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THE RELIGION OF AN
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THE RELIGION
OF
AN EDUCATED MAN

BY

FRANCIS GREENWOOD PEABODY
PLUMMER PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN MORALS¹¹
IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY



New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1906

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Set up, electrotyped, and published November, 1903. Reprinted
January, 1904.

New edition September, 1906.

Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing & Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

Haberford Library Lectures

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THREE LECTURES

TO THE STUDENTS OF HAVERFORD COLLEGE

- I. RELIGION AS EDUCATION.
- II. THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST TO THE SCHOLAR.
- III. KNOWLEDGE AND SERVICE.

I. RELIGION AS EDUCATION

I. RELIGION AS EDUCATION



MEET you in the happy companionship of the academic life, as sharers of the ideals of educated men.

I meet you also in the larger fellowship of the religious life, which this college was founded to express, and which these lectures are designed to strengthen. At such a point of meeting, where the paths of education and religion join, and where one pauses as at the crossing of the roads, it is inevitable that he should glance along both these great highways of human life as they traverse the hills and valleys of experience, and should inquire whither each road directs the traveller and which way it is best to go. What is the relation of education to religion? How far do these two highways coincide and at what point do they part? Do their diverging tracks involve a lasting separation, or do the roads meet again as they approach a common end? What is it to be educated? What is it to be religious? What is the religion of an educated man?

When one hears these questions raised, he may well imagine that he is threatened with a renewal of the long-protracted de-

bate concerning the relation of science and religion, — a debate on whose issue the life of the Christian Church has often been supposed to depend. What was to become of religion in an age of science? How could the Mosaic cosmogony be adjusted to the doctrine of evolution? Was there room for miracle in a world of law? What was left of the Bible if its origin and its diversities of teaching were thoroughly explored? Must religion be dismissed from attention by a modern scholar as a survival of the pre-scientific view of the world? Was there any such thing as the religion of an educated man? — such have been the questions which for generations seemed of critical significance for religion, and these bitter and prolonged controversies necessarily involved much temporary doubt of mind and distress of heart. The adjustment of religion to the habit of mind of an educated man was often a painful process and often an impossible task.

Fortunately for us all, however, this controversy between science and religion has had its day, and the pathetic history of superfluous antagonism and of misplaced loyalty now interests only a few belated materialists and a few overslept defenders of the faith. The chief privilege of a

serious-minded young man who begins his mature life with the beginning of the twentieth century lies in the fact that he is not likely to be involved in this heart-breaking issue between his spiritual ideals and his scholarly aims. Philosophy, science, and theology are all committed to the problem of unification.

Nor has the issue of this momentous conflict been a truce, as though each party had withdrawn to its own territory and were guarding its frontier against hostile raids. Science and faith have discovered a common territory which they possess, not as rivals, but as allies. Faith has committed itself to scientific method; science has recognized that its work begins in faith. "The world of science," remarks one of the greatest of American philosophers, "is a world of faith. . . . The faith which is the basis of religion and theology is only the extension and completion of this faith that the universe is a perfect and organic whole."¹ Thus the most alarming intellectual conflict of the last generation has already become of merely historical interest to the thought of to-day. A census of preaching on a certain Sunday last year

¹C. C. Everett. *The Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, Macmillan, 1902.

by a certain Christian communion disclosed the encouraging fact that of all the sermons preached that day but one had concerned itself with the controversy between science and religion.

No sooner, however, has this issue concerning the territory of science and religion been dismissed, than a new and not less serious question opens concerning the very habit of mind, the instincts and prepossessions of educated men, in their relation to the religious life. Have we not here, it is now asked, two ways of human discipline which are in their very nature and principles distinct? On the one hand is education, — a gradual, progressive, continuous work. Classical scholars, I believe, do not favor the etymology which finds in the word itself the thought of nurture, — the e-duc-ing or drawing out of the pupil's mind. Yet classical writers certainly emphasize this aspect of the teacher's work. Education to Plato was nurture (τροφή). The lower desires, he says, are wild and must be tamed. The eye of the student must be turned toward the light. In short, the object of education to Plato is personal, ethical, spiritual growth; and the ends of education are manliness (ἀνδρεία) and self-mastery, balance, soundness of mind

(σωφροσύνη).¹ Education is the word applied by Roman writers not to intellectual training only, but to the care of children, to the suckling of young, to the providing of imperishable food, — the assisting of a growth from within, involving patience and faith, nurture and time.²

Whatever, then, may be the etymology of the word, education is not merely instruction, or the building up of knowledge; it is the building up of the scholar's mind; the bringing the mind to self-consciousness; the birth of the intellectual life. The quality of education is not to be defined through the subject of education, but through the effect of that subject on the student's mind. That subject is most educative which most draws out the student. No subject contributes to education if it be mechanically, repressively, or stupidly taught. The end of education is not information, but inspiration; not facts, rules, tables, but insight, initiative, grasp, growth, character, power. Physical science

¹ See the admirable Essay of R. L. Nettleship, "The Theory of Education in Plato's Republic," in E. Abbott's *Hellenica*. Rivingtons, 1880.

² *Educit enim obstetrix, educat nutrix, instituit pædagogus, docet magister.* — Varro, quoted in Nonius Marcellus, 5. 105.

Vitulus marinus educat mammis fetum. — Plin. 9. 15. 1.

Alere est victu temporali sustentare, educare autem ad satietatem perpetuam educere. — Nonius, 5. 5.

may be the summons of education to one nature; classical learning to another; technical skill to another; and all are justified in education, not because they are old subjects, or new subjects, or academic subjects, or bread-and-butter subjects, but because they awaken the student's mind. The great word of modern thought, evolution, is but another word for education. Education is the evolution of the individual; evolution is the education of the race.

And meantime what is religion? According to the still surviving tradition of many churches religion is not a process of evolution, but a process of revolution; not a way of education, but a way of transformation; not a growth, but a surprise. It delays its approach, it is inaccessible to the natural state of mind or the natural qualities of the child. It springs upon one out of the mystery of the universe; it shines on one with a sudden flash of light, as on Paul by the Damascus road; it revolutionizes the nature; it is a second birth. Religion and education are thus set far apart. Life is like a ship with water-tight compartments, in one of which we may carry the habits of our education, and in the other of which we may say our prayers; as Fara-

day is said to have dismissed from his mind the methods of his laboratory when he went to worship in his little Sandemanian chapel. Here and there, indeed, the roads of religion and of education may meet, but they cross, as it were, on higher and on lower levels, where the collision of thought which might occur at a grade-crossing may be happily escaped.

Now it is unquestionably true that the experience of religion is often tumultuous, sudden, surprising; the access of a new life; the birth of a new power. The history of conversion is not the history of an illusion or of a fever. The growth of Christian virtue, as Bushnell remarked, is not a vegetable process. But are not the same incidents of crisis, revelation, awakening, birth, to be observed in the history of education? Does there not arrive in many experiences of the intellectual life a moment of intellectual conversion, the starting into life of an unsuspected capacity or desire? Education is not inconsistent with regeneration. The development of the mind is made picturesque and dramatic by the frequent disclosure of new aspects of truth which beckon to the student as a new vista of beauty surprises the traveller at a new turn of the road. Nothing is so delightful to watch

in the life of a college, and nothing so fully rewards a faithful teacher, as to observe this awakening of a young mind to the persuasiveness of the truth; this transformation of irksome tasks into positive and commanding interests. The mind is born again; the youth, like the Prodigal Son, comes to himself, and the teacher says, This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.

