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I. THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON.

“WHATSOEVER is spoken of God, or things pertaining to God, otherwise than the truth is, though it seem an honor, it is an injury. And as incredible praises given unto men do often abate and impair the credit of their deserved commendation, so we must likewise take great heed, lest, in attributing unto Scripture more than it can have, the incredibility of that do cause even those things which it hath most abundantly to be less reverently esteemed.”¹

Thus wrote wise old Richard Hooker some three hundred years ago. And multiplied experience since his day has fully endorsed his observations. Nothing has ever been gained by the friends of the Bible by the assumption of false or unnecessary positions, and at the present critical stage of the battle for and against the supremacy of God's word, much, very much, is to be lost by such manœuvering. History abundantly shows how bad tactics, the deep and continuous error of Christian apologetics, has once and again compelled retreat before the sharp onslaughts of the foe, with confusion, and doubt, and dismay as the results. Inexcusably, often, has the Bible been put in a false place by “attributing to it more than it can have.” Subsequent defenders have always felt the serious disadvantage of the well-meant but ruinous policy. Finding themselves at the very outset in an untenable position, their first move was necessarily a retreat, to their own discomfiture and the jubilation of their opponents. We are even now learning something of the risk involved in relying upon argu-

¹ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book II., Section 8.

II. THE SPECULATIVE VIEW OF FAITH.

THE defects of our uncritical thought result mainly from our slowness and unwillingness to leave the sphere and influence of mere external and finite relations. The methods of the logical understanding and categories of thought, on the other hand, have the advantage of discovering to us those latent contradictions which frequently pass without suspicion in popular language and exposition. But even these methods, when applied to religious ideas, in order to permanent results, require a regulative principle which is not contained in them. Otherwise, a movement which promised well, and was begun hopefully with the purpose of giving greater clearness to our conceptions, ends, more likely, in the confusion of simple faith, and fails also to satisfy reason itself. There is no other way to prove our knowledge than to bring it to the test of the category of necessity. Propositions which borrow nothing from the contingent contain this *a priori* element. Without this element they must await the slow process of empirical testimony, or be acted upon without verification as untried experiments. In the ordinary affairs of life no such standard is possible. Probability, not necessity, is the rule of life. But in morality and religion the empirical standard is a needless, fallible, and offensive thing. In presenting the speculative or discursive view of faith, we must not forget to provide some unconditional test of validity, else we shall be apt to share the fate of the man who hastily sets to work without foundation for his opinions, only to see his structure displaced by other opinions, and those, perhaps, equally groundless. We might suppose that the understanding, wearied with its unsuccessful efforts, would confess its incompetence and leave the field. Such is by no means the case. Refusing an unconditional *prius*, it continues its Sisyphus-like labors with unabated zeal and with a sublimity of confidence bordering on the grotesque. Between the arrogance of reason on the one hand, and utter skepticism on the other, may there not be a middle course—a view not wholly independent of the common organon

of knowledge, nor wholly dependent upon its common methods? Let us assume that there is such a course, and let us attempt within this sphere to exhibit the grounds and function of faith. As to the grounds, we shall decide in advance that faith is intelligible only on the presupposition of knowledge. The composite view seems to be held by many eminent authorities, as Rothe, Jacobi, Dorner, and others, apparently defending the scholastic maxim, *crede ut intelligas*. But the discussion has really hung upon the use and meaning of terms rather than the psychological fact. Both Abelard and Anselm would agree that faith must be rational. This is all that is necessary to settle. Faith must somehow legitimate itself. It must obtain authority from some source. Then, in turn, the source itself must be rationalized. This authority must be settled by reason, and the reason, it would appear, must have the last word. But this is not the meaning of rationality. If it were, no place could be found for faith, though we sought for it with tears. Reason believes in itself, but reason neither comprehends itself as an absolute whole, nor its own concepts. To demand a comprehension of all the objects of faith would, therefore, be itself irrational. Faith may accept what has been demonstrated, and if it possessed no wider field, then faith and knowledge would embrace each other. But faith does not stop with positivism. Faith is wider. It comprehends its own instruments—the very ground of its existence—much that reason cannot demonstrate. But it must not attempt to embrace contradictories. Here is the principal function of philosophy, both in pure reason and in religion. It is to try the doctrines, to see whether they be of reason or of themselves, comparing doctrine with doctrine. Neither should doctrines collide with the laws of thought as universally recognized, and the accepted laws of evidence. So we say again, whatever is not rational is not of faith, and where there is no ground for faith there is no faith.

