook no opposition, and in a tone that impresses one that he is listening to the last words of wisdom, that every organ of the body has its use, it exists for some purpose. But who has told us the use of the hyoid bone, the appendix vermiformis, or the sigmoid flexure? The use of the two latter seems to show how frail we are. Apriori one is justified in postulating that the different organs of the body exist in order to conserve the whole. But the appendix has no use in the economy of the body, but is a source of danger, and the sigmoid flexure seems to have no other use than a gathering place for germs that hasten old age and death.

Then the interaction that takes place within the body is really to a very large extent independent of us. Some try to create a fictitious something by which they can befuddle thought and keep us in confusion. They tell us the "sub-conscious mind" presides over this

department of the body. But when we ask to know something about this subconscious mind, or subconscious self, or unconscious mind, it becomes a very fictitious thing. As a modern psychologist has put it, so we must conclude; "The story of the subconscious mind can be told in three words: there is none."¹ So the interaction within the body is in the same category as the interaction of things without. Its cause must be found in unitary thought.

In experience we find, soul and body in interaction, or to be strictly accurate we find the concomitance of soul and body. But this is a specially difficult field and one in which metaphysicians and psychologists have allowed their imagination to run riot. So we had better simply content ourselves with what we know and that is "that the physical echoes the mental and that the mental varies with the physical."² We, however, have already seen that all actions of the physical must find its source in unitary thought, and as the soul is thought it can find its source in nothing but thought, and as the human soul is finite and thus dependent, it must rest upon independent unitary thought.

Among the assumptions that we were compelled to make before one could proceed in thought were the coexistence of persons, and mental community. Just how

1. Hugo Munsterberg, Psychotherapy, p.125
 2. B.P.Bowne, Metaphysics, p.372.

minds interact or knowledge passes from one mind to another may be mysterious enough, but the meaning of grasping the thought of one person by another is plain enough. I grasp another's thought by thinking it. Yet when the process is analyzed it is seen to be very complex. This one thing, though, is sure, I can grasp the thought of another only on condition that I assume a community of thought. But a community of thought can find its source only in unitary thought.

This brings us to the problem of knowledge of the world of experience. Our third assumption was the world of common experience. It will help us just here to go back to our fundamental certainty, the thinking self. A thinking self means an active self, and the one thing we know in immediate experience is the self, thinking, that is, the mind, soul or spirit acting. Now all thinking that is "special to me" is simply a mental event. As soon as I wish to attain knowledge I must assume the coexistence of persons, the mental community of thought, and the world of common experience. These make thought and knowledge possible, as we have already seen. We have seen too that a great certainty gives us the self active; and in getting thought or knowledge from other persons we saw it could be gotten only as we re-think their thoughts and thus they become our own. But how are we to

get a knowledge of the objects of the physical world? Because the objects of the physical world reach us through the sensibility many in the past, and perhaps a few belated minds in the present, imagine the mind to be a sort of photographer's film upon which the objects are impressed, and **there** they are. So this is the way objects get into the mind. Now getting into the mind is a figure of speech, and is all right as long as it is recognized as such, otherwise we should understand just what we mean. That we mean it in any **spacial** sense is too absurd for comment. Then we must mean it in a spiritual sense. But the material world and the thought-world are incommensurable. The fundamental fact of one is extension in **space**, that of the other is activity. And when we return to experience we find that here is the mind acting, thinking; and there is the external object, say a little island in a lake. Someone comes along and says, "What have you in mind? what are you thinking about?" you answer, "I am thinking of building a little summer cottage on that island, and I have a little beauty in mind too." Now the imaginary cottage is as much in the mind as the actual island that is to receive it. That is, the mind thinks them both. This is the only possible answer to the question, How does the mind get knowledge of the external world. The mind can only think

in all its getting of knowledge, and if the knowledge is to be of the external world, the mind must think the external world. But we have said that thought and matter are incormensurable. But the facts of experience are that matter can be grasped by thought, then the only explanation is that it is the product of thought. But we had to assume that the physical world is a system, then again we come back to our unitary thought as the source of the system.

The illustration above involved two factors, an imaginary and an actual. The **distinction** between the two is plain; the imaginary one was "special to me", the actual was "common to all". Then the difference is that in the first case I speak of an image **that** I create; in the second I reproduce what is common in the order of experience of all. That is, any person with normal faculties could reproduce the island; the intended cottage was the product of my imagination. So in every judgment there must be this objective reference to an order that is common to all, one that we do not make, but reproduce in thought. This order too is a thought order, or it would not be commensurable with thought, and it is one common to all. So, again, we are brought back to unitary thought for the ground of the objectivity of thought, the ground of the **judgment**, when we are seeking

to distinguish the true from the false, must be found in a unitary thought that posits this order which finite minds do not produce but reproduce.

In as much as it has become evident that no matter how crude and lumpish the physical world appears to us at first sight reflection shows that the world we grasp with our minds is one of thought relations. We are fully persuaded that our senses report a thing-world, nevertheless, this thing-world must become a thought-world before it is anything to us. This brings us to the paradox that thought and matter are incommensurable, yet the material world must become a thought-world before it is known to us. The only explanation is that the material world, like the finite thought-world must be founded in thought.

Then in every direction in which we have pursued our lines of reason we have found unitary and independent thought our final stopping place. We found our one great certainty to be the thinking self. But this thinking self could do nothing until it assumed other thinking selves, a community of thought, and a world of common experience. The thinking self is thought, mind or spirit, but it is not self-sufficient, and therefore must rest upon independent thought. The world of persons or thinking selves, are just as dependent as the individual self, and hence must rest upon independent thought. These

thinking selves find a community of thought in which they mentally live and move and have their being. They do not make this mental community but find themselves in it. This mental community can rest on nothing other than unitary and independent thought. And finally the world of common experience, including all finite spirits other than ourselves and the physical world, rest upon unitary and independent thought. That the physical world exists in its own right is taken for granted by spontaneous thought but reflection soon shows that neither epistemology, metaphysics, nor religion can do anything with it on that assumption. Epistemology gives us a world of relations and shows us that no matter what the physical world is, it is for the mind a thought world. Then the fact that it can be grasped by thought can be explained in no other way than that it originated in thought. So epistemology shows us that the world is phenomenal, that is, it exists only in, for, and through intelligence. Metaphysics can do nothing with the world, or physical nature, until it is recognized as "the sum-total of spatial phenomena and their laws."¹ Being phenomenal it exists in, for, and through thought; and the laws must find their source, too, in a thinking self; for all we can mean by law is the rule by which an agent works.²

1. B.P.Bowne, Metaphysics, p.262

2. B.P.Bowne, Theism, p.72

And religion cannot tolerate anything short of the Infinite Spirit as the creator and sustainer of the physical universe. And this is to ground the world in thought.

Then all our avenues of investigation lead us back to mind, or intelligence, or spirit, no matter what name we use, as the source of all things. And so far we have seen that this ultimate intelligence must be unitary or one, and it must be independent or infinite. Independent and infinite in fact have the same meaning; for by infinite we simply mean the independent, ground¹ of the dependent or finite.

1. B.P. Bowne, Theism, p. 61.

Chapter III.

The Nature of the Infinite Spirit.

In our last chapter we saw that no matter whether we turned our attention to self or the not-self, the thinking self, our neighbors, or the physical world we found they all led us back to unitary and independent thought as their ground and source. Now in every day life when we get to the source of things we think we are on pretty secure ground, and so it is in philosophy. Our surest way now is to see what we can understand about this unitary and independent thought.

In man we use thought, mind, intelligence, soul, and spirit as synonymous when we are referring to his ultimate spiritual nature. Perhaps it will be better henceforth to confine ourselves to the term spirit. As we have seen, spirit as we experience it ourselves can do nothing but think. And when we speak of an active self or spirit, we mean a thinking spirit. And henceforth when we use spirit it will mean that it is acting or thinking, for the probabilities are that our spirits are always active, even in sleep. However this may be we cannot conceive of their being inactive. An inactive spirit is an impossible conception to us.

Man is related to the lower animals by virtue

of his physical nature; and, to an extent, his mental nature is similar to theirs. Now our problem is to find wherein his spiritual nature differs from theirs. They certainly produce results that in man we should say are evidence of thinking. That is they get knowledge by their thinking. But there is no evidence that they have that peculiar experience that we call self-knowledge. They cannot turn their thought in upon themselves and ask themselves whence they came, whither they are going, and what are their relations to the universe in which they are. Then again, an even more distinguishing quality is freedom. The animals seem to know nothing of this. As far as we can understand them they are driven by instinct or if we say they reason it is not reason in the sense that they form purposes and guide their lives by them. These two factors then are lacking in the lower animals. But our self-hood is found just here. Self-knowledge and self-control are the two things that make us distinct and responsible, that is, that make us persons.