Under the same law, though with profounder emotional experience, occur the rebirths of the religious life. Sometimes, indeed, they are like startling convulsions of nature, volcanic and unanticipated, breaking in upon the normal habit of the soul as a sudden volcanic eruption overwhelms a sleeping town. Yet these critical upheavals of the human spirit are no more typical of the religious life than they are of the process of education. A volcanic eruption is not representative of the order of nature. It reveals a region of interior fire which here and there bursts forth with amazing power, but it is an abnormal incident in the tranquil process of the evolution of the world. Nothing could be more exaggerated than the inclination of my brilliant and beloved colleague, Professor James, to regard the

ecstasies and fevers, the earthquakes and volcanoes, of spiritual experience as normal aspects of the religious life. Under such a view religion would be not a form of health and sanity, but a form of intoxication or fever; and the religious life, intermittent, spasmodic, hysterical, must fail to command the rational confidence of an educated man. These abnormal incidents, these volcanic eruptions, in fact, make more impressive the orderliness and continuity which mark the normal condition of the spiritual life. The religious nature is no more abnormal and revolutionary than the physical or the intellectual life of man. It is not a scene of catastrophes and pathological excesses, but of a silent process of evolution and education, not without friction, reversion, and effort, but with a general movement of expansion, progress, and growth. Both education and religion have their crises, their awakenings, their calls to self-expression, as a river has its turbulent rapids and its sudden falls, where the course of the stream is marked by surge and foam; but through these the river makes its way, as through quiet reaches and sunny meadows, and the occasional agitations are but incidents in its steady movement toward the sea.

Here, then, is the conviction with which one must begin if he would commend religion to an educated man. (Religion itself is education.) It does not sever into two sections the rational nature of man. It is consistent with the growth of the mind; it confirms the principle of evolution. Other aspects of religion may make their appeal to other conditions of life, to moods of discouragement, or repentance, or doubt, or fear, or sin; but to the academic life the first condition of responsiveness to religious influence is the recognition that in their fundamental method and final aim religion and education are essentially consistent, coördinate, mutually confirmatory, fundamentally one.

Let us look, then, at each side of this proposition which affirms the unity of education and religion. Religion is education: that is the first statement of the truth. We have seen that education concerns itself not so much with subjects studied, as with the educative effect of whatever subject may be approached. In other words, the subject of education is not the task, but the person. Through what discipline, asks the modern educator, and by what method within that discipline, can one draw out from the complexity of

human purposes a person, with intentions and ideals which shall fit him for the effective service of the modern world? Education, said a wise leader of academic life the other day, is simply the making the most of one's self for usefulness. "The aim of education," according to Professor Hanus, "is to prepare for complete living . . . and the factors of educational value are incentive and power."¹ "It becomes impossible," remarks President Butler, "for us ever again to identify education with mere acquisition of learning. . . . It must mean a gradual adjustment to the spiritual possessions of the race."²

Is not precisely this intention of education, however, the primary intention of religion? What is it for which churches are built, and for which forms of worship and Sunday-schools are maintained? Is it, as it often seems to be, for the propagation of a creed, or the defence of a dogma, or the extension of denominational control? Are churches forts whose mission is war and whose ammunition is words? Even the most zealous controversialist would deny this charge. Behind the appearance

¹ *Educational Aims and Educational Values*. Macmillan, 1899, p. 5.

² *The Meaning of Education, and other Essays*. Macmillan, 1900, p. 16.

of such hostile activity there lies in the intention of the churches a unity of purpose which makes the mission of the competing sects essentially one. They are in reality not forts, but schools. They may be rivals in education, as colleges may be rivals, through differing methods, advantages, or aims; but their fundamental intention is, like that of all the colleges, one. It is the nurture and development of human souls. The soul does not exist for the church, but the church for the soul. What God asks of man is not primarily adoration and recognition, but obedience, loyalty, faith. "Bring no more vain oblations," says the prophet; "cease to do evil, learn to do well"; "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord," says the Master, "shall enter into the kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." The initial purpose of religion, that is to say, is to draw out from the mingled motives and conflicting desires of the undeveloped life a conscious consecration, which shall issue into a new sense of capacity, resistance, initiative, and power.

One of the most striking aspects of the teaching of Jesus is created by the fact that his appeal is primarily not to the

emotions, or the opinions, but to the will. "Follow me," he says; "Take up thy cross and follow me"; "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt"; "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother"; "If any man wills to do the will, he shall know of the doctrine." The discipleship of Jesus, that is to say, is not sentimental, occasional, emotional; nor is it doctrinal, intellectual, philosophical; it is ethical, educative, a form of obedience, the beginning of spiritual growth. The unmeasured rebukes of Jesus are reserved not for the sinners with weak wills, but for the self-righteous with wills strongly and wrongly set. The religion of Jesus is a religion of education. It is the drawing out of the person; it is the discipline of the will. ✓

Religion is education. If this proposition is true, then the method of religion must proceed in the same faith which education implies, and must in the main follow the same road. And what is the faith which justifies the process of education? It is a twofold faith — a faith in truth and a faith in persons. The wise teacher believes, first, in the significance and dignity of the truth. Every expression of the truth, however insignificant, deserves recognition and respect as the open road which

leads from the less to the greater, from truths to truth. That is what gives to the teacher his patience. He does not expect to educate the mind all at once; he has heard the great saying: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful in that which is much." The teacher makes himself the servant of the least of truths for the sake of the greatness of the whole of truth.

The teacher believes, secondly, in persons, in the capacity of his pupils to learn, in their responsiveness to truth when fitly presented, in the possibility of a kindled interest and a determined loyalty. He believes in these young lives even when they do not believe in themselves. Neither their dulness, nor their indifference, nor their wrong-headedness overcomes his faith in their interior nature as adapted to truth and as given for him to e-duce. Thus, in education the growing mind meets the growing truth, until at last the things that are in part—the partial truth and the partial mind—are done away, and the whole mind and the whole truth meet face to face, and then the process of education is complete.

If this is education, what, we ask once more, is religion? Religion, we must answer, comprehends these same acts of

faith; and by the completeness of this twofold faith religion, like education, is to be judged.

On the one hand religion rests on faith in truth; faith in the rational revelation of truth; faith in its growth from less to more; faith that the real will in due time open into the ideal. If there is any mistake in the teaching of religion which has alienated from its influence great numbers of young minds, it is the mistake of demanding full-grown religion from a half-grown life. It is a pedagogical error of which no skilled teacher would be guilty. Education must begin, not with the abnormal, the unrecognizable, the remote, but with the natural, the near, the verifiable, the elementary. Education proceeds from the demonstrably known to the less obviously unknown, from the geography of the neighborhood to the map of the world, from the observation of the neighboring field to the comprehension of the planets and the atoms.

The same demand is laid upon religion. It is preposterous to expect from the child the conviction which mature experience alone suggests. To thrust upon young lives a demand for emotions or opinions which are unreal and premature is to

encourage weak minds to hypocrisy and strong minds to reaction. Religious education takes the facts of the spiritual life just as they are, imperfect, unformed, elementary, and draws out their significance and suggestiveness. It lays on a young mind no complication of conformity, no conventional consent. It says to him: "Here is your life with its real experiences, its doubts and fears, its ambitions and regrets, its duties done and undone, its desires for generous service, its repentance for foolish mistakes. It is not to be expected that these facts will adjust themselves outright to the prevailing creeds, or catechisms, or confessions. Take the facts as they are, recognize them, harmonize them, follow them, obey their admonitions, listen to the teachers who understand them, and by degrees, stumblingly indeed, and with many mistakes to correct along the way, the process of your education will proceed, through the truths you possess, to the truth which shall make you free. The Spirit of the Truth, the Comforter, shall guide you into all truth."