As to the function of faith and the obligation of faith in God there is much to be said, or rather much that ought to be said, by teachers of ethics in opposition to the inveterate tendency of the times to construct a morality independent of religion. There is great de-

mand for faith, but it is for the most part, in philosophy, limited to phenomena. Philosophic speculation, both in morals and in religion, makes less and less demand upon our faith in God, while scientific inquiry in the physical world makes a bold demand for faith in a great multitude of abstractions, such as law, order, system, adjustment, and many other impersonal objects, in increasing numbers.

The Psychology of Faith.—Something should be said about the psychology of faith. On this point authorities have been unable to agree. Some have made faith to depend upon the intellect, others upon the sensibilities, others upon the will, while still others have invented a faith-faculty. The consensus of opinion would probably be expressed by the late Professor T. H. Green, of Oxford: "In different relations reason is the source alike of faith and knowledge. God is not wisely trusted when declared unintelligible." If we turn to the New Testament many passages seem to predicate faith of the reason as its source, while an equal number may be found which seem to posit faith in the will, but never in mere feeling. Faith is truly a mighty stimulus to feeling, but it follows rather than precedes it. I am persuaded that faith is capable of a deeper psychological treatment than has hitherto been accorded to it. It is unnecessary here to point out the proposed course of thought, but only to indicate a few results which it seems quite easy to establish, viz., (*a*), Faith is the synthetic unity of rational perceptions concerning the attributes of God; (*b*), Faith is the substance and evidence of that knowledge which is most intimately connected with human happiness; (*c*), It is not philosophical to divorce faith from knowledge.

Belief and Knowledge.—A cloud of obscurities has at times rested upon the relation of faith and knowledge. A schism between reason and belief seemed at one time inevitable on philosophical grounds. For more than a decade the doctrine of the Unknowable, as proclaimed by Hamilton, followed by Mansel, seemed supreme. Speculative thought was brought to a standstill or became fatally misleading. We were taught that the Infinite is the Unknowable, and yet that the "Infinite is, must, and ought to be believed in." When reason began to recover itself it was seen

that the key to the difficulty lay in the conclusion "the Infinite must be believed in." For this conclusion must be either mediate or immediate. By hypothesis it is not mediate, it is therefore immediate; and since it is immediate, and yet forms no part of our knowledge, this curious result is reached, that our intuitive or immediate belief in the axioms of geometry, and therefore of geometry itself, forms no part of our knowledge! But this doctrine of Hamilton has long since crumbled under criticism.

No close observer of the trend of thought in morals and in religion can fail to observe the naturalistic tendency. The impatience with which recent writers on morals treat the ideals of Christian ethics is amazing. And this tendency seems to have grown to a passion since the theory of evolution came to be a factor in the explanation of man in his moral consciousness. Since it has been discovered, under the stress of the evolutionary hypothesis, that morality has no absolute *a priori* principle, and that man is simply the product of material conditions shared alike with the brute, ethical writers have vied with each other in their efforts to reduce morality to the methods of natural science. Before proceeding further, I desire to call attention to two outstanding facts verifiable in history: that every form of morality independent of God has degenerated into (*a*), gloomy pessimism; (*b*), or philosophical egoism:

1. In reference to the first fact I am concerned with what philosophers call intuitional, or formal, or idealistic, ethics. Here it is not necessary to trace the ethical spirit in the ancient Greeks, or the later Platonists, or the Brahman, or the Buddhist, in the view that life is an illusion and burdensome, or to dwell upon the stoical philosophy, or to follow the reasoning of Hume, that from the consolidated good and evil of this world no beneficent First Cause can be predicated; but it will be sufficient to take a classical example from modern philosophy to show that the whole ethical process, even under the inspiration of one of the most wonderful of men, is but a continuous repetition, and forever remains essentially the same. I refer to Kant. I am greatly disinclined to attempt any criticism of his great work on the *Practical Reason*; but it is well known that he falls into antinomy. He confesses it.