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
 These three alone lead life to sov'reign power. ¹

Thus personality is a purely spiritual characteristic, and it distinguishes us from the brute creation.

¹ Tennyson, Cenone.

As this is an attribute of the spirit of man, and he is a dependent or finite spirit, our problem now is to see if this stops with man, or whether it is an attribute of independent or infinite spirit. We hardly need to state the problem, for a priori, there is not the slightest objection to an infinite person; for all that means is a person who has complete self-knowledge and complete self-control. Now personality is the highest conception of being that is possible to our thought, and as we are dependent persons there must be an independent person upon whom we must rest. Some, such as F.H. Bradley, do not deny personality to the Absolute so much as, to say that he must be more than a person. But this only makes for confusion of thought, for it is useless to talk about, something that is above our thought in kind. To be sure infinite personality is beyond us, but only in degree, in the adjective; the noun keeps it within our kind, and thus it is quite manageable by us. The great trouble with such critics is that words get the better of them. The trouble is with their definitions of infinite and absolute. These cause the rejection of personality, or impose a super-personality upon the Infinite Spirit and take Him out of all relations with men, and really make Him a piece of celestial bric-a-brac. Infinite is thought of in a spacial sense and absolute as excluding

and it will always be so. So we conclude that just where in man is distinguished from the brutes we find him akin to the independent Spirit upon which he rests; and here we find that the Ultimate of philosophy and the God of religion are identical. Philosophy's last word is infinite and unitary personal intelligence, and religion in its highest form holds up God as infinite and unitary personal intelligence.

Though he is so bright and we so dim,
 We are made in his image to witness him.¹

And from now on we shall be free to use the term God, and we have seen so far that that term means the independent unitary personal intelligence upon which all finite beings and things depend.

Philosophy tells us that all things find their ground and source in an infinite and unitary person, and history shows us that religion, that is, in its highest development, tells us the same. And as, with the aid of philosophy we look into the essential movements of the mind of man, or with the aid of history, we trace these movements in his experience, we find that the finite person finds his ground and source in the infinite person. And while it is true that "monotheism is a very late and an infrequent faith",^{2.} it is also true that man has always

1. Browning, Christmas Eve.

2. A. M. Fairbairn, The Philosophy of the Christian Religion, p. 538.

had lying deep in his nature an instinctive monotheism. When we become reflective we see that if it is theism at all it must be monotheism.¹ And this means that the essential demand of the human mind is for one God. It will also be voted that all efforts to describe religious feeling falls unconsciously into monotheistic terminology. Hoffding describes the earliest and simplest manifestation of the religious spirit as being "belief in a power which cares whether he (man) has or has not experience which he values."² Jevons also says, "We have, implicit from the beginning, that communion with God, or striving thereafter, which is essential to worship."³ Browning in his Caliban gives us a picture of a savage philosophizing on his god; but Caliban, cannot rest in a local, imperfect and thoroughly comprehensible god, he is forced to reach out after the infinite, for that which by searching no man can completely comprehend, and thus he can only rest his mind in the Quiet.

Caliban, in spite of all his crudeness, did reach essential truth. And this was because his method was essentially right. His method is summed up in the motto to the poem, taken from Psalm 50:21, Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself. If altogether had possessed his mind less he would have reached a **truer** conclusion. Nevertheless he was on the right track when

1. B. P. Bowne, Theism, p. 175.

2. H. Hoffding, Philosophy of Religion, p. 147.

3. F. B. Jevons, Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion, p. 137.

he looked into his own mind to learn about God.

Caliban teaches us too a truth that is of great usefulness if we keep it in clear consciousness, namely, that if we are to think of God at all it must be under the form of perfection.¹ With all his assurance about the plans and purposes of Setebos he cannot rest in the Setebos idea of God, he must go beyond him and find the perfect God, the Quiet. So it is with us all. Our highest ideal we call God, and our highest ideal is always perfect to us. The ideal grows but with its growth grows our conception of the perfect. This assumption of the mind of a perfect being is inherent in the human mind, and the only way to get rid of it is to ignore it.

Now this property of perfection puts God as a perfect person over against us as partial persons. Then if we cut out Caliban's "altogether" we have the right method; we can take the essential attributes of human personality and try in thought to find their perfection. Thus we can hope to get some light upon the nature of God. And indeed this is the only way we can hope to get anything like a true philosophy of life. Both branches of philosophy, the theory of thought and metaphysics, bring us to a perfect person as the ground and source of all things. Then if we are to get a philosophy of life we must begin with that which created and sustains

the life-order. Then if we can find out something of the perfect, it being clear that the imperfect is but "broken lights" . of the perfect, our surest way is to begin with the perfect. Then as we look into history we find that not only all great and noble minds have sought guidance and strength from God, but that religion is, and always has been, the greatest single factor in the life of the masses of men. It is men's religious ideas that give them their attitude towards their fellow men and the universe, and this means it is religion that gives a man his philosophy; for we have already seen that a philosophy of life is one's way of looking at things. Both the few minds and the great masses of men have guided their lives by their respective religions because the object of worship in all those religions was a perfect God.

So we begin by looking into the personality of man and trace his attributes until we can imagine them in their perfection. Thus we shall get some idea of the divine attributes.

We have seen that the great fundamental certainty is the thinking self. This is immediate knowledge; all other things and persons must be known by their effects; the one item of immediate knowledge is ^{the} sole thinking self.

We have seen too that this self can only get knowledge as it gathers its sense impressions together and thus by giving them unity give them meaning. Again the thinking self is a spirit, and we saw that unity is only possible to spirit. But the human spirit is finite, dependent, and thus must rest upon infinite spirit. Thus our unity must find its source in infinite unity. Then the mind must stop somewhere, it can find no rest in an eternal regress. Metaphysics shows that explanation and causality have no meaning except in personal intelligence and there is no explanation of our finite intelligence apart from the Infinite Spirit. All explanation finds its resting place in Infinite Intelligence, or the infinite God who is One.

But the theory of thought and the theory of being demand the unity of the Infinite Spirit, but thought also demands that this unity be accompanied with the unchangeableness of God. When we look into our experience we see that we must reach the unchangeable or perish. On the phenomenal plane the law of the sufficient reason gives us nothing but the logical equivalence of cause and effect; we must find the consequent in the antecedent, and thus we find ourselves pursuing the infinite regress.

Our only escape is personal intelligence, "The changelessness we need is not the rigidity of a logical

category but the self-identity and self-equality of intelligence." ¹ It is not that thought demands that God be fixed and immovable but that there be constancy and continuity of law in the divine nature. We have said thought must reach the changeless or cease to be; it is equally true that if by changeless we mean rigid sameness of existence thought would be impossible. But the truth is that such changelessness is a vague abstraction that is seen to be impossible as soon as the clear light of sound thinking is turned upon it. Our supposed necessity for positing a rigid changelessness in the divine life arises either following an abstract and rigor ^{from} and rigor method of investigation, or from a fear of attributing caprice to the divine mind, or both. Thought shows that by lifting the problem to the personal plane we can manage it; and metaphysics must turn the possibility of caprice over to the discussion of the ethical nature of God.

One of the greatest limitations under which we labor is that which arises from the spatial law. There is no doubt much truth in what Emerson says about travelling: "It is for want of self-culture that the idol of travelling, the idol of Italy, of England, of Egypt, ² remains for all educated Americans," nevertheless many

1. B. P. Bowne, *Theism*, p. 179.

2. R. W. Emerson, *Self-Reliance*.

of us would like to see some parts of the world without the trouble of passing through so much intervening space that does not command our interest. So our assumption of God as a perfect being compels us to remove this limitation by making him omnipresent. I am here, my friends are there, and there, and there, and God is everywhere. He covers both here and all the theres. Now when I try to draw the line between my here and my nearest friend's there I find that the relativity of the terms throw me into confusion. And it seems that there is no doubt that in this case Locke's conclusion that relations are the work of the mind is correct. If you were to ask me if I were here yesterday I would have to know what boundaries you meant to give to the here before I could answer. You might mean this state, this city, this house, or this room. And there is but one way to determine the here, and that is to say that my here is determined by my immediate activity. And the more we think about it the more we are persuaded that this is just what we do mean. And as in so many other cases in our language we mean just the reverse of what our words say; for when we say we act where we are, we shall get the literal truth if we reverse the words, and say, we are where we act. Then my presence is relative to the range of my immediate action, and if I could act as

immediately in Spain as I do at the length of twelve inches then I would be present in Spain. Now a being who could act everywhere in the universe immediately, such would be omnipresence. God being an independent Spirit is not limited by space **but** can immediately act everywhere, so He is omnipresent. Thus we are not troubled by the crude notion that God to be present everywhere must be extended in space; which notion, because of the infinite divisibility of space, destroys God's unity. God is a spirit, and is not extended in space, but his activity may be manifested in space.