How wonderful was this pedagogical instinct in Jesus Christ! How reasonably both his friends and enemies were led

to call him Teacher, so that this word is applied to him more than forty times in the New Testament! He believed in the growth of the soul, from an elementary obedience to a sufficient faith. The figures of speech through which he would teach his doctrine of the kingdom are almost invariably figures of growth: the mustard seed; the leaven; the sower; the blade; the ear; the full corn. He begins where people are; he uses the little to make it much; he puts small attainments at interest. Even the single talent should earn its increase. The scribes and Pharisees were enforcing a system; Jesus was watching a growth. The one is the method of the hothouse; the other the method of the open air. The one was art; the other was nature. The one was religious instruction; the other was religious education. So is the kingdom of God — says Jesus — as though a man should plant corn in his field, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. That is the miracle with which rational religion surprises the discouraged soul. The seed of loyalty, once planted, groweth up one knoweth not how; and the truths which once seemed fragmentary and meagre ripen into a harvest of reasonable faith.

On the other hand religion, like education, demands faith in the capacity of the individual soul. The work of a teacher becomes simply heart-breaking if he is not sustained by faith in the potential quality of each young life. Somewhere, somehow, beneath the dulness and inertia of the most unresponsive mind there lies, he believes, an interest in something; and to discern that point where the mind touches reality, to draw out the intellectual life as by the magnet of a compelling truth—that is the challenge which the true teacher welcomes and obeys. ✓

Precisely this act of faith in the soul marks the beginning of religious teaching. As one surveys the dealings of Jesus Christ with the varied types of persons who claimed his interest, what is more impressive than the faith he has in them? He believes in them before they believe in themselves; he claims them before they think themselves fit to follow him; he takes them where they are, and by his faith in them makes of them more than any one but he believes they could become. If any leader of men ever had a right to give up any follower, certainly Jesus was justified in cutting off from fellowship the unstable Peter. How could

any man seem less like a rock, and more like the sand which a rising tide of opposition sweeps quite away? Yet Jesus sees even in this man the capacity for leadership, trusts him, forgives him, shapes the sand into firmness until it becomes sandstone, and verifies the promise, which to many a hearer must have seemed almost a jest, "Thou art Peter, thou shalt be called a rock." How contrary, therefore, to the spirit of Jesus, and how destructive of religious education, is any depreciation or denial of the spiritual possibilities of any human soul. Many a young life has swung clean away from religion, because it seemed to demand of him quite another nature than his own. He is wilful, careless, foolish, doubtful of much, sure of little. What part has he among the saints? Religion, let him remember, is education. Its very purpose is to accept the unfulfilled desire and the unrealized dream, and to draw them out into firmness, stability, permanence, realization. Sound religious experience verifies the strange prophecy which the aged Simeon made concerning the infant Jesus, that through him "The secrets of many hearts should be revealed." A man commits himself to the way of Christ, conscious of imperfect

knowledge and halting discipleship, and by degrees there are revealed to him secrets in his own heart which he himself had never fully known, and that which he was meant to be grows out of what he thought he was, as naturally and gradually as a flower of surprising fairness blooms out of a gnarled and unlovely stalk.

Religion is education. It is the truth first clearly stated, perhaps, for modern scholars by Lessing in his epoch-making proposition that "Education is revelation for the individual, revelation is education for the race." It is the truth first communicated to the New England theology by Horace Bushnell's treatise in 1847 on "Christian Nurture," a book which came like the dawn of the first spring morning after a harsh winter of New England cold. "Calvinism," wrote Bushnell, "is a religion which begins explosively, causes little or no expansion, and subsides into a torpor. Its religion is a kind of transcendental matter, which belongs on the outside of life—a miraculous epidemic, a fireball shot from the moon." The Christian life, he teaches, begins with nurture. "The aim, effort, and expectation should be, not as is commonly assumed, that the child is to grow up in sin, to be converted after he

comes to a mature age ; but that he is to open on the world as one that is spiritually renewed." "The child is to grow up a Christian and never know himself as being otherwise."¹

Shall we then say, asks many a mind, that this normal, unconstrained education of the spiritual life is a natural or a supernatural growth? Does the power which thus lifts life act from below or from above? Is this education of the soul human or divine? That, we must answer, is as if one should ask whether the growth of the plant proceeds from the action of the soil, or from the action of the sun. It proceeds from both, from the nourishing earth and from the inviting sunshine. It is both natural and supernatural. No analysis, thank God, can determine which fragment of the stalk, which petal of the flower, is a product of the earth or of the sky. In every cell of the meanest flower that breathes, there is manifested the unity of the universe. So it is in the growth of the soul. The natural and the supernatural conspire. The light within is one with the light from above. What is revelation to the individual is education for the race. This is

¹ *Christian Nurture*, Scribner, 1861, p. 10.

the truth which most dignifies the history of the society of Friends—the truth of the normality, reality, accessibility, immediateness, of the revelation of God to the personal soul of man. “The early Friends,” wrote one of their historians, “made a practical experiment of Christianity from the inside. The secret light that shone in the heart was a revelation of God; the faint streak of dawn which began the heavenly day.” The Inner Light is described by George Fox, now as the “Christ within,” now as the “Seed.” It is from within and yet it is from above. It is I—yet not I, but Christ that dwelleth in me. “God has given to us,” wrote Fox, to those whom he called Friends of the Truth, or Children of the Light, “God has given to us, every one of us in particular, a light from himself shining in our hearts and consciences, and we have found this light to be a sufficient teacher to lead us to Christ Jesus.”

Such, then, is the aspect of religion which for the moment concerns us. Religion is education. It is impossible, however, to dismiss the analogy without observing in a word its other side. If it be true that religion is in one aspect education, it is also true, and should be constantly re-

called in the academic life, that education is fundamentally one aspect of religion. It is often debated whether education should be wholly secularized, or whether there should be superadded to the programme of education some teaching of the principles of religion. Nothing could testify more plainly than this debate to the prevailing misinterpretation of the nature of religion. If, as is often assumed, religion is a matter of theological dogma or ecclesiastical rule, then it certainly makes a field of knowledge which may be divided from the work of the school and the university, and reserved as the field of the church. When, however, it is thus proposed to detach the method of education from religion, the only rational answer which can be made is that such a separation is essentially inconceivable, because education is in itself a religious work. The relation of the teacher to the youth is not mechanical and occasional, as though the young mind were a pump from which an intermittent flow of knowledge may be laboriously drawn. The teacher, as we have seen, stands before the undeveloped capacity of the scholar as an agent in the evolution of a personal. He is a laborer together with God, a participant in a creative work.

What sustains him in the routine and detail of his task is the reverent sense of this participation with the Eternal. He works by faith, not by sight.

When a mature mind looks back on the process of its education, what are the incidents which seem significant? They are the moments, perhaps infrequent, when through the forms of study there flashed some suggestion of the meaning and uses of life. And how did such disclosures arrive? They proceeded from the teachers who were able to impart themselves and to draw out one's hesitating nature into loyalty, discipleship, appreciation of the beautiful, reverence of the truth. But this communication of power is of the very essence of the religious life. This which redeems one from being a book-worm, a critic, a pedagogue, a cynic, and shows one how to be a scholar, an idealist, a person,—this is the beginning of the religion of an educated man. The Holy Spirit, the spirit of the truth, is the spirit of education. The true teacher may reverently repeat what Jesus Christ humbly said of himself, "No man cometh unto me, except the Father draw him." The issue of education is the great confession of St. Paul, "The spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are

the sons of God." Religion is education ; but education, when its process and end are revealed, is religion.