There is no thoroughfare in absolute formalism. Perpetual self-legislation ends in perpetual and useless conflict. Logical symmetry must be marred, or moral autonomy without content must be surrendered. The absolute opposition between reason and nature, virtue and happiness, with which he set out, can be overcome by no further dialectic, but only by invoking the datum, God; and hence, when he advances the postulate that virtue is a form of causality in the sensible world, the dualism between virtue and happiness is reconciled, the attainment is no longer impossible, and his system is carried over into the domain of Christian ethics; but the inner harmony of his metaphysic has so far lost tone that no hand has been able to restore it. Kant founds by his postulate a causal connection between virtue and happiness through the Author of nature. This assumption, which liberates his system from the category of infidel ethics, condemns it at once in the eyes of those who are content to follow him only to the extent of his rigorous formalism. With such, the conflict of reason and nature could not be compromised. To such, also, the postulate with which Kant had resolved his antinomy was but a weak concession to the endæmonistic spirit which at first, they said, he had put out at the door only to bring back again at last at the window. Among those who took offence at Kant's final position, Schopenhauer, the misanthropic philosopher of Frankfurt, easily stands first. The apparently logical consequence of this man's doctrine would be universal suicide. To him the world was the worst possible—an unmitigated horror. He claimed that the idea of duty should be eliminated from ethics. How far Hartmann, Frauenstädt and others have relieved or promoted this doctrine, or how far their influence has extended among English-speaking people, are questions which must end only in pure conjecture. Suffice it to say, the repulsive features of their pessimism do not appear to lessen its popularity.

2. The other fact referred to is no less saddening. Objective or empirical ethics is naturalistic, and finds its logical expression in a bald egoism, and is itself a tacit declaration of war between the species, *bellum omnium contra omnes*. Of this evil tendency in ethics, Ludwig Feuerbach may be taken as the classic repre-

sentative. While claiming fellowship with Fichte and Schleiermacher in theology and philosophy, he inconsistently taught that the individual man, in his sense-intuitions, is the only absolute; that pleasure is the *summum bonum*, and can be attained alone in society. His writings have given the principal material to all nihilistic and communistic literature. J. S. Mill, in accord with Bentham and other utilitarians, shows that happiness as the ethical principle of morality must resolve itself at last into the supreme desire for one's own happiness. Thus, with Comte and Spencer, while professing altruism, they have become egoists. A comprehensive application of their principles would result in nothing less than systematic and scientific individual selfishness. There are those now living who can remember when these writers first began to break with Christian ethics and to develop their purely naturalistic systems; and this rapid descent into Avernus has been immensely facilitated by the application of the theory of evolution. Ethical writers have run greedily, and with almost one accord, to this superior fountain of knowledge. All *a priori* principles were, one by one, discarded. The brutal conditions from which man was evolved would not admit the transcendental authority of duty. The whole conception must be abolished as immoral. Man under the illusion of duty might commit immoral acts. Hence, the average hedonistic writer, while feebly calling for self-renunciation, logically excludes the ideal whose authority he invokes. His humanitarianism has no commanding ground. His appeals for the progressive emancipation of society have no logical basis. Granted that the ideal good makes for righteousness, why should it be recognized if it does not rule the world? If duty is only a fetic, why may I not cast it off? If duty is but the creation of my own thought, why should it rule my conduct? If I have voluntarily adopted it, I may as freely renounce it. If duty is simply an invention of others as selfish as myself, why should I obey it? My own interests are best known to myself. Why should they be overborne by those of other persons equally selfish with myself? If conscience is but the voice of organized society, or the growth of habit, why should I obey it when it opposes itself to my selfishness? What is the inference from

these two facts? If we see that idealistic ethics, unsupported by the eternal good, falls by its own gravity into degrading pessimism, and if empirical ethics finds itself only in naturalism and unrestrained egoism, what is the moral obligation of seeking some transcendental and immutable Standard? Rather, perhaps, I should ask, What is the moral obliquity of that man who rejects at his very door the good which is able to reconcile his natural opposition of reason and will, virtue and happiness?

But it may be said that this good is a mere assumption of Christian ethics, and is based upon it. With the societies for ethical culture, and with many writers, this flimsy answer seems to possess all the virtue of a conclusive argument against the religio-ethical idea. The only duty known to man, it is said, is to be happy, and to keep one's self "healthfully moral."