In a similar manner we get the thought of the eternity of God. And ^{time} like space turns out to be part of the phenomenal order. Time, we say, has three dimensions, **past**, present and future. But the past is dead, the future is not born, only the present exists. But how long is the present? When we look at our temporal standards of measurements we begin to realize how relative and even local they are: **years, months, weeks, days, hours, seconds**. If we were in any other sphere each of these would be different, and the smallest would be capable of infinite divisibility; and thus we would be left without a unit of measure. But we have seen that unity is possible only to spirit, and spirit alone is ontologically real.

So, like the here of space, the now of time must fall among phenomena, and can be explained only as we refer it to intelligence. But we seem to be possessed with the idea that God must experience the time category in himself. Yet a little thought will show us that there is no ground for this idea. In our thought life we have an experience of timelessness. "Epistemology shows that to introduce a real objective succession into thought would destroy it. Subject and predicate must be simultaneously grasped in one timeless act, or they fall asunder and thought cannot even begin. The present of **experience** therefore is not in some independent time, but is only in a special relation in consciousness. The person who can grasp only a few things has a small present; one who can grasp many things has a large present; one who can grasp all things has an all embracing present or a changeless now.¹"

Thus amid all our bondage to the senses we can see that even we have some experience of a timeless existence, and we see that it is simply a lack of power that keeps us from making our relative now absolute. And we begin to see that it is just as rational to conceive of God as independent of time as we have seen Him independent of space. Indeed both from the standpoint of religion and of thought we find that we are forced to do it. As Emerson says, "With sublime propriety God is described as saying

1. B.P. Bowne, Personalism, p. 144.

I AM. " ¹ God possesses all facts of his life in immediacy of consciousness, and thus he has no past; he is always in full possession of himself, is under no law of development, and has no unrealized potentialities, and thus he has no future; and so his now is eternal. Because of our temporal terminology it is difficult to describe the timeless existence of God, but we have seen that we can, and do experience such an existence, and it is only the lack of power that keeps us from enlarging that timeless life; and with the help of the imagination it should not be impossible for us to conceive of it as absolute in God. But whether we can grasp the idea of God living a timeless life or not, it is clear that we must so affirm. Time we know to be a limitation, and it must be removed from the attributes of God if we are to affirm Him to be absolute and perfect. If time is real it must be infinite, that is, independent, and thus it is not dependent upon God. Thus we are puzzled with two infinities. Creation too becomes an insolvable problem. Why did it begin just when it did, and not before or after, and what was God doing in the infinite cycles of eternity before the creation? But if time is part of the phenomenal order we cannot ask what God was doing before He created the world. Before is a temporal term. And time began with the world and the whole phenomenal

1. R.W. Emerson, Spiritual Laws.

order. Then we must say again that by the eternity of God we mean an all-embracing present or a changeless now, and this must be conceived not in sense terms but in terms of intelligence and it must be experience in the sense that we in our life have the experience of timeless existence.

Knowledge we know is relative to us, but we believe, if we had mental power enough, nothing would be beyond our reach. We have seen that the world, both physical and psychical, must find its source and ground in the Infinite Spirit. That is, there is nothing of extramental. So by the omniscience of God we simply mean that he knows all things. There may be many puzzling questions in regard to how certain kinds of knowledge reach the divine mind, but we cannot deny that they do without surrendering our belief that God is an infinite and perfect person. But as God is an infinite person He has complete self-knowledge and complete self-control; and as the whole phenomenal order finds its source and ground in Him as the infinite person, he must know perfectly and control perfectly the phenomenal universe, the creature of Himself.

After affirming again and again our unshakeable conviction that God as infinite personal intelligence is the creator and sustainer of all finite being it

seems only necessary to mention the fact of his omnipotence. But some seem to think that God Himself must be subject to truth. Thus truth is construed as a thing and the only way out is to assume a third something to bring God and truth into interaction. And after we have done this we shall be compelled to call this third something God and we shall have had our trouble for our pains. It will be easier to look at truth first and see just what it appears to be. "Rational truth, as distinct from truth of contingent fact, is never anything more than an expression of the necessary relations of ideas, or the way in which reason universally proceeds." ¹ Now when we put truth over against God, as some ardent lovers of truth do when they say it is valid in the void, we mean this rational truth, not the truth of contingent fact; and it then is not a thing, but simply the way in which reason universally proceeds. And the reason is none other than God. So rational truth is simply the way God universally proceeds. So the omnipotence of God is not impaired even by the existence of truth, for it too has no meaning apart from personal intelligence.

We see then that our thought in trying to explain the existence of the physical world and the world of finite spirits only by positing an Infinite Personal

1. B.P.Bowne, Theism, p.192.

Spirit whose attributes are unity, unchangeableness, omnipresence, eternity, omniscience, and omnipotence.

Chapter IV.

God and Man.

The attributes of God which we considered in the preceding Chapter we call metaphysical because they are demanded by the speculative intellect, or they are what the mind requires in the Infinite in order to account for the existence of the finite. But finite spirits cannot rest in the metaphysical attributes alone; they must also seek the moral in God. Indeed when we look into the history of the race we find that "the net result of human experience is faith in the moral goodness of God." ¹ Men must so believe; for no matter how much we may be awed by the majestic power of God it is worse than nothing if it is not coupled with goodness. Then too the mental demand for a perfect God would include his goodness, and no doubt great numbers of men hold it on this ground.

But we meet some difficult problems just here. We have been insisting upon the unity of the godhead, yet a moral life necessarily means a community life. And community means plurality. How to get this community without destroying divine unity is our problem. Even according to the law of parsimony the least we could do

is to posit two beings, but if these two were independent personal intelligences we would destroy the unity of the Infinite, and the result, essentially, would be polytheism. There is just one possibility left, and that is to posit as a necessity of the divine nature a community of mutually interdependent persons. Just what the number of such beings is in the godhead is a dark and grievous mystery. The necessity of thought calls for but two. But just what is the relation of each of these persons to us the necessities of thought cannot tell us. And our net result is that we have provided for the moral life of the Diety, and we have a formal foundation for our moral life. But as for the building up of, and giving contents to our moral life nothing could be more barren than the result just reached.

And this is because we cannot give contents to the moral life of the Diety. Thus we cannot determine God's attitude towards men, nor man's attitude towards God. It would seem, however, that it is not necessary to determine these things for our moral life. If we just take a look at man, morality on a purely natural basis seems perfectly clear, a perfect life is not difficult of definition: "a life leading to the complete development of the bodily and mental powers and to their full exercise in all the spheres of human existence, in

close communion with other closely related persons and fully participating in the historical and spiritual life of society at large." ¹ This is the Greek idea of life, self-realization. ² And the best modern thought cannot define the supreme good better than this. ³ Yet as soon as we begin to try to realize this perfect life our clearness is replaced by darkness and doubt. If one goes on the theory that he must develop all the powers of body to the highest possible extent, before he reaches middle life he will be loathsome to his fellowmen and the embodiment of misery to himself. Yet the Greek conception of the good as the perfection of man as a natural being would logically lead to this. When the appetites crave satisfaction the natural thing to do is to satisfy them. The break down of this theory is best seen in the history of the sex appetite. Here is to be found humanity's most signal and most ignominious failure. It has been the source of the most outrageous oppression and degrading slavery of millions of women and men in Oriental countries from the dawn of history to the present day; and even in Western countries the most atrocious crimes are due to this appetite. Lecky says that unchastity "has probably contributed more than any other single cause to the misery and the degradation of man." ⁴ That unchastity is the logical and natural

1. F. Paulsen, A System of Ethics, p. 4

2. Hugh Black, Culture & Restraint, p. 26.

3. B. P. Bowne, Principles of Ethics, p. 69.

4. W. E. H. Lecky, History of European Morals, Vol. II. p 282

result of the Greek view may be seen in the case of Socrates' visit to Theodota in which he advises her how to act towards her lovers in order to win them, and not once does he reproach her for what we would call a life of shame; but assumes that she is following a perfectly legitimate and honorable calling, and after pointing out how she can make the most of her charms he takes his leave of her by paying her a graceful compliment on account of her beauty. And Socrates was one of the wisest and best of the Greeks.