A student may fancy that he may evade his tasks in education, may waste his years, may sit on the margin of the academic life and watch its stream flow by, and may lose little out of life but a few profitless bits of information and a few academic grades. A teacher may find himself tempted to mechanical methods, may be almost crushed under the dead mass of unresponsive minds, may be overweighted by the burden of routine. What shall renew vitality, courage, effectiveness, responsiveness in teacher and taught? It is the conviction that education is religion. Not somewhere else, in churches or forms of worship, are educated men to expect the witness of the spirit of God, but in the increase of the student's fidelity, in the steadiness of the teacher's hope, in the grasp and vision which issue from education, in the patient faithfulness to that which is least and the happy disclosure of that which is much, in revelation through education, and self-discovery through self-discipline. When an academic community perceives that education is itself a religious task, then there need be no further debate

concerning religious teaching in a college. It is already there, just as health and good air and appetite and hope and laughter and duty are there; and the spirit of education expands because it breathes the atmosphere of the spirit of God. When a teacher takes up his work, not as though he were one cog in a machine, but as though he were a person among persons, a laborer together with God in the unfolding of a student's nature, called to unveil within the truths which perplex men, the Truth which makes men free, — what is this but one form of the Christian ministry, a priesthood ordained to teach the religion of an educated man? Life, such a teacher demonstrates, is not divided and discordant; it is harmonious and one. That which on its academic side is education is on its human side religion. One is not a teacher except he kindle, waken, communicate the contagion of personality, show the way of the spirit of truth; but he who is thus a teacher is at the same time a minister of religion. It is as Matthew Arnold said of teachers like his father at Rugby: —

“Servants of God! — or sons
Shall I not call you? Because
Not as servants ye knew

Your Father's innermost mind,
He, who unwillingly sees
One of his little ones lost —
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in the march
Fainted, and fallen, and died ;
See ! in the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
* * * * *
Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God."

The true teacher verifies what was spoken of Jesus, "When He putteth forth His sheep, He goeth before, and the sheep follow Him for they know His voice." Over the hills and valleys of thought the teacher goes before his little flock, until at last the tracks of the various shepherds along the bypaths of education meet at the cross-roads where religion and education join ; and those that have heard the voice of the faithful teacher find themselves in the great company which moves together toward the fold of truth, following the shepherd of souls.

II. THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST TO THE SCHOLAR



II. THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST TO THE SCHOLAR



THE religious life has many aspects and interprets various needs, but to the academic mind the most commanding fact concerning religion is its analogy with education.

Religion, as we have seen, is the education of personality. Religion, as education, reveals life to itself by revealing within the life of man the spirit of God. Religion, as education, begins with faith in the capacity of man to respond to the spirit of truth, and proceeds, like education, through faith in the revelation of truth. Finally, religion idealizes education itself, and touches both teacher and taught with a new sense of obligation, reverence, patience, and power.

Thus far we have been led through the principles of education toward a definition of the religion of an educated man. But what, we now go on to ask, is the finished product of education? What is the type of personality which issues when education has done its work? It is the scholar. Before the student stands ever the ideal of the scholar; before the teacher lies the

problem of converting a student into a scholar. And what is a scholar? There are many misconceptions of the scholar's life. It is sometimes fancied that a man of information is a scholar, but a walking encyclopædia is no more a scholar than a catalogue is a library. Again it is fancied that when one becomes a critic of scholars, he becomes a scholar himself. The critic is familiar with the habits and products of scholars; he quotes and judges and condemns as though the critical temper were a mark of the scholarly mind. Criticism, however, though it may rise to the dignity of scholarship, may easily sink into mere imitation of the scholar, as though a valet were to dress himself in the clothes of the gentleman whom he attends. Nothing is more remote from the nature of the scholar than the critical spirit. The scholar is a creator,—with the chastening, humbling sense of a part in the work of creation; while the critics, as the most scholarly of American critics has said, are like a chattering flock of barn-swallows who circle round this creative work, building their nests against the Infinite,

“ And twittering round the work of larger men,
As they had builded what they but deface.”

What, then, is the mark of that way of life which the philosopher Fichte called the vocation of the scholar? The scholar, we must answer, is the person whose mind is educated. Through whatever way of study he may have come — and who shall say what road he must follow? — his mind has been gradually disciplined, until it has become the effective instrument of his will. The mark of the scholar is not that he is well informed, for a schoolboy may know many facts unknown to him; it is not that he is merely well read, for a critic may quote more freely; it is that he has acquired — not without much self-discipline and renunciation of many other aims in life — the capacity to think straight, and to discriminate between the seeming and the real. He knows, as Emerson once said, “that a pop-gun is a pop-gun, though the ancients and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom.” He has acquired a susceptibility toward truth and an applicability of mind to the problems of his calling, as they shall from day to day arise. He is, as Fichte said, a priest of truth, looking upon his vocation as the purpose of God for him. The truth has made him free. He dedicates his life to the truth. “In silence,” says

Emerson, "in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself apart, enough if he has this day seen something truly."

Such is the scholar, the servant of the least of truths, because the seer of the greatness of Truth. As one of the most gifted of American scientific scholars has said: "Behind this manifested nature of which we know an infinitely small part, there is a vastly greater infinite of the imminently possible yet never happening, of which we know nothing. . . . In such a realm the spirit may contentedly dwell, feeling that it is in its own fit house."¹ Here is the privilege of the scholar's life; here is the persuasion which draws one to the habits and ideals of the academic world. In an age and country, where the solicitations of commercialism are so overwhelming, fortunate are those who may, as Emerson says, "raise themselves from private considerations and breathe and live in illustrious thoughts." Here is the only aristocracy which a hurrying, shifting, democratic world can permanently respect — the aristocracy of unambitious and unworldly scholars, content to live simply

¹ N. S. Shaler. *International Review*. December-March, 1902-3, p. 301.

if they may live in the world of the ideal, regarding as the true wealth of life the wealth of the true, the beautiful, and the good.

But what relation, we go on to ask, has this life of the scholar with the habits and motives of religion? Even if it be true that education is a religious work, is it not true that the scholar is at last set free from the method of education, and has become a law unto himself? Has he not found a religion of his own, in which his study becomes his shrine, where in the solitude of his thoughts he worships his own ideal of the truth? Does not the scholar look from his study windows and see religion doing its work among the ignorant, the sinners, the outcasts of the world, and may he not thank God that he is not as other men are, and draw his curtains on this struggling, tempted world, to give himself to his own sacred and happy task?

Certainly, we must answer, the religious life comprehends many a circle of human experience in which the scholar's vocation has no place. Whatever other privileges the scholar enjoys, he certainly has not, as the learned have often believed they had, a monopoly of religion. The measure of learning, as Schleiermacher said,

is not the measure of piety. On the contrary, the scholar, by his very immunity from many of the solicitations of the world, is at the same time set out of reach of many a wave of religious feeling, which sweeps in upon more exposed souls and cleanses the nature as by an inflooding and surprising tide. The message of Jesus was not primarily delivered to the scholars of his time. These were, on the contrary, the persons who were least accessible to his message. "I am not come," he said in lofty satire, "to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." It is not until the scholar emerges — as some day he is certain to emerge — from his secluded life of learning into the world of common human life, with its passions and regrets, its obligations and opportunities, its pity and its fellowship, that he comes into any realization of the scope and power of religion, or any understanding of the gospel of Christ.