Leaving the negative view, let us now turn to the positive argument.

What is the human ideal of God? If we could remove from our consideration such terms as the Absolute, the Unconditioned, and the term in which the agnostic finds his favorite refuge, we could simplify our answer. Let us summarily seek to dispose of these terms. For what is the Absolute? An Absolute which does not include humanity self-evidently is no absolute. An Unconditioned which stands in no relations with man possesses no interest for us—does not and never can, with our present faculties, enter the sphere of human knowledge. And to affirm something of the Unknowable is a deceptive contradiction. For if I declare God to be the Unknowable, I covertly contradict myself. The man who affirms that God is the UNKNOWNABLE is in the same position as the one who denies that there is a God, for in each case there must be an *a priori* idea of God; each stands self-convicted of his folly. There is then in every rational soul an imperishable ideal of God. Nor is this ideal *form* only, it has definite content. This content has been delivered to us once for all in the person of Jesus Christ. He is simultaneously our ideal man and our ideal God. There are three ways in which the reason of man exhausts itself in the effort to define concrete reality: 1. In positing a being who can master every form of nature and its mani-

festations. 2. In positing a being who never fails to master his own spirit. 3. In positing a being who instantly masters all other spirits; but this reality finds itself efficiently in the person of Jesus Christ, and leaves nothing to be added, nothing to be desired. If in the perilous opposition of reason and nature, virtue and happiness, in our daily life, we wish to supply further material to the content of our ideal, we find inexhaustible resources in his wonderful life. The history which perpetuates his character is so simple, and yet so profoundly wise and wholesome, that the child, as well as the scholar, delightedly adds some new touch—finds some new perspective, as the picture which he is forming grows in unity and completeness. But it is just here men make two difficulties: 1, Is there an infallible record of Jesus Christ; and 2, If the record be true, is Jesus Christ absolute God? These difficulties, whether honest or not, become stones of stumbling and rocks of offence; here men take occasion to avoid the obligation of faith. They exclaim against the coercion of their reason. They desire to see in advance how the opposition of reason and will, virtue and happiness, is to be overcome; and this in turn opens up afresh the whole controversy: 1. Can man know God? 2. Does man know God? The first question is wholly theistic, the second wholly apologetic. As to the former question we may dispose of it quite summarily, after the Anselmic or Cartesian methods, concluding from concept to existence, or we may treat it more discursively, taking a vast array of subjective and objective facts, and thus exhausting the whole theistic field as it is understood to-day. No man can take this course without a feeling of obligation rising like a tide within him; he will feel the will of God unconditionally binding upon him. This is no prophecy. It is abundantly borne out in the experiences of multitudes of individuals. Compare the earlier writings of many of the disciples and opponents of Kant, Fichte and Schiller, Jacobi and Hamann, and we find a growing conviction of the need of a religious morality, of a Divine ideal in humanity. While their faith was by no means churchly, and while they held themselves apart from creed, they were in all essentials at one with Christian ethics.

The latter question is answered at once affirmatively, and then

treated defensively and intensively. The synoptic account of Christ is assumed to be true. And this assumption is no proof of weakness. The long chain of historical reasoning has been so long under the hammer that its links are conceded to be of indestructible strength. No Christian should blush at this assumption. The Tübingen school has disbanded. Let us see what is the nature of this postulate. It can be shown beyond dispute, that prior to the close of the second century the Christians of that time were in possession of a body of facts respecting their Lord which were substantially the same as those now contained in the the synoptic Gospels; and further, it is true that nearly every educated man, believer or unbeliever, who has looked into the evidences of Christianity, admits the genuineness and authenticity of four Pauline epistles, viz.: the two Corinthians, Romans, and Galatians. In dealing, then, with the synoptics and these epistles, we are dealing with instruments of historical precision. With these in hand, we have to determine the true character of the historical Christ. A unique personality at once emerges, which forces the attention of all men, and concerning whom moral indifference is impossible. A man might conceivably pass into the ranks of morality who should confess his indifference to honesty or virtue, but it is inconceivable that man can stand in no moral relation to Jesus Christ. Each rational being must be for him or against him. For in dealing with him there is no neutral ground between sincerity and hypocrisy, simplicity and duplicity, humility and absurd self-conceit. He is always the former and never the latter. He never falls below the ideal of God. He is always the divine-human. Now, how does this being treat all men—men without any true conception of his mission or character—men gross, ignorant, defiant in unbelief?