But it might be said, and very properly, that the Greek ideal included the mind. The powers of mind were to be developed to their highest possible extent. Well if any people ever approached that ideal it was the Greeks; we have to acknowledge them as our intellectual ancestors; there is very little in our intellectual life than cannot be traced directly to them. This is so evident that to read a Greek author seems to put us in a perfectly modern atmosphere. Nevertheless with all their intellectual development they never learned the necessity of restraint in any practical way, and so had no anchor when the storms came. Then we know that nothing can be more cruel, haughty and selfish than culture. If culture does not have the restraining influence of service to mankind it generally turns out to be a doubtful good. It must not be forgotten

that the "glory that was Greece" rested upon a narrow view of humanity that filled Athens with slaves. And so while Greek ethics are so good that to-day we can hardly improve upon their idea of the supreme good, yet as long as that supreme good is kept down to the natural plane, in practice, life cannot be satisfactory. Greece finally failed because she did not allow that repression had an important place in life. The physical must be controlled and guided, but this self-control is of the mental and moral nature of man. Then the interests of the spiritual man must dominate, and when it comes to a choice between the physical and the spiritual the latter must have the right of way. Yet the physical has its right and they cannot be thrust aside without due consideration. And it is this consideration that brings struggle into life. But "true self-control is to be got in the midst of struggle: it is not mutilation of a natural desire, but the subordination of each desire to the good of the whole man, and ultimately also to man as a social unit."¹

This is why man has always looked beyond nature for guidance in conduct. We have always instinctively felt that we cannot follow unrestrainedly the impulses of our nature. This is why man has always been religious;

1. Hugh Black, Culture and Restraint, p, 340

and his moral life and his civilization have been determined more by his religion than by any other single factor. Religion means the relations between God and man, and thus mankind has always counted a divine relation the greatest of blessings. But our real problem is to know which of the alleged divine revelations are really divine. "If a divine revelation be the first of blessings then the imposture that counterfeits it must be by far the greatest of evils." Now this is true enough, but the man who wrote these words had no real test by which the first of blessings can be distinguished from the greatest of all evils. Mr Seeley wrote a book to show that miracle and supernaturalism must be eliminated from Christianity before it can be accepted by the modern spirit. But he acknowledges that the only religion possible is some kind of Christianity. Eucken does the same thing. He says that the work of the best minds of the world for nearly twenty-five centuries leaves us in "a state of painful uncertainty," even in regards to the general meaning of life. He too must hold on to a "more universal Christianity." He seems to identify himself with those who "refuse to break with Jesus", but "with full conviction appropriate the saying of Peter: Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life?"^{2.} And this really is

1. J. R. Seeley, *Ecce Homo*, p. 293.

2. Eucken, *Problem of Human Life*, p. 172.

the consensus of the best thought of the day. In this matter the following words may be taken as final: " We have come to see that if we will not listen to Jesus Christ in His revelation of the Father, it is not worth while to listen to anybody else. He is the only one who has brought a Gospel worth hearing, and, we may be sure, the only one who has brought the Gospel that can move the hearts of men."¹

There seems nothing left to us but to turn to Christianity as it was proclaimed by Christ, and see if in it we can find our philosophy of life. We have seen that thought breaks down at the moral nature of God;² the best it can do is to save the moral nature of God by positing a duality in the Godhead; but this only gives a formal basis for the divine moral nature; it tells us nothing of the contents of that nature. History shows that all other religions, no matter how useful they have been in the past, are now incapable of progress, and it is useless to consider any of them. And as it is practically agreed to-day that our problem of life must be found in some form of Christianity, we now turn to it to see if it is in reality a divine revelation," the first of blessings." If we will not listen to Jesus Christ it is not worth while listening to anyone else. About what? Jesus Christ said he came

1. B.P.Bowne, Zion's Herald, March 2, 1910.
2. B.P.Bowne, Theism, p.290.

that men may have life, and have it more abundantly. ¹
So He came that men have abundance of life, and this
is the ultimate aim of a philosophy of life. We try
to interpret experience in order that we may under-
stand life, and understanding it we are in a position
to enlarge it. So now that we have seen that human
thought breaks down at the moral nature of God; that we
cannot be sure that God is moral although the exigences
of thought demand it; for when the **moral** nature rests
upon the necessities of thought, the nightmare of the
possibility of our misunderstanding the necessity is
always with us; we turn to Jesus Christ as the one who
claims to give us just what we need. History, too,
suggests that this is a promising field. The finest
minds of the race have been glad to acknowledge him as
the leader of humanity, and few would hesitate to say
so, in the words attributed to Immanuel Kant. It is
said that when one compared his system of morals with
that of Jesus he took it as a great offence and begged
his friend to erase the comparison, saying, "One of those
names, before which the heavens bow, is sacred, while the
other is only that of a poor scholar endeavoring to
explain, to the best of his abilities, the teachings of the
Master." Then the great mass of humanity that have
heard of him have been so irresistibly attracted to him

that Renan was forced to say of him," to whom the
universal conscience has decreed to title of Son of God"
Then we shall see what are the credentials of Jesus
Christ and what he has to say about the problem of life.

Chapter V.

The GOD - Man.

As long as we are in the body thought and action will mean two things to us and not one. It may be that in a purely spiritual existence there would be no distinction between thinking and acting; and we can conceive of God, as morally and intellectually perfect, as one in whom the judgment has no meaning, and thus it is not necessary to distinguish between his thinking and his acting. But to us finite beings, as long as we are in the body, thought and action will be distinct, and as far as we can see, it looks as if they will be in the next life. But however it will be in the next life, in the present we make a decided distinction between one's thought and one's action, his profession and his doing. When there is a deliberate and calculated difference we describe him in a term that is one of the meanest in the language, hypocrite. Just here we find the bold and startling claim that distinguishes the religion of Christ from all other religions, namely, that it not only reveals the mind of God by word but by action. The best that all other religions have claimed is that they have the word of God; Christianity

has had the sublime audacity to claim to present God in action: the others never claimed more than a revelation of God; Christianity claims a self-revelation of God.

To be sure it is only fair to say that the best of the religions and philosophies have claimed that God reveals himself in nature and in the human heart. But while this may not be doubted in either case as a general proposition the proof in any particular instance is exceedingly doubtful. If we happen to be in a happy mood we shall have illustrations innumerable from nature of the love and goodness of God. There will be rain and sunshine, bountiful harvests, the beauty in nature, and so forth. But then there will be times when we must admit that nature is red in tooth and claw, with ravine, and she shrieks so loud against our creed that we have serious doubts as to its credibility. And as to the self-revelation to the heart of man: this is so easily the instrument of imposture that there has never been a crime too atrocious, an action too foul and indecent, or a belief too absurd and impudent to claim that God had not revealed it to some mind. It might be retorted with all truthfulness that this has all proven true in the history of the Church. But there has always been this difference: there stands the objective self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ making its eternal protest.

And so in its truest sense a revelation must be a self-revelation. If we are to distinguish God as he is from God as men depict him; if we are to know God in distinction from knowing about God, we shall have to find him in action. But God in action means in human action, and objectively in human action. If he reveals himself to a man this is subjective; his revelation of himself in nature is objective, but we see so much in the natural world that with more propriety may be attributed to the devil we have so many doubts that our confidence is completely shaken, and we see that a natural revelation can never stand alone.

If then revelation is to be at all it must be through the human. But the trouble with the human is that it is subjective. The divine treasure is in an earthen vessel, and it has a strong earthy taste. If God reveals himself to a prophet we could not tell what is God's truth and what is the prophet's whim. That part of the teaching is strange is no sign that it is whim; for some teaching that appeared strange to men when first given has turned out to be necessary to the life of the world; and everything is new when it is first given, and the new must of necessity be strange. The only way to test a tenet is to put it into practice.

If it causes men to adjust themselves to their physical and social environment so that the life and that of their fellows are more satisfying, we realize it is the way towards satisfying the demands of our being. The action is the only thing that will distinguish the subject whim from the objective truth. But again some truth in action cannot commend itself as such sometimes for generations and centuries. So the revealer would have to be free from the influence of the spirit of his times. Then a prophet would have to be a man with intellect strong enough to receive the divine communication, a will permanently seeking this communication and a life in which the communication found perfect expression. In short he would have to have a perfect moral consciousness and he would need to live a sinless life. But such a human life as this would be so contrary to all experience that we would need to modify the human. But when we say a prophet must be morally perfect in thought and action we are saying he is morally divine. And who can be morally divine except God himself? So it seems that such a prophet must be both God and man.