Yet there is a message of Christ to the scholar. There are conditions of the effective use of learning which are not intellectual, but ethical and religious. The teaching of Jesus has, indeed, nothing to say concerning the acquisition of

knowledge or the materials of modern education. The gospel is not a text-book of instruction from which modern scholars can derive the materials for their task. Accurately speaking there is no such thing as Christian sociology, or Christian economics, or Christian science. The teaching of Jesus concerns itself with the relation of human life to the life of God, and with the principles of human duty among the life of men. It does not classify people as scholarly and ignorant. It gathers up all the different types of human life into a comprehensive unity of discipleship, so that one is no longer peculiar or isolated, a scholar or a peasant, rich or poor, teacher or scholar, but is held in the great companionship of struggling, doubting, sinning, repenting, rejoicing human souls. Yet, I repeat, there is a message of Christ to the scholar. Just as his teaching sometimes seems peculiarly directed to the poor, as when he quotes the Prophet's word, "The poor have the gospel preached to them"; just as again it seems a message to the sinner, as when St. Paul writes that, "Jesus came into the world to save sinners"; just as those who mourn open the gospels and are comforted; just as those who are happy turn to it and

read, "That my joy might remain with you and your joy be full"; so among the diverse types of life which Jesus meets are the scholars, and to them also he announces the conditions which control the Christian use of their special gifts.

It may, at the first statement, appear improbable that Jesus has any message of importance to offer to the scholar. The prevailing tradition of the Christian Church has emphasized the lowly, untutored, provincial conditions of his lot. The lower the level of his education and opportunities was set, the higher have seemed his supernatural claims. He fulfilled, it is held, the prophecy concerning the Messiah, that he should be despised and rejected of men. It is probably true that he was not a student in the higher schools of Hebrew learning, so that when the Pharisees said of him, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" they perhaps meant to say: "How is it that this man knows our law, when he has not learned it in our schools?"

Yet, as this very passage indicates, Jesus, though not bred in the academic circle of his day, seemed to those who heard him by no means an untutored peasant or inspired carpenter. He knew letters, though he had

not learned them of the scribes. On almost every page of the first three gospels there is disclosed in him the student of the Scriptures, the master in dialectic, familiar with the scholar's method of logic and rejoinder, with a mind which was disciplined, self-confident, and keen. When, at the beginning of his work, he is tempted to the misuse of his ministry, he shows himself already familiar with the literature of the ancient Scriptures, quoting to the tempter, "It is written; it is written." When he returns to the synagogue in Nazareth, he is recognized and received by his old neighbors as a trained teacher of the holy word, and there is delivered to him the book for to read. When he opens the book, he knows where the Scripture is to be found which makes the lesson for the day and reads the passage whose significance he was to fulfil. When the learned people about him propose to convict him of self-contradiction or blasphemy or treason, they do not hesitate to confront him with the dicta of the law, assuming him to be instructed in it like themselves; and Jesus on his side meets these learned persons with their own weapons of logical dialectic, and parries their talk, and thrusts so keenly, that they durst ask him no more questions. Jesus, in short, must have

seemed to those who met him not merely a spiritual seer, a beautiful soul—as Strauss calls him—but an intellectual master, with extraordinary resources of argument and rejoinder, of lofty irony and intellectual refinement. He had a right, it seems, to deliver a message, not to the meek and lowly alone, but to that aristocracy of scholars who regarded it as their vocation to interpret the learning of the law.

Yet this evidence of intellectual fitness is not the trait in Jesus which is of most importance in his message to the scholar. Beyond this technical training, adequate though it may have been, the gospels report in Jesus a much profounder quality which immediately impressed his hearers, and which we perceive at once to be the quality which distinguishes the scholar from the merely learned man. It is the quality of wisdom, insight, foresight, grasp, discernment—a habit of mind not to be derived from instruction alone, not dependent upon the amount of information one has acquired, but the mark of intellectual power, of spiritual force, of original genius. The merely learned person reads many books, and reports their contents; but before the mind of Jesus

there were open the marvellous books of nature and of life, the secrets of the fields and sky, the motives hidden in men's minds, the movement of events, the destiny of Israel. When as a little boy he delayed to hear the debates of the learned at Jerusalem, the trait that startled those graybeards was a certain intuitive wisdom which penetrated their subtle distinctions with the candor and insight of a mind already at home among great thoughts. They were astonished, it is written, at his understanding and his answers; just as many another learned person has had his elaborate reasonings confronted and overwhelmed by the untaught wisdom of some winsome, candid, gifted, little boy. From that time on, it is recorded, Jesus increased not in stature and in charm alone, but in wisdom also. When his public life began, the first impression of his teaching was derived, not so much from what he said, as from the manner in which he spoke; the mastery and authority which distinguished his wisdom from the learning of his time. The people were astonished at his doctrine, because he taught them with authority and not as the scribes.

This is the quality which gives to the

higher scholarship its distinction. When one reads Emerson, or Goethe, or Mill, or Martineau, he anticipates, of course, that these scholars shall be well informed in the learning of the past; but it is not their erudition which gives them their primacy. It is their insight and comprehensiveness, their discernment of motives and tendencies, their capacity to read the mind of the world, to interpret life and history as other men read open books. When Mr. Emerson was asked for the arguments which supported his doctrine of the immanence of God, he answered: "I could not possibly give you one of the arguments you cruelly hint at on which any doctrine of mine stands, for I do not know what arguments mean in reference to an expression of thought. I delight in telling what I think, but if you ask why I dare to think so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of men." If we raise that habit of mind, with its calm assurance, its indifference to demonstration, to its highest power, we come into view of the kind of wisdom which marks the teaching of Jesus Christ. Very rarely does he descend into the region of proof. There is no proof in the gospels of the Fatherhood of God; no proof of the su-

premacny of duty; no proof that the peace-makers and the pure in heart are blessed. Once he approaches an argument about the truth of immortality, but even this is touched with a gentle irony, as though designed to meet the Sadducees on their own ground. Jesus moves in the religion of assertion, of spiritual axioms, of intellectual authority. The musician does not argue for his art; he utters it, and those who have ears may hear. The bird does not prove the possibility of a flying machine; he spreads his wings and flies, and his self-expression is the demonstration of his power. So it is that Jesus utters his truth, and spreads the wings of his spiritual flight. He looks upon the world of nature, its sowing and reaping, its lilies and its weeds, its birds and grain, and the scene is to him a book from which he teaches his message. He looks into human lives, their impulses and obstacles, their sins and repentance, their capacities for heroism and sacrifice, and reads the meaning of natures that are hidden from themselves, so that one disciple answers, "Whence knowest thou me?" He looks into the mystery of the universe, and while the learned debate of its origin and tendency, he reads the story of his Father's

love, and a new theology and a new morality issue from his teaching of the life of God in the soul of man. In Jesus Christ, then, we have a teacher to whom a scholar may not unreasonably listen. The message of the gospel does not proceed from ignorance, or superstition, or mysticism, or the visionary schemes of an Oriental peasant, but from a mind not untrained in the learning of his time, but enriched by an extraordinary and untaught endowment of spiritual wisdom. Nothing but the still profounder traits in Jesus Christ, of religious vision and moral cogency, could have obscured the intellectual greatness which justifies his message to the scholar.¹

What, we go on to ask, is this message of Jesus, the teacher, to the intellectual life? It is a twofold message. It speaks, first, of the nature of the truth with which the scholar has to deal; and, secondly, of the nature of the scholar who has to deal with the truth. It considers, first, the approach of truth to the scholar; and, secondly, the approach of the scholar to the truth.