It has not escaped the notice of critical readers of the New Testament that Christ does not demand knowledge in order to volition, but conversely, volition in order to knowledge. Preceptively and practically this is the order of faith. Thus, "if any man will do his will, he shall know," etc. "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." Faith was not primarily a question of the under-

standing, but ultimately became such. "Do ye now believe?" was spoken after a long period of voluntary discipleship, and yet the question seems to have antedated their faith. What, then, is the divine procedure in the order of faith? It proceeds on the postulate of the freedom of the will. It is first, "hear ye the word of the Lord," and then, "faith cometh by hearing." The case of Naaman, the Syrian, is a case in point. If he was a man of a philosophic turn, he must have seen that his volition had been a determinative factor in his healing. He had external and inward testimony to the knowledge of his cure. He knew, also, that there had been the play of some efficiency, and that his will had somehow founded a relation between his condition and that efficiency. He knew what he had willed to do, and he knows that he is healed. Hence, his belief has a foundation of knowledge. In a similar manner may be traced the causal operation of the will in the faith of the Apostle Paul. He declares of his conversion that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Astonished and overpowered, he willed to do the Lord's bidding. He was commanded to go into the city and it should be told him what he must do. His meeting with Ananias, and the strange revelation which followed, were calculated to convince his understanding. He was not called unto faith without knowledge, nor faith without works. From these and other illustrations which the reader of Scripture will readily recall, it will be seen that in the order of faith it is not a blind coercion of the reason which is attempted, but rather a free activity of the will is demanded as a condition of knowledge and the precondition of belief.

Now, it is by such induction we reach at once two, at least, of the cardinal postulates of the *Practical Reason*: (1), The postulate of freedom; (2), The postulate of will as a form of causality.

Writers upon empirical, utilitarian, and evolutionary ethics take offence at the first postulate, and make haste to show how the will is constrained by environment, habit, and training, and are apt to liken it to a physical molecule borne along in the general uniformity of nature. Under the cover of this speculation, they proceed to liberate themselves from all obligation which is not empirically discovered in society. Hence, the vast

majority of ethical writers of to-day, and the societies for ethical culture, have determined upon the absolute divorce of ethics from religion. In the light of scientific culture, it is said, a higher, a more humanitarian, morality has been discovered. Further, it is declared that religion, when injected into morality, subjects man to an objective standard of action, in which he has no rational interest. Hence, his freedom is sacrificed, without compensation, to a law which he cannot apply to his environment. In the narrow confines of the law of God he loses active self-determination and the widest development of his powers. It introduces into his life a mean spirit of abasement in the presence of his fellows, and involves him in actions which abstract from his self-respect. Self-reliant and courageous acts are discouraged. In fine, it unfits him for the world in which he must live, and handicaps him in the race for the prizes of life for which he must run.

To all these apologies for pure secular morality we may reply, If God is an illusion, virtue is an illusion also. It is impossible for me to maintain the supreme principle of moral dignity and excellence if no such principle is sovereign in the universe. If the world is not directed to the good, and is not destined to attain it, why should I identify myself with it? why labor for a falling cause? Hence, Kant is right in making the existence of God the postulate of morality. He argues well that the honest man necessarily recognizes the existence of a moral cause in the world, and he is unable to repress the spontaneous volition of his soul, "I will the being of God."

Having considered some of the grounds contained in the idea of freedom and in the fact of revelation why men should seek faith in God, let us proceed to examine some of the grounds which lie perdue in his nature, but which, later on, fill the whole field of his consciousness.