Again a revelation is not worth having unless the being who is revealed is moral. But we found that all that thought could tell us was that God must be

moral; but it left that moral life practically without contents. And we just cannot rest our moral life upon such a tenuous foundation, or if we could it would be about as barren in contents as the foundation. We can take our test of the moral and see if God's moral nature will stand the test. Our highest expression of the moral is found not only in love but in self-sacrificing love. When one goes to the point of self-sacrificing then we know he has done love's utmost, he has given the last full measure of devotion. This is the supreme test we have for moral beings. It may be objected that this test cannot be applied to God; for sacrifice means limitation, and we cannot limit or impoverish the infinite being. This objection may be allowed to stand if the objector wishes to take the consequences. It means nothing short of the denial of freedom. If we are free beings then when God created us he imposed limitations upon himself. But if there are no limitations in God we are not free; and with the fall of our freedom there comes down with it, ^{all thought,} ¹ ^{scientific and philosophical,} ² all possibility of truth, all explanation, and our entire moral nature. We prefer not to take the responsibility, but to hold to freedom in theory, as every man actually does in fact, and assume self-imposed limitations in God. Nor can the most rigorous and vigorous absolutist object to this: for to say

1. B. P. Bowne, Theory of Thought & Knowledge, p. 244.

2. B. P. Bowne, Metaphysics, p. 92, 406-409.

the limitations are self-imposed does not impair the divine absoluteness; while to deny the possibility of such self-imposition is to deny that God is absolute. For one to impose limitations on himself means simply that he refrains under certain conditions from using his power, he acts as if he had not the power to do otherwise.

But how can there be such a thing as an act of divine self-sacrifice. In no way can such an act be manifested in the material world. If God is what we have been forced by thought to see him to be, then all he needs to do is to will and material worlds innumerable will come into existence; and if these could be of any value to us they would be only of material value. Nor can he manifest his self-sacrifice through the word revealed to his prophets. But it would avail nothing for a prophet to tell men God is a God of self-sacrifice. The only way we can know is to behold a self-sacrificing divine act. So God must enter the heart of the prophet, and the prophet might suffer persecution for the divine truth. But this is the sacrifice of the prophet, not of God. There seems no way possible except that instead of God entering the prophet he becomes the prophet. And here again we are forced to the conclusion that God

must become man; if we are to have a revelation of self-sacrificing divine love it must be through a God-man.

But is the conception of a God-man amenable to thought? Before we hasten to deny that it is, it will be as well for us to recall our conceptions of God and man. God we have spoken of as infinite personal spirit; man as finite personal spirit. So far then the only distinction that we can see is one of power. But man as we know him is dwelling within the body, and the significance that the body has for the nature and character of man is so great that we cannot call him a human being and eliminate it. So when we say God must become man we mean he must become human, that is, he must dwell in the body. Now the problem is, How can an infinite spirit dwell in a physical body? Suppose we try to understand what it means for a finite spirit to dwell in the body. The crude impression that obtains in unreflective thought that the spirit is in the body in a spatial sense, that some part of the body is the seat of the soul, may be set aside with little comment. We have long since seen that matter and spirit are incommensurable; to speak of the soul being in the body in the sense that water is in a bucket is as absurd as to ask the shape of the spirit, its length, breadth and thickness. We have no experience of the spirit taking up its abode in any

particular portion of the body, but if we are in great haste to get to the side of a loved one who, twenty miles away, is in great danger, then we have a very acute experience of what it means to be in the body. We would fly with the rapidity of thought, but there are the conditions, laws and limitations of the body that keep spirit from speaking with spirit, until the two bodies come into each other's presence by obeying the laws of space. Then what we mean by being in the body is simply being subject to the conditions, laws, and limitations of the body. And what we can only mean when we speak of God becoming man is that God became "subject to the conditions, laws and limitations of human life, and thus came in the truest sense of the word a man." This is all we can mean by being in the body, and this is what human life, or being a man, means; the finite spirit living under the laws and conditions of space and time in the physical body and in the world. Just why the order is what it is we do not know, but to live the human life, to be a man, is to live in this order. The only objection to the infinite Spirit becoming man then is that we cannot understand how he can so limit himself. But this is in fact no objection, for it is common to all the divine actions. We do not know how God creates worlds and universes, but we are nevertheless

fully persuaded that he does. We do not know how he can create a free being, but there are few things we are surer of, and those who formally deny it, generally most vehemently assert it in fact. But when God created a free being he imposed limitations upon himself. Then as long as we know that God does limit himself we shall not trouble ourselves because we do not know, how.

Human thought broke down at the moral nature of God, and we turned to Christianity, the noblest of revealed religions, as the only hope of a philosophy of life. But as the central doctrine of Christianity, and the source of all its power¹ is the doctrine of the Incarnation we have tried to see just what thought would do with such a doctrine. It turns out that the self-revelation of God is impossible without it. In it God reveals himself not by word but by action. Thus it is not only the highest, but the only objective revelation, one that is common to all; and hence the only one that can keep life from becoming immoral, grotesque and fanatical. It is the only one that gives contents to the ethical nature of God, and it does this in the richest possible way. And finally it gives no real offence to thought, and is troubled with mystery no more than other aspects of the Infinite.

1. B.P. Bowne, Studies in Christianity, p.93.

Chapter VI.

Some Christian Facts,

When we undertake to tell just what we mean by Christianity we find it is not so easy. We certainly should not care to confine ourselves to historical Christianity as a whole, for it has suffered grievously from its conflict with the world, not always conquering in the sense of its own standards: nor can we define it as the religion of the New Testament, meaning by that that the New Testament is its only source of authority. Christ himself said his religion was to be a progressive revelation; he had many things yet to reveal to his disciples but they would come through his Spirit as his followers would be able to receive them, and that this revelation through the Spirit would be a revelation that he gave them.¹ But it is Christianity as given us by Christ; that is, it is all of his teachings as recorded in the New Testament, and his promise of the Spirit who would bring all things to their remembrance and guide them into all truth. Thus he bound together the objective revelation as given by him in his earthly life and the subjective revelation of the Spirit to the hearts of men. As the Spirit can only speak to men by way of their minds this

1. John XVI: 13-14.

frees the mind forever from the shackles of the past, and, yet, as the Spirit only testifies of Christ the words of Christ remain as the immovable foundation that steadies men.

But this all rests upon the firm foundation that Christ's lives, or as Harnack puts it, "on the conviction that Jesus lives we still base those hopes of citizenship in an Eternal City which makes our earthly life worth living and tolerable"¹. And the proof that Christ lives rests upon a historical fact, the fact of his resurrection. The conviction that Christ has passed through death and now lives robs death of its terrors and enhances our value of the personal life. "This feeling of life is bound up with the conviction that Jesus Christ has passed through death, that God² has awakened him and raised him to life and glory."

The resurrection was to prove that He who was dead is alive again. That the early disciples believed that Christ arose from the dead is clear from their testimony and from the complete change in their lives. After the crucifixion they returned to their vocations, not dreaming of a resurrection,³ but upon the evidence of the resurrection they go to work to found the Church on the fact of a living Lord, and the cowardly Peter

1. Adolf Harnack, What is Christianity, p. 162- 2. Ibid, p. 163
3. A. C. McGiffert, The Apostolic Age, p. 36.

who a few days before in the presence of a girl had denied his discipleship, is transformed and we find him facing a crowd at Jerusalem, telling them that they are responsible for allowing their rulers wickedly to crucify Jesus whom God had raised up and had made him both Lord and Christ. And from that day to this no sensible man has ever denied that the disciples¹ believed that Jesus Christ arose from the dead. Even those who reject it admit that the early disciples believed it: Bauer, Strauss, Keim, J.R. Seeley, and others. Now all historians have to agree that historical Christianity,² and thus Christianity of to-day, in the words of Keim, owes its existence to the belief of the disciples in the resurrection of Christ.