As to the effect of truth upon the scholar,

¹ See also, *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1903, p. 691 ff., "The Character of Jesus Christ."

we may begin by observing the teaching of Jesus in its negative form. Who are the persons among the varied types of human life which from day to day confront him, whom Jesus regards with the most unmeasured condemnation? What kind of sins appear to him most fundamental, irremediable, hopeless? One of the most surprising traits of the gospels meets us at this point. The classification of conduct to which we are accustomed, the order of sins of which our law and social judgments take account, are, in the teaching of Jesus, without argument or protest, reversed. Jesus is astonishingly merciful toward many faults which the common judgment of the world holds to be beyond forgiveness. He accepts the penitent adulteress, saying, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." He has no severe rebuke for the doubt of Thomas, or the half-heartedness of Nicodemus. He cannot bring himself to abandon even the plotting Judas. He sees beyond the lie of Peter to a possible atonement through a strong, brave life. This extraordinary tolerance, however, seems checked when Jesus contemplates another kind of sin, which is apparently much more venial, but which seems to affect him with a loss of hope.

Who are these, who in his moral classification are set in the nethermost circle of all ; the only sinners of whom he can bring himself to say, " Woe unto you ! " Curiously enough, they are not adulterers, or betrayers, or deniers ; but, on the contrary, persons of social consideration, leaders of the church, scholars in the law. And what is it in these scribes and Pharisees which smites the heart of Jesus with this sense of hopelessness ? It is their self-sufficiency, their unteachableness, their impenetrability. The truth cannot reach them in their self-complacency. The light shines into their darkness and the darkness comprehends it not. Seeing, they see not ; hearing, they cannot understand ; for their heart, as the prophet said, " has waxed gross. " The approach of his message to the human mind demanded, he knew, first of all a quality of open-mindedness, docility, receptivity, intellectual humility ; and straight across that way of approach which truth must take to man lay the obstacle of the closed mind, the satisfied nature, the intellectual inertia of the satiated mind. These were they who entered not in themselves, and suffered not those that desired to enter. This was the sin against the Holy Ghost ; the turning

the back upon the light, which could not be forgiven in this world or in the world to come.

Who, we ask, are the persons most tempted by this sin of spiritual satiety? They are now, as they were then, the scholars. This is the besetting sin of the intellectual habit; the obstacle that stands between a man who intends to be a scholar and the work he wants to do. Many a man has fulfilled the discipline of his student life, and sees straight before him the vocation of the scholar, and then he is smitten with the scholar's palsy, the paralyzing sense of sufficiency, self-consciousness, or conceit. He has gained the technique of his art, but he has lost its passion. He has acquired a style and has lost reality; he knows much and fancies that he knows it all. His knowledge is that which, as St. Paul said, puffeth up. He has gained the whole world of the scholar and lost the soul of the scholar. What can be done with such a man? How can he be made meek and lowly of heart, poor in spirit, teachable, hungry and thirsty after righteousness, with the simplicity that is toward Christ? Here is where the hope of Jesus for men hesitates. A complete reversion of mind is demanded, from complacency to humil-

ity, from arrogance to simplicity, from the confidence of a master in Israel to the spirit of a little child. How perplexing to many a learned man must have been the symbolism of Jesus, when among the scholars of his day he set a little child, and made the childlike spirit a condition of entrance to his kingdom! How preposterous seems this reversion to childhood! Is it not this, we ask, that one has in his education outgrown? When I was a child, one says, I thought as a child, but when I became a scholar I put away childish things. Should not the child look to the scholar, instead of the scholar to the child? Should not the child say, except I become as this scholar I cannot enter into the kingdom of truth? Yet, if there be any mark of the scholar it is, as Jesus said, his childlikeness. The wonder and dimensions of the truth, its potential revelations, its baffling mysteries, keep him in the attitude of an eager, docile, wondering child. The ocean of the unknown stretches away before him and he is, as Newton called himself, a child, gathering pebbles on its beach. Self-importance and self-satisfaction drop away from the scholar like a disease of immaturity; and his scholarliness is like the change in Naaman when his flesh

came again like the flesh of a little child.

Here is the difference between learning and scholarship. The scholar is humbled by his task and chastened by his ideals. The higher he climbs among the things that are known, the broader becomes the horizon of the unknown. The greatest scholars are marked by that childlike temper for which Jesus looked in his disciples, the humility of the learner, the reverence of the truth-seeker, the attitude of faith. It is a safe rule to distrust the learning which leads to arrogance; and to avoid the scholar, who, as was said of one distinguished Englishman, makes science his *forte* and omniscience his *foible*. The scholar leaves the conceit of learning to those who have not discerned the dimensions of truth; and, as in the days of Jesus, the poor in spirit inherit the kingdom of the truth, and the spirit of the little child alone enters that kingdom.

Such is the teaching of Jesus concerning the effect of truth upon the scholar. The approach of truth to the educated mind creates, not self-sufficiency, cynicism, and conceit, but humility, simplicity, and reverence. The scholar, as the first Psalm

says, does not sit in the seat of the scornful, because his delight is in the law of the Lord. The other aspect of the teaching of Jesus concerns the scholar's approach to truth. What are the conditions of the scholar's insight? What is it which gives him discernment, effectiveness, penetration, wisdom, and breadth? The answer to this question might seem to be simple enough. The scholar is the finished product of education, the perfected intellectual machine. He thinks straight, writes forcibly, observes accurately, generalizes prudently. He may be defective in other qualities, feeble in body, infirm in morality, deficient in spiritual insight; but if the machinery of his professional thinking works smoothly, he would seem to many persons to be a scholar. It may even happen that his training as a scholar has involved definite weakness in other parts of life, robbed him of his bodily health, stifled his imagination, paralyzed his moral enthusiasm, yet his professional capacity would make it possible for him still to claim the title of scholar.

It is quite true that on the surface of the scholar's life it has this appearance of mechanical or technical proficiency. It is even true that specialized capacity tends

to exclude certain spheres of sympathy and knowledge, as in the famous confession of Mr. Darwin that music, which had once delighted him, was no longer a source of pleasure, and that his mind seemed atrophied toward this æsthetic resource. The scholar, like other men, falls into the rut of habit, and as that rut grows deeper the escape from it involves a severer wrench. When, however, we look beneath the task of the scholar to those qualities which create the scholar, it becomes plain that he is much more than a computing, observing, or analyzing machine. He is a thinker, projecting his guesses into the universe, and justifying, correcting, or refuting them by the facts. He is a dreamer, anticipating an invention, imagining a process, pursuing an analogy, tracing an elusive possibility, and then with sanity, restraint, and infinite patience, verifying or denying the dream. He is a philosopher, holding in his thought a picture of the universe, and thinking God's thoughts after him. If this, however, is the nature of the scholar, if this is what we call the scientific habit of mind, then these approaches to truth demand something much more than mechanical accuracy or specialized training. They call for perfect fidelity, transparent sincerity, an instinct for truth, an unflag-

ging self-control; and these are quite as much moral qualities as intellectual gifts. What we may call intellectual morality is, in short, a condition of the scholar's work. His task is not one of cleverness alone, but of character. This is what the philosopher Fichte described as "the integrity of the scholar." The scholar must be not only quick of wits, but clean of heart. The scientific habit of mind is not alone the power to see straight and reason rightly; it is quite as much the power to wait, to sacrifice, to free one's self from passion, prejudice, and fear. A greater gain to the world, perhaps, than all the growth of scientific knowledge is the growth of this scientific spirit, with its courage and serenity, its disciplined conscience, its intellectual morality, its habitual response to any disclosure of the truth.