I. Man knows himself as a psychological unity, but he also knows himself as a unity in diversity. He finds his spirit a scene of endless conflicts. He is not a peaceful animal, which, unencumbered with ideals, passes the rounds of his limitations without reflection and without aspiration. He awakes to discords in his

nature, which he must heal if he can. The plant, the mere animal, mechanically and habitually transforms its surroundings into materials for its own self-progressive existence, without knowledge of its attainments, and without the consciousness of choice in its future self-development. Man finds his nature divided against itself. Reason is condemned to strange vicissitudes, since it is troubled by questions which cannot be declined. They are forced upon us by our very nature, but to them we can give no answer, because they transcend all our faculties. Man finds himself an animal possessed of appetites and passions which he can neither eliminate nor renounce, and he also finds himself a personal being, a restless, spiritual consciousness, which nothing short of the perfect can satisfy. But this perfection comes by no avenue of the sense. It comes only as the fruit of self-conquest.

Hence, the opposition of reason and nature, virtue and happiness, is a radical and conscious one. As such struggle is inevitable, development and perfection are possible. If man were nothing more than a crude animal nature, there would be no antagonism to compose, no unity and harmony to seek. If it could be shown that this struggle was confined to a few sensitive souls with rare ideals, no universal remedy would be demanded. But reason is everywhere the polar opposite of natural inclination and desire. The former seems to traverse the infinite in pursuit of its ideals; the latter loses itself in the moment of gratification. The satisfaction of the sensuous appetency is always a self-limited experience, and revives only to repeat and then exhaust itself. But the consciousness of a spiritual self defies all limitations, and transcends all efforts at satisfaction. The narrow limitations which sense throws around the spirit are impatiently burst asunder in the presence of the ideals of reason. Our sensuous intuitions find themselves and find their end in no conscious purpose. They fulfil their mission by a blind necessity; but self-conscious spirit knows no rest till it has quieted itself in some intelligible end which fulfils it and comprehends it. There must be discovered some unity which embraces man's^s past and future, and which is their ground and reality. Here there is a being who is the ser-

vant of two natures; on the one side is reason, seeking by an in-born necessity to find itself in the universal Reason; on the other, the inclinations of sense in blind opposition, seeking expression and satisfaction in space and time. While overborne by the one, he finds himself, nevertheless, in bondage to the other. In themselves considered, the merely animal activities are neither moral nor immoral; but as instruments of self-consciousness they acquire a significance apart from themselves. They are no longer the neutral forces of an organism moved from without. In their wayward and illegitimate exercise they assume a *quasi* personality and become the vicious agencies of the self-conscious spirit. The worldly mind serves itself in them, and borrows an abnormal self-development from them. A reality and universality is thus imported into them which render them easily mistaken for the good. To invest sensible objects with an ideal character, which the reason can alone furnish, is the destructive tendency of our nature. The conflict, therefore, deepens with experience, or till the reason, overmastered in the struggle, becomes the passive slave of its own self-created illusions. Still further does the antagonism of reason and inclination intensify when the spirit seeks inordinately to connect itself with such super-sensible objects as the love of money, the love of admiration and the love of power. Here human life finds ample stimulus for all its powers, and seems to find an end worthy of its pursuit. Here reason is confronted by a simulant of itself—a false reflection which possesses all the charms of reality. Here the human spirit is apt to identify itself with its secret foe, or to awake to the consciousness of a more intensive and lasting struggle.

The question then returns, how is the opposition of reason and will to be composed? According to Schiller, the reconciliation is to be effected by adopting the good as the regulative principle of life. But this is to return to the scholastic inquiry, What is the good? Far more simply and more concretely the answer may be given as self-surrender to God. This is just the converse of self-conflict. It means unconditional capitulation to the supreme ideal, the glory of God and his enjoyment forever. It means a faith which is more than belief, more than intellectual assent. It