But the resurrection is a miracle, and, according to Renan, because of that historical science cannot hear to it a minute. Such a good historian as Seeley³ takes the same view. But really science is not so sensitive as either of these gentlemen imagined. At any rate if the resurrection must be rejected because it professes to be a supernatural fact, we cannot reject the simple and natural fact of the disciples' belief in that resurrection. All the historians and critics are compelled to admit this, and this is all that is necessary for

1. McGiffert, Apostolic Age, p. 37; J. H. Roper, Apostolic Age, p. 67. 2. Quoted by Alexander, The Son of Man, p. 366. McGiffert, Apostolic Age, p. 42; 3. Seeley Natural Religion, p. 240.

our purposes. Mr Seeley has said, "The achievement of Christ in founding by his single will and power a structure (the Church) so durable and so universal, is like no other achievement which history records.¹ And the Christian Church is so great, and so superior to all other institutions and systems that they are, he tells us, coarse, common, flimsy and unsubstantial compared with it; and he can account for it only on the theory that "it descended out of heaven from God". Yet this same Mr Seeley asks, "For what is, what was originally the Gospel, but the announcement that Jesus was risen from the dead?"² And in the next sentence he says, "Now it is the prevalent opinion among those who are most penetrated with the modern spirit that Jesus did not rise from the dead." Well then those who are most penetrated with the modern spirit must face this ugly fact: The Christian Church that is so great that all other institutions and systems are coarse, common, flimsy and unsubstantial compare with it; that it is "the Moral University of the world, not merely the greatest, but the only great school of virtue existing,"³ that "held together for many centuries the civilization of Europe,⁴ and it does so to this day more than most suspect;" and it did this work so well that we are told the modern historian finds it hard to express in words the

1. Seeley, Ecce Homo, p. 354. 2. Seeley, Natural Religions, p. 240
 3. Ecce Homo, Supplementary Preface.
 4. Natural Religions, p. 233.

gratitude modern civilization owes the Church:¹ this institution originated in and rests upon a falsehood. It would be difficult to imagine anything more discouraging than to be forced to such a conclusion. Since the days that Christianity introduced it as a new principle,² the philosophy of history, the meaning of human history taken as a whole, has never ceased to have its charm for men. They see in it the essential nature of the world: if there is a purpose, a meaning of things anywhere, it must be in human history. This is one thing the Greek mind missed. We wonder how they got along without it; for it is everything to Christianity, and has so become to the modern world. God is in history; and the essential meaning of this is, " a divine purpose, a moral development in humanity."³ But what kind of being is God if his most exalted truth cannot get a footing in the world and remain here without having as its foundation a stupendous falsehood? Such a conclusion throws a pall over all our search for, and love of truth, and shatters our faith in both the power and goodness of God.

Yet some will not tolerate the resurrection of Christ because it involves the supernatural, it was a miracle. This is nothing but an intellectual superstition that possesses some who are so immersed in physical

1. John Fiske, The Beginnings of New England, p.18.

2. Windelbard, History of Philosophy, p.255

3. B.P. Bowne, The Immanence of God, p.52.

science that they never dream there is the problem of reality as well as the problem of appearance. Every event has its real or supernatural side; wherever there is causation there is the supernatural. And as for miracle, the most obnoxious definition of miracle is that it is a departure from the order of nature. And horror of horrors, does not this mean the production of something which nature left to herself would not produce? And does not this remove the great gods, the Reign of Law and the Conservation of Energy, and thus the Temple of Science comes crumbling into the dust. If so, then your Temple of science is nothing but valiant dust that is built on dust; for as a matter of fact such miracles are innumerable in nature. And according to even this definition there is no apriori objection to miracles in general.¹

So if the last word of the world is moral, and if all explanation and causation must be traced to a personal God, then if some spiritual exigency should demand miracle, apriori there cannot be the slightest objection. And if Jesus Christ claimed to be the God-man, and to pass through death to live again, and if he does live to-day, nothing could confirm these facts as well as the miracle of the resurrection.

1. B.P.Bowne, Metaphysics, p.290.

This is just what, historically, it has done. After the resurrection the disciples were immoveable in their belief that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us; and, as **Schwegler** has said, "that God became man, is, ¹ **speculatively**, the fundamental idea of Christianity;" and there is not the slightest indication that Christianity will ever change in this regard.

This is the key to the deciphering of all the teaching of Christ. He does not speak and act always as we should expect; but when we consider his words and acts in the light of the Incarnation then we see that they are just what we might expect from such a being. Then there is a practical principle that is involved in this speculative one, namely, absolute obedience to the words of Christ. This is the practical essential and the Incarnation is the theoretical essential of Christianity. Christ did not demand that men should believe that he was God incarnate before they could become his followers, but he did repudiate any claim of discipleship that did not put him first and obey him in all things. To be sure logically such a demand can be **justified** only on the assumption of the deity of Christ, and even the unreflective thought of the masses was sure to seek the theoretical basis of the

1.

A. **Schwegler**, History of Philosophy, p.143.

practical principle; and we see Christ telling men that to put into practice the practical principle will automatically reveal the truth of the theoretical one.

Chapter VII.

Faith and Reason in a Philosophy of Life.

By this time we see what a large place religion must have in a philosophy of life. We have continually found ourselves returning to the independent world-Ground to explain every problem that has demanded real explanation. We have seen that the nature of that World-Ground is spirit; and by spirit we mean intelligence. We have seen that this ultimate intelligence must be unitary, or one; that is must be infinite, that is, the independent ground of the finite; and that it must be personal, that is, it must not only know the finite, it must know itself; and it must not only control the finite world, but must control Itself. This combination of self-knowledge and self-control is what we mean by personality, and as the Infinite Spirit possesses absolute self-knowledge and absolute self-control we say He is the Infinite Person, and we must cease using the impersonal pronoun in referring to Him, even if we should capitalize it.

Now this terminology is philosophical, but the thought is the same as we express when we use religious terms. The philosophical term World-Ground comes to mean

exactly the same as the religious term, God. But the latter has some advantages. It is more familiar, and in the popular mind the associations of the latter make it essentially personal. Some philosophers have used the term God for their notion of an impersonal First Cause, but "religion from the beginning has been the search after a power essentially personal."¹

So religion and philosophy brings us to the same goal.

So we need make no apology for the fundamental place religion has in our philosophy of life. We have just seen that thought comes to the position always held by religion. Philosophy is compelled to define the World-Ground as personal intelligence, and religion defines God as personal spirit. Religion is the relationship between God and man; and a philosophy of life can never be more than fragmentary that does not ground itself in the relation existing between the World-Ground and finite persons. That is, if it is to be a philosophy of life it must include the entire life. And when we look into experience the testimony is such that we find that we are not only justified in founding our philosophy of life on religion, we are not justified in founding it upon anything else. "The truth is that religion is and always has been the basis of societies and of states."²

1. F. B. Jerons, Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religions, p. 136.
2. J. R. Seeley, Natural Religion, p. 201.

This is true because religion gives a practical view of life by which communities live. But a community is an aggregation of individuals, and this practical view by which communities live must also be a practical view by which the individual lives. And the world has always been full of religion, because men must live; for it is certain that we cannot escape taking some attitude toward ultimate reality, and that attitude always controls our conduct.

Now as men have always had religion, and religion gives them a practical philosophy of life, it would seem that philosophy is a kind of mental appendix vermiformis, useless except to endanger our existence. But in this case things are not what they seem. Philosophy gets all its data from experience, and, it is true with these concrete data we must not expect logic to give us demonstration, but its province is rather to interpret these data, and thus give the mind peace and satisfaction. And now we see that while religion determines the practical view of life for men, individually and collectively, and is the basis of states and civilizations; nevertheless, it needs reason to lift its claims and demands up into clear consciousness so that what does not meet the demands of reason and of life,

and what does not satisfy a universal feeling may be rejected. We all know that false and pernicious beliefs and customs flourish if not deprived by reason of nourishment. So the only safety for man is to be found in the right of the individual judgement. Then too sooner or later the intellect will assert its rights, and all religious beliefs will have to justify themselves to the intellect, and if the mind has not accustomed itself to meet these demands faith in the religious beliefs will become imperiled. On the other hand it must not be forgotten that a great historical religion, may, because of its stupendous power in shaping the destinies of men and states say that the fundamental question in respect to it is not whether it is true, but whether we would wish it true. Browning saw this and causes Bishop Blougram to say to the naive skeptic:

"What think ye of Christ" friend? When all's done
and said,

Like you this Christianity or not?

It may be false, but will you wish it true?

Has it your vote to be so if it can?

Trust you an instinct silenced long ago

That will break silence and enjoin you love

What mortified philosophy is hoarse,
And all in vain, with bidding you despise?