If this is the fairest flower of the scientific mind, it is certainly most interesting to observe that precisely this moral quality in the intellectual life is what Jesus demands in his message to the scholar. He is not, it is true, a teacher of science concerned with the discovery of truth; he is a teacher of religion concerned with the character of the soul. Yet he sees with perfect clearness that the character of the

soul counts in the discovery of the truth. The first approach of the mind to truth, he teaches, must be made, not by intellectual acuteness, but by moral obedience. "He that willeth to do the will, he shall know the doctrine." The path to insight is through fidelity. "To him that is faithful in the least, that which is much is given." Sympathy, he teaches, is a trait not of the emotions alone, but of the intellect. Thou shalt love the Lord not only with thy heart, but with thy mind. There is such a thing, that is to say, as intellectual affection. According to Jesus, in one of his loftiest axioms, discernment of the highest truth depends not on the mind alone, but on the cleanness of one's spiritual nature. The pure in heart, he says, have this blessing, that they shall see God. It is as though the mind were a telescope, through which the stars were to be seen, while the moral nature were the lens which gave the instrument its power. The lens is but a part of the instrument and does not direct its mechanism, yet the least fleck upon the lens blurs the image of the star. So the unflecked character has its part in the scholar's task. Not every pure-minded man becomes a scholar, for the lens needs to be set within the intellectual

life; but, when through the instrument of the disciplined mind the truth shines upon the unstained heart, then the universe opens its mystery to the scholar as the depths of the heavens report themselves to the perfect lens, and the pure in heart see truth which is unrevealed to the soiled or tarnished soul.

“Talent,” said Emerson, “sinks with character; the moment of your loss of faith will be the solstice of your genius.” “What impresses one,” said Phillips Brooks, “in the most Godlike men we have ever seen, is the inability to tell in them what of their power is intellectual and what is moral.” Here is the point where many a man fails to be a scholar. He has done all the work that seems to make a scholar, but has just missed the character which is demanded of the scholar. It is as though he had laboriously climbed to the heights of his vocation, and a subtle mist had crept round him and shut off the view. The atmosphere of the true scholar’s mind is clarified by his sincerity, integrity, and sacrifice, and the truth lies with broad horizon and in right perspective at his feet.

Such is the twofold message of Christ to the scholar. The approach of truth to the scholar demands of him responsive-

ness, teachableness, and humility ; and the approach of the scholar to truth demands of him obedience, purity of motive, love. What, then, is this relation of the scholar to truth which is attained when the truth and the mind thus meet and know each other? Is this relation of reverent acceptance and loving loyalty the scholar's scholarship alone? Have we not reached the point where the scholar's religion comes into view, and where at last the ways of education and religion meet in the scholar's faith? This is the answer of the scholar to the message of Jesus Christ. As the scholar's knowledge grows from more to more, so more of reverence in him dwells. As he ascends into the hill of the truth, he comes with clean hands and a pure heart. It is not the whole of the religion of Jesus. Other messages are delivered by him to other needs of life ; but to the scholar Jesus still says that he alone who does the will can know the doctrine, and he alone who is pure of heart can see.

Is this faith of the scholar, we ask in conclusion, a sudden and unanticipated attainment, like the abrupt conversion of many souls, or is it a slow growth of experience issuing from many efforts and

mistakes? Sometimes, no doubt, it is a sudden transformation. The scholar is, not infrequently, born again in an intellectual conversion. A man who has been dabbling in scholarship, a dilettante, an amateur, hears one day a call to serious learning, and for the sake of truth accepts in a moment the life of self-denial, self-discipline, humility. But this is one of the miracles of experience. In the order of nature the attainment of the scholar's faith issues from the normal growth of the student's mind, and marks the ripening and enriching of his powers.

In three widely scattered passages of the fourth gospel there are written the three successive chapters of this evolution of a scholar's faith. It is the case of a man named Nicodemus; and the story of his life is a summary of all that we have said. He was not, like most of those who came to Jesus, a fisherman or peasant; he was a cultivated gentleman, bred in the schools of learning; and the message which he could receive must be a message to the scholar. He came to Jesus, first of all, not with the noisy crowd, but in a quiet hour when he could calmly study truth. It was a prudent plan. His was a scientific mind. On that uninterrupted even-

ing Jesus made his great demand of the scholar, that he should become a child again if he would receive the perfect truth. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." The scholar goes out into the night, unconvinced and unconverted, saying, "How can these things be?" and for two years we do not hear of him again. But what a change has come over his mind, when once more Nicodemus steps out of the shadowy background of the gospel. He has proceeded from childlikeness to candid sympathy, from obedience to fidelity. The message of Jesus, he now says, shall have its hearing. "Doth our law judge any man before he hear him?" The truth has now approached the scholar, as the scholar at first approached the truth. Nicodemus is no longer a critic; he has become the brave and patient student, the candid judge of truth. Then once more this cultivated gentleman disappears from the record until the life of Jesus ends. The truth seems nailed upon the cross and buried in the grave. Pilate has said to Jesus, "What is truth?" and then has added, "Take him away and crucify him." It is the moment when all who believed in him have fled. At that moment comes once more the scholar

— he who had once wanted to debate and judge. He comes no longer to criticise or to defend, but silently and loyally to serve. He brings his myrrh and aloes for the body of Jesus — nay, he brings his own life as an offering for the truth which he has learned to love. At the moment when the truth seems defeated, the evolution of the scholar's religion is fulfilled. Step by step the mind of the educated man has moved, from criticism to sympathy, from sympathy to sacrifice, until at last, precisely when many an untrained mind takes flight, it is the scholar who brings the rational offering of service as his answer to the message of the Christ.

III. KNOWLEDGE AND SERVICE

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WE have traced together the successive steps in the religion of an educated man, the growth of religion through education, and the emergence of education into religion.

It is like the story of growth in nature, not without its surprises and its crises, but with the steady, normal expansion of natural evolution, as a plant fulfils its destiny from stalk to blade, from blade to flower. The religious life unfolds as the natural flower of the process of education, and the process of education reaches its fragrance and richness as it blooms into the scholar's religious life. The same persuasion of the ideal, like the warmth of the sun in spring, draws out the scholar from the roots of education and then bids his growing thought blossom into the scholar's faith.

Precisely at this point, however, when the story of this growth from root to flower seems complete, we are confronted by a new demand which is made of educated men by the spirit of the modern world. It is the demand for service. By one of the most extraordinary transitions

in the history of human thought, the mind of the present age has been led from the problem of individual development to the problem of social service. Philosophy, economics, science, ethics, — all these fundamental studies now concern themselves in a quite unprecedented degree with the conditions, relations, and needs of social life. It is the age of the social question, — of the renaissance of philanthropy, of the search for industrial peace, of sociological speculations, of Utopian dreams, of religious unity. Never before were so many persons, rich and poor, employers and employed, learned and ignorant, so stirred by the sense of the life in common, and applying themselves so devotedly to the interpretation and amelioration of social life.

With the age of the social question arrives a new test to be applied to the gifts and institutions and acquisitions of all classes and conditions of men. It is the test of utility, of social value, of human service. To the scientific or æsthetic mind it may be still interesting to trace a growth from root to flower, but the new spirit proceeds to the new inquiry concerning the fruit which is to follow. It is not whether the growth is

fair or fragrant that the mind of the present age inquires ; it is whether it is noxious or serviceable, applicable to social welfare or cumbering the ground. Never was there a time when the test which the teaching of Jesus applies to his discipleship was so thoroughly accepted concerning all truth and life : By their fruits ye shall know them. What, asks the modern world, does any social movement or custom or tendency contribute to the common good ? What fruit does it bear for social service ? Is it to be counted among the causes and resources of the better world ? Is it worth producing or maintaining as an instrument of social salvation ? It is not only he that would be great, as Jesus said, but it is every philosophical formula or economic scheme or social institution that would be permanent which must prove itself the servant of all.