is now a soul-resting and soul-trusting in a person. Does now the struggle, so graphically described by the apostle in the seventh of Romans as the conflict of the law of the members and the law of the mind, fall away? Certainly not, but the scene changes. The law of harmony has been discovered. The conflict is no longer a war of ideals. The soul is no longer combating the illusions of its own creation. The blind and purposeless strife is ended. The good has been defined. The motive is the self-appropriation of this good. The impulses which resist and cramp the soul are already reconciled in a Person who has reconciled the antagonism of spirit and nature unto himself. Now the warfare of the soul is the effort to realize the fruit of an accomplished victory. The antagonistic elements, both from within and without, are not to be destroyed but to be transformed. Conflict is the principle of self-development. Discord is the presupposition of realization. Hence, self-surrender is not the goal. It is but means to an end. It is the active and persistent recognition of an ideal—a City, a King, a developed spiritual self, without which development the City and King would be only illusions. For the reason, though clothed with the power of self-legislation, cannot will itself into a state of perfection. Self-determination is no unmeaning endowment. It must express itself in particular acts. It cannot proceed at once from the particular to the universal. It can advance only by particular volitions; but these imply opposition. The ideal and perfect self can only find itself through the antagonisms of a lower self, and by successive volitions to surrender the lower to the higher. Without this surrender there is no freedom, and no attainment is possible. A mere moral life fixes its eye upon a distant goal as the end of achievement, an end which vanishes farther and farther with every approach; and thus the victory of the higher over the lower self is never realized and never can be. Infinite additions do not make an infinite. Here if the moral ideal were actually reached it would be but the realization of a potential self; such a life could only mean crude and unrelieved antagonisms. I may live a life of absolute self-sacrifice and seek to identify myself with every true interest of family and state, and yet, as that interest itself is a progressive life, I, as one

of its members, have identified myself with a definite but not infinite quantity.

This, of course, is not the religious conception. Here the ideal is not reached by progressive steps. In the idea of religion as self-surrender to God, the Infinite Spirit is realized as the first term of the series. The native discord between soul and will vanishes with the first step in the divine life. The Infinite is no longer the inaccessible horizon. "God is a very present help." The soul does not attain to some attribute of God by painful progression, and address itself to the hopeless task of rising ultimately to the consciousness of the Infinite Whole, but in the moment of self-surrender joins the children of faith in the acclaim, "now are we the sons of God." Still the question remains, are there no foes to fight, no differences to compose, no mistakes to cancel? Can the life of faith be conceived otherwise than as a progression from grace to grace, from old to new obedience? Is not approximation the only way of advance? Here in answer to such questions we must confront a maze of apparent contradictions. The Christian paradoxes of Bacon set forth the conflict with striking significance. The writer of these paradoxes was at one time supposed to view them with a divided mind; but what was insuperable to the father of the Inductive Philosophy offers no difficulty to the spiritually-instructed child of faith. He understands that he must put on the whole armor, but he understands also that the victory has been won; there is antagonism, but there is also reconciliation—discord and yet harmony. The attainments of the believer, if viewed as successive increments in his spiritual life, preclude forever the Christian ideal. He could never conceive and could never realize it. As an infinite whole, he could never approach it nor participate in it. To conceive of religion as the hope of a prospective union with the divine mind is the complete negation of the idea. This union is the necessary pre-condition from the first of its reality and enjoyment. "We have the mind of Christ" was the assertion of the apostle when defining the subjective difference between the natural and spiritual man. As we cannot reach the infinite by successive additions to the finite, so we cannot reach the divine mind by adding to our attainments.

We do not become religious by super-imposing the divine intelligence upon our minds, but by making that intelligence our own. "Let that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus" is not an external law foreign to our natures, but is the necessary condition of knowing anything beyond the veil of sense. Once within the sphere of the Infinite Spirit the true philosophy of growth is to appropriate what implicitly we have received. As the whole oak is potentially in the acorn, so the whole spiritual life is contained in form in the very rise of religion in the soul. It is not the development of the old nature with its false ideals, but the unfolding of the new life hid with Christ in God. The external evil and inward imperfection belong to the fleeting life of sense which has been renounced. Even these work together for good by exciting the soul to claim the whole of its birthright and to seek revenue from its entire inheritance. This life is by faith, and as it is a life divinely derived, it is divinely moved. As such it is an infinite and eternal whole.