Browning here is not rejecting reason, he is simply asserting the practical nature of belief; insisting that needs of practical life and the essential demands of the mind are first and formal logic is second. As an example, here is Christianity, with its doctrine of the Incarnation that has, everyone must admit, solved theoretically, at least, the most difficult of all problems,¹ that of the relation of God and the World; with its lofty moral ideals, and the ideals incarnated in a life that when men try to show that there was sin in it they make themselves ridiculous. When Christianity is seen simply as a system of thought by which men are brought to God we are overcome with wonder. And so many noble minds have said, "Oh, that it were true!" But it must have originated with some person or persons. If it is not of God, then men here have surpassed God; for it is worthy of Him. And, then, the didactic of the mind that insists that God shall be perfect compels us to attribute this highest moral scheme to God.

In turning then to Christianity for a philosophy of life the rights of both faith and reason must be respected.

1. Windelband, History of Philosophy, p. 235.

Chapter VIII.

The Final Philosophy of Life.

Christianity claims to be a revelation of God, and this is what makes it so important to us. As Amiel says, "as it is impossible to be outside God, the best is consciously to dwell in Him." But consciously to dwell in Him means that we must know Him, and as we have seen the alleged subjective revelation to the hearts of individuals is open too much to imposture to be credited by men, and the objective revelation in nature is too contradictory, too inconclusive, and lacks too much in contents to be of much use to men; we are forced to turn to a system that reveals God in act. This is what Christianity claims to do. God was in Christ, the Apostle Paul tells us, reconciling the world unto himself, and, again, he says, in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. So as we see Jesus Christ speaking to, and acting towards men in Palestine over nineteen hundred years ago it means that God so speaks and so acts to men to-day.

The central thought in Christ's teaching in regards to God is that he is the loving heavenly Father of men. But this attitude of God as Father is double. The general impression that Christ makes upon us is that

God is the Father of all men, but when the particular passages are examined it is surprising how he seems to be ever offering the alternative of accepting or rejecting God as Father. Thus the double attitude is apparent. God is Father in what we might call the natural sense. He has created all men; the evil as well as the good find their origin in Him. Therefore he sends the rain and sunshine upon both classes alike. On the natural plane all share alike in the great commonplace blessings of life, and all have access to the natural resources. At least this is true as far as the Father is concerned. On the other hand men may reject the Father's love, and then Christ does not hesitate a moment to tell them that their father is the devil. But the solution is better seen in acts of Christ rather than in his words, and this carries us back to the principle that Christ is the revelation of God in act. Before men have truth presented to them Christ is exceedingly gentle with them, but as soon as they deliberately reject, or what appears to be worse to him, refuse to consider the truth as he proclaims it, he without the slightest hesitation terms them serpents, offspring of vipers who can hardly escape the judgment of Gehenna.

And this could hardly be otherwise. God's purpose

is to build up a kingdom of righteousness, that is, a moral kingdom. Now to be moral the subjects must enter it from choice; and to be a kingdom, the King's will must be supreme at all times. So God to be Father in the highest sense must be so by the choice of men. This is similar to the distinction between the natural and the moral love that parents have for their children. It is plain that natural love, no matter how satisfying it may be to the parent, is fatal to the child if not used as the basis of moral love. Schleiermacher said the moral is the imposition of reason upon nature. Thus the blind natural feeling that the parent has for the child must be enlightened and guided by reason, and thus it attains dignity and worth. So both in the relations existing between God and man and those between man and man the moral must dominate. And in Jesus Christ we see just how God acts as Father in the double sense. Then the problem of God's attitude toward us is a very simple one, namely, He is a loving heavenly Father who has brought us into existence, and He will do everything for us on condition that we make His will our will.

But the real problem here is to know just what God's will is - not, of course, in every detail, but in its great general lines of action. Theoretically, the

doctrine of the Incarnation solves this problem, but is there any concrete test by which men may know that Christ actually does represent the Father, and that Christ's mind and will is God's mind and will? There is such a test given us by Christ himself. If anyone willeth to do God's will he shall know whether the teaching is of God or whether it is the teaching of a mere man by the name of Jesus. This takes the burden of proof from the mind of men and places it in the heart; from the intellectual nature and puts it in the moral nature. The test is not logic but experience, and thus the responsibility falls upon the individual in such a way that he cannot escape the responsibility of making the test. It actually brings the judgment seat of the Eternal into the heart of every man who has access to the words of Christ; and what Shakespeare says of the heavenly court of justice becomes true in the breast of man:

There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults
 To give in evidence. ¹

If a man refuses to make this simple test he does no less than acknowledge that he is not very anxious to know

1. Hamlet, Act III.sc.III.

whether or not the greatest blessings ever offered to man are real and true.

The element of mysticism enters our problem just here. His teaching is to a large extent composed of promises both spiritual and material. To commune with God is the greatest of spiritual blessings, and, according to the doctrine of the Incarnation, to commune with Christ when upon earth was to commune with God. But what about communion after Christ's earthly life had ended? We saw that thought demanded a community in the Godhead that was at least a duality before it could provide for the moral nature of God; and now we see Christianity asserting that God is a Trinity. And Christ said, If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto me. This leads us to believe that Christ was to return and spiritually abide in the hearts of his disciples. Yet he said it was expedient for his disciples that he should go, for upon his going depended the coming of this Spirit. Now no one has ever succeeded in defining just the distinctions in the Trinity; we only know the fact that Christ both distinguished himself from the Father and the Spirit and identified himself with the Father and the Spirit. Just what these distinctions and identities are we do not know. So when

it is said that the Father, or the Son, or the Spirit abides in the heart the fact is the Triune God is there.

The simple facts of the Christian revelation are that Jesus Christ gives us the general, fundamental, objective laws of life in his historical revelation, and the Spirit guides us in the special application of these laws by his subjective revelation. The two give us the revelation of God the Father.

A very important point just here is, what should be our attitude towards Christ? He gives us a very simple answer: that of uncompromising obedience and loyalty to him. He must be put first, before parents, children, and indeed one's own life. This seems harsh, for the rights of the natural affections seem to us unquestionably to take precedence of all others, and there is nothing in ethical theory that can object to a man loving himself first. It is a very old proverb amongst us that self-preservation is the first law of nature. Yet when we turn to experience we find that it is self-sacrifice¹ that makes the heroes of the race. Paulsen gives three great truths that Christianity has engraved upon the hearts of men. Two of these, Suffering is an essential phase of human life, and, The world lives by the vicarious death of the just and innocent are based upon self-sacrifice. And we all concede that one has a right

1. System of Ethics, 157.

to sacrifice himself for his family, his country, and his honor. Now when we say a man sacrifices himself for his honor we simply mean that he loses his physical life instead of his ideal life. There are occasions in the history of the race when either the physical or the ideal man must die.

Though love repine, and reason chafe,

There came a voice without reply, -

"'Tis man's perdition to be safe;

When for the truth he ought to die".²

But just what is the ideal man that no one with a sense of honor would sacrifice is difficult to determine. The truth is, in the history of the race most men who have sacrificed themselves for the ideal man have done it more for an undefined but profound feeling rather than from a clear sense of the ideal. Now the Christian claim is that the ideal man has become concrete in the man Jesus Christ. He is a man, in all things made like unto his brethren, the sinless man, the perfect man. Now we do not wonder at men sacrificing themselves for the ideal man within them, and we should not wonder when they have sacrificed themselves for the clear cut, historical embodiment of the ideal man. So when Christ demands that we put loyalty to him first he is simply showing us

in a perfectly clear manner how to live the largest life. He says he came that men might have abundance of life; and to be loyal to him first is to assure loyalty to the ideal man within man, and to one's blood relatives and one's friends. As Lovelace put it:

I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

Now absolute loyalty to Jesus Christ means absolute obedience to him in everything. This is the ideal that we should ever strive to realize. We now seek to know the Father's attitude toward us, our attitude toward Him, and our attitude toward each other.