II. The speculative view of faith must lead to the feeling of obligation, because faith cannot be conceived otherwise than as rational, and, as such, finds itself in rational acts. Self-surrender and renunciation of worldly ideals are not the all of a life of faith. They are rather the preliminary and necessary volitions, and, as such, constitute the pre-conditions of such a life. Now, if faith is rational, its ground, as has already been pointed out, must be rational also. That is to say, the faith which determines the ground of obligation is in turn determined by it. This is a circle, but not a vicious circle. It is an ultimate psychological fact in the constitution of our nature. Its analogue is found in the autonomy of the will, where the will determines the law, and the law determines the will. Man is thus represented both as lawgiver and subject. Kant conceived this law as immanent in man, and was followed at this point by Fichte, who argued that "no law, no commandment, though divine, is unconditionally obligatory; it is obligatory only on condition that it is confirmed by our conscience, and only because our conscience does confirm it." This may be construed in the language of more modern ethics as the well-known postulate, that law, to be obligatory, must possess both

subjective validity and objective authority. In other words, the law as expressing the nature of the lawgiver must be immanent, while it is also recognized as transcendent. Now it is certainly true that such a faith rests both on a logical and a theistic basis. On the one hand, the law which is of faith is seen not as the arbitrary will of the lawmaker, but as the transcript of his own nature. On the other hand, obedience to the law is but the dictum of the subject's own conscience. The law written in the heart then becomes the logical unity in which all differences are harmonized. Human and divine interests no longer conflict. The same object is common to both. Satisfied that the law of the kingdom is the law to which his conscience bears witness, man sees that his rational life is a contribution to the establishment of that kingdom. While the subject sees the will of God as the unconditional principle of his life, he does not see it as an alien force. Rational acts then become voluntary acts. They are neither derogatory to God nor foreign to man.

There are two great dangers which lie in wait for the man who would do the will of God. In the early and mediæval church these errors took the names of mysticism and asceticism. They pass by other and different names in our day. They have a common origin. They took their departure from the supra-rational spirit. Cutting loose from the categories of Aristotle, they began to transform and to interpret the *ideas* of Plato. The sentimental, and not the rational, side of man's nature was cultivated. From mysticism came superstition; from asceticism came fanaticism. These twin evils plagued the church for many centuries. Their hideous and grotesque manifestations are not much seen in the highways of our civilization, but they survive plainly enough in the less sensational form of church institutions and dogmas. Inferences from Scripture which have no authority to bind the conscience are exalted to the high dignity of principles. Dogmas of the church are confounded with the dogmas of the Scriptures. Rational testimony is neglected or repudiated. Stillingfleet, in the seventeenth century, expressed the true doctrine—a doctrine which long before had been approved by the Reformers after they had rejected the text of *Divina Fides* in the settlement of

the canon of Scripture: "Where there is an infallible testimony, sufficient rational testimony goes along with it to make it evident that it came from God."¹

We must distinguish between the rational and rationalism, and we must remember also that a theoretical knowledge, which ends in philosophical skepticism, is not necessarily averse to religion. To show the limits of demonstrative knowledge is not to discredit faith. Thus, theistic arguments, though often exposing the Achilles heel, are of great benefit, not because they afford demonstration of the existence of God, but because they exercise the already existing feeling of his presence. Thus, also, Kant, while defining the limits of theoretical knowledge, and despairing of a valid argument for the divine existence, affirmed, "It is indeed necessary to be convinced of the existence of God, but it is not equally necessary to demonstrate it." He expressed his willingness to destroy the harmony of his dialectic rather than sacrifice faith. His three ideals, God, freedom, and immortality, could be established by means of postulates in the practical reason as distinguished from the theoretical, and thus he invoked a divine reason as a rational necessity to account for reason itself.

It may be objected that sin has so deformed our reason that it is no longer competent to test the truth, and, consequently, that no object of faith can be reliably determined; but this objection is self-contradictory, for, if it is true, how does the objector know it to be true? And how is it that he has faith in his own objection?

In conclusion, it is evident that the reflective reason can have no purpose, no end, if it is not to give unity to itself and to objects of its knowledge; but this is impossible apart from the fact of God. If reason regards itself as alone in the world, or as the only absolute, it must come back at last from its weary wanderings with the melancholy confession of Hume—the last word of skepticism, and a monumental warning to all who would travel his way: "I have already shown," said he, "that the understanding, when it acts according to its most general principles, entirely subverts

¹ Stillingfleet, *Origines Sacrae*, Vol. II., p. 8.

itself, and leaves not the lowest degree of evidence in any proposition, either in philosophy or in common life." For the empirical knowledge which Hume would vainly supply to the understanding to give it content and make it intelligible, we would substitute the idea of a First Cause as the primitive impulse of consciousness, as the only secure datum of knowledge and refuge of faith.

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