God's attitude toward us as revealed by Jesus Christ is best expressed by the phrase holy love. The phrase is tautological, for love in its highest sense is always in union with holiness; but it is helpful in making the thought clear. This being his nature it is not surprising that he calls us to nothing less than the perfect life. Christ says, Ye shall be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect. Now we are told that "life demands for its perfection both outward fortune and happiness and inward worth and peace." And this is just what Jesus Christ promises to men. He insists

that we shall put the inward worth and peace first; but having done that. he promises that the outward fortune and happiness shall surely be given. To use Christ's own words, But seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. The adversative, but, is used to contrast the Gentile theory of life with his theory of life. The difference is clear, the Gentile puts outward fortune and happiness first; the Christian puts inward worth and peace first. Not that material wealth is to be despised, Christ admits that it is important, but to put it first is to develop the spirit of self-sufficiency which prevents us from getting the higher goods. The divine plan is to build up a spiritual kingdom on the plan of the family. The chief good is to satisfy the heart's demand for God. If we will seek God and righteousness first then these necessary things will be provided. This brings God into the details of the daily life. And because of this it has always been too definite and distinct a principle for the vast majority of even those who call themselves Christians. In the great crises of life we gladly fly to God, and our trust in Him then is not without its reward; but He would have us do it in the commonplace things of every day life. Now this principle

is clear and capable of practical proof in our lives, but so many of us fear to test it. Christ was so sure of its truthfulness that he considered it outrageous to think God would not make good the promise, and he drew the analogy of earthly fatherhood to show that to doubt this principle was absurd. Yet in some quarters to accept this principle is not only considered absurd but fanatical. There is however no middle ground. We must choose between the Gentile theory of life and Christ's theory. Apriori there are not the slightest objections to the theory that all the laws in the universe work together for good for the man whose supreme desire is to make his will conform to the divine will. And the principle can be tested in experience. One thing is sure, if this principle is true then we are absolute masters in this life. Christ is almost cruel he is so tenacious in forcing from us a decision upon this principle. He says the love of money is an enemy; it must be annihilated; in short, we must choose between God and mammon. But if we annihilate this our only protection is that this principle be true. Selfishness is an enemy. It must be replaced with self-denial to the point of self-renunciation. Again if we do this our safety depends

upon the truth of this principle. Care is another enemy which Christ ranks with heathenism. If this principle is true there is no place for care in life. If we treat these things as enemies then we are forced to a life of trust; but this is just what being a child of God means, and this is why Christ contrasts his principle with the Gentile view of life. The two lives are so different that many of us fear to put the principle to the test; but this is what Christ everywhere is insisting upon. All of his teaching rests upon this basal principle that God is in his world, has control of things, and if we meet the conditions we shall be at home everywhere in his universe. All blessings then, temporal and spiritual, depend upon obeying the will of God as it is revealed in Jesus Christ. If we do this no experience in life can crush us; even death no longer has terrors for us, as it becomes simply the gateway to a larger life. Thus we see God's attitude toward us is that of a loving heavenly Father who understands all our needs and will supply them; and our attitude toward God should be that of dutiful children seeking always to do the Father's will.

Our attitude toward each other is best expressed in the phrase, Love thy neighbor as thyself. Under normal conditions a man seeks his own good; he wishes

good for himself. This attitude Christ insists every man shall take toward every other man. This too is perfectly plain. We always know whether we intend good or evil toward our neighbor. The attitude of good will toward men is absolute, indeed, it is the only absolute thing in our lives. And the rule of action by which this attitude finds expression is, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them. It must not be forgotten that this rule assumes discipleship. One as a member of the kingdom of God, always having the attitude of good will toward his fellow man is to act toward others as he would wish them to act towards him. It can be readily seen how rapidly the world would be transformed if all these who call themselves by the name of Christ would seriously and earnestly get to work to put into practice in their lives his teaching of God's attitude towards men, men's attitude to God, and men's attitude toward each other.

But there is another point that has not been touched upon yet which is very important: one's management of himself. After all has been said and done this is man's most difficult practical problem. He has a judge within his breast that is exceedingly stern,

and exacting at all times. Byron in one of his poems began to enumerate the outward and accidental things that have power over us, but he ended by admitting that the most powerful factor was within:

Our means, our birth, our nation, and our name,
 Our fortune, temper, even our outward frame,
 Are far more potent o'er our yielding clay
 Than aught we know beyond our little day.
 Yet still there whispers the small voice within,
 Heard through Gain's silence, and o'er Glory's din:
 Whatever creed be taught or land be trod,
 Man's conscience is the oracle of God.¹

Of course the Christian solution to all the problems of self is simply to seek first the Kingdom and God's righteousness, that is, put inward worth and peace first. And just how to do this is made so perfectly plain by Christ that we miss it through its simplicity. Indeed it is one of the most remarkable characteristics of Christ that he gave the world his great principles of life while speaking about the most ordinary things; just as if he were calling men's attention to something that had always been perfectly obvious to everyone, and under no circumstances could it possibly be otherwise.

1. Byron, The Island.

Apparently he simply called to their remembrance what they had always known, and what they could not think of denying without transparent absurdity. The reason of this is not that he had in mind the thought of Pope:

Man must be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown proposed as things forgot.

But rather because he had perfect insight into human life and knew perfectly what could, and how to, satisfy it. Augustine's words, "O, Lord, thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart is restless till it finds rest in thee", expresses Christ's key to the solution of the problem of human life, and explain his method.

It is one of these sayings that give us Christ's great principle of self-mastery. "Everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Beyond a doubt this simple saying is one of the most marvelous combinations of words ever uttered, expressing as it does thought that reveals the Thinker's insight into human nature so profound that it is nothing short of perfect. The lonely majesty and lofty scorn with which all pretense of defense of sensuality and unchastity are set aside are only equalled by the sublime hope of a triumphant life that is offered to everyone. He says men are responsible

for the most fleshy of sins, but he does not arbitrarily assert it. Thinking, he here tells us, is the source of action, and thus we are responsible for action, because thinking can be controlled. This is self-evident in experience. One may make his mind a sewer, but he knows that the time and energy in accomplishing this unsavory work could have made it as the cleanest and sweetest of mountain streams. Thus we are ever making our heaven or hell. Theoretically one is just as easy as the other. Practically the fact that we are in a world of heredity and social solidarity makes the problem more difficult. But Christ was so confident that his followers could master these that he for the most part ignored them. Heredity and all its problems he met with his doctrine of the forgiveness of past sins. The purifying and spiritualizing influence that the consciousness of sins forgiven had upon one seemed to him enough to take care of heredity; and to follow him was to live so close to God that the influence of one's fellows could be overcome when that influence was evil. Then the way to get complete control of self is to know God in constant communion, and no experience in life will be too much for us. All things shall work together for good to them that love him; even sorrow and death shall be made to help us to a higher life, and we shall understand" the passionate pleasure

of prayer to the soul that grieves."

Now if we were to sum up our philosophy of life in a single principle we could do it in no better words than those of Browning:

I say, the acknowledgement of God in Christ
 Accepted by the reason, solves for thee
 All questions in the earth and out of it. ¹

That is, God the Father has revealed his will on the fundamental things of life through his Son, Jesus Christ, and our problem is to work His will out in this world. We have seen that God's attitude towards us is that of a loving Father: if we ignore his will he will still send us the great commonplace blessings of life; but if our attitude is that of obeying His will as revealed in Christ, putting Him and the interests of the Kingdom first, then we are assured of outward fortune and happiness and inward worth and peace. Indeed the promise is if we obey the words of Christ we shall be conscious of his presence. Now when Christ said that temporal blessings were necessary he determined our attitude toward the world; these may come into the life until they conflict with the demands of the higher life. Thus the love of money and the fret of care are banished from life, according to Christ, two of our greatest enemies.

And when he assured us of inward peace he made possible the mastery of life. But our attitude towards God determines his attitude towards us, and upon this depends all our blessings. But our attitude towards God involves the attitude of goodwill towards all men, even our enemies. Thus the revelation of the will of God in Jesus Christ is complete. It is that each individual shall consider that he is a member of a family that includes all the children of men, that he must love all as he does himself, and that if he obeys the Father's will, all his needs, temporal and spiritual, will be met. He is not to withdraw himself from the world, but work out his philosophy among men, earnestly seeking the guidance of the Spirit. Thus the prize is given to the seekers after knowledge, and indolence is condemned without mercy. It is the man who does nothing that receives the severest condemnation from Jesus Christ.

No one can deny that theoretically the plan is perfect. The perfect life is made possible; both outward fortune and happiness and inward worth and peace are assured. That is the triumphant life is not only made possible but is made certain. Mr Eucken, after reviewing the systems of men covering a period of two thousand years sees nothing but hesitation over even the great

general principles of life. With his principle he might come back here two thousand years hence and his result would be the same. He insists that the modern mind does not take to the Incarnation, it prefers to come to God direct. Well then the modern mind will miss the solution of the problem of life. If Mr Eucken would take the system of Christ as given by him, and then look into history to see if it has proven itself by its results he would see that there is no place in it for hesitation but shows the way to a triumphant life. The German philosopher's results of his study of the philosophies of life covering two thousand years remind us of the saying of Ruskin, that he did not wonder at what men suffer but he often wondered at what they lose.

NOW UNTO HIM THAT IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDING
ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING
TO THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US, UNTO HIM BE THE GLORY
IN THE CHURCH AND IN CHRIST JESUS UNTO ALL GENERATIONS
FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.