Such a test of excellence may well appear at its first statement a crude and even brutal way of estimating worth. Is there not, one may ask, an intrinsic excellence in truth and beauty, quite detached from questions of utility ? Are we to become wholly utilitarian ? Is there no such thing as pure science ? Is not beauty its own excuse for being ? Is not the useless often admirable and the wayside weed a source of

joy? This interpretation, however, of the spirit of the modern world as a reaction from idealism to utilitarianism does not represent the real character of the age of service. A reaction of this nature was seriously proposed by philosophy two generations ago and is not quite abandoned. What the modern spirit contemplates is not a retreat from idealism, but an expansion of idealism. It enlarges the scope of personal ends through observing their social relations. It deals not with man alone but with man among other men; not with the atom but with the organism; not with a Ptolemaic doctrine of the universe revolving round the single life, but with a Copernican doctrine where the single life finds its orbit within the larger world. The spirit of social service is not a reversion from idealism, but a new appreciation of the unity, size, and range of the world in which the idealist is set.

Whatever institution, then, or problem of modern life one may consider, he finds the new idealism applying to it the new test of social service. The institution of the family, for instance, has been for many centuries a comparatively unquestioned and accepted social unit; but there is now applied to this domestic relation a new

test. "What," asks the new spirit, "does this coherent group signify, not merely for those whom the law describes as 'the parties concerned,' but for the social order, the stability of civilization, the future of the race?" The problem of marriage and divorce when thus approached acquires new significance. Is the family, as some affirm, an obstacle to plans of social transformation, an inconsistency with the social commonwealth? Then the present instability in the domestic tie has the significance of social destiny. Or is the family the unit of civilization, the issue of social evolution, the chief defence against social revolution? Then the preservation of the family is a part of the protest against economic socialism, and the problem of the family is the very *crux* of the social question. All this new significance comes of regarding the family, not from the point of view of the convenience or whims or lusts of individuals, but as one aspect of the larger problem of social service and social stability.

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In the same way the new spirit judges the extraordinary modern phenomenon of the multiplication and concentration of wealth. The test which is now applied to the rich man, the only justification of his power in the world which commends itself

to the present age, is to be sought in the principle of service. We speak of a man as being worth a certain sum ; but modern idealism asks, "How much is he really worth? Is he worth having? Are his possessions, as Mr. Ruskin once asked, to be described as wealth, because it is well with him, or ought they rather to be called his ill-th, because it is ill with him?" Many a rich man, as Mr. Ruskin says in another place, is like the man who, when his ship was wrecked, tied a belt of gold pieces round his waist, with which later he was found at the bottom ; and one may fairly ask whether, as he was sinking, the man had his gold or whether the gold had him.

If, then, a rich man is not worth having when tested by the principle of social service, if he is an obstruction or a menace in modern life instead of an effective instrument of social welfare, then — according to the new spirit — he must be regarded as a danger to civilization, which must be somehow mitigated or removed. By one or another means of legislation or taxation, or perhaps of confiscation, the accumulation or transmission of great wealth might be made extremely difficult, if not impracticable ; and all these ways of relief from what are regarded as the dangers of wealth

are being freely proposed by the social agitators of the time. Nothing is more obvious than that wealth is being scrutinized and weighed as a question of social utility; and nothing is more touching than to observe the efforts of a few rich men to demonstrate that they are worth enough to justify their existence.

The same test of service is applicable, and is, indeed, being already unsparingly applied to the educated man. How much is he worth? Is he worth what he costs? Among the problems and needs of modern life is there a place for the higher education, or does a liberal training detach and disqualify from effective service, and breed mere loungers and lookers-on? We have heard for some years much contemptuous talk of the scholar in politics. We now hear the same talk of the scholar in business. More than one employer of labor has expressed his scepticism about the serviceableness of education, and his opinion that the new world calls for a new man, shaped in the iron-works and the railways rather than in the colleges and the universities of the land. The spirit of democracy cares little for traditions of superiority, but mercilessly threshes the

chaff from the wheat ; and education — like the institution of the family, like the accumulation of wealth — must justify itself by the test of social service and prove itself fit to survive as adapted to the new environment of the age of the social question.

Such, then, is the new test of value applied by the spirit of the modern world. The condition of permanence and of primacy is the capacity for service. When, however, we look again at these same conditions of society, we are confronted by another fact which is equally impressive and significant. For as one observes the signs of the present time he is at once impressed by the unprecedented demand made on every hand for knowledge as the condition of service. It is not only true that service is the test of excellence, but it is still further true that the capacity to serve calls for a new quality of preparedness, discipline, alertness, breadth, and force. One of the most striking traits of modern civilization is its constantly increasing demand for higher grades of service to utilize the complex mechanism of a new world. The motor-man who succeeds the car-driver must be a more observant, disciplined, silent, sober man. The engineer who runs sixty miles an hour instead of twenty must

be a better man than his predecessor, both in mind and in morals. The very switchman controls an intricate system instead of a single crank. It is sometimes asserted that this transformation of industrial methods has brought with it nothing but degradation to the working class; that the age of machinery has reduced the handworker to a machine, or, rather, to a single cog in a machine; and it is, of course, true that much of the work of life is done in dehumanizing and mechanical ways. It is still further true that with every shift of industrial method there is temporary disarrangement, which bears hardly on the least adapted, and involves friction, anxiety, and even tragedy for some ill-adjusted lives. This is that solemn aspect of social evolution which is described as the cost of progress. When, however, we turn from these economic maladjustments to the total scene of modern life, it is obvious that the industrial movement is on the whole not one of general degradation, but one of general elevation. The pull of the industrial world is in the main a pull upward. The way out of industrial distress is the way up. There is a constant summons to the best, an updraught which draws the more effective to the higher service and

creates a vacuum into which the less competent may rise. Never was there a time when it was so far from true that the working classes were as a whole sentenced to a dehumanized and mechanical career. On the contrary, there was never such a chance for intelligence, or such a reward for fidelity. The more complex is the machinery of life, the more competent must be the man who shall run it. A man must be active, sober, and teachable, in order to keep his place in the whirling machinery of the modern world. The best agent of temperance to-day is the nature of modern industry. The best encouragement of popular education, technical training, sober habit, and inventive skill is the new demand for knowledge as the condition of service, which is giving to the hand-workers of this country their place as the best paid and the most productive in the world.

This demand for intelligent service becomes still more conspicuous when we turn from industrial affairs to the specifically intellectual and spiritual enterprises of modern life. A whole series of undertakings, which have for generations been guided by sentiment, kindness, piety, and emotion, now present themselves as problems of knowledge,

science, discipline, expert skill. The relief of the poor, for instance, has seemed in the past sufficiently safeguarded if it were stirred by compassion, generosity, and tender-heartedness; but it has been at last discovered that the agent of charity must be not only pitiful, but educated, and many a half-trained giver, who has confused alms-giving with charity, looks back at the mistakes of his sympathy and wonders whether he has not done more harm than good. And how is it with the cause of temperance in alcoholic drink? Is it not for the moment most obstructed, not by lack of devotion and self-sacrifice, but by the wide-spread doubt whether the right method of approach has as yet been found, whether half-truths can do the work of the whole truth, and intemperate agitation can promote temperate habits? With still more pathos the industrial movement of the present age is calling for a new kind of capacity to interpret and direct its perplexing issues. We find ourselves suddenly involved in a complex industrial machinery which we have not learned to control. Combinations of capital and combinations of labor have outgrown the skill of those who are responsible for them; we are run away with by forces

which our own hands have made; and the confusion is only intensified by those who leap to our rescue, fancying that some special, outright, wholesale change in society will check the disorder and set the world right again, or believing that these runaway forces should be permitted to upset the whole industrial order, so that out of the fragments a better world may be made. In the midst of these noises of the time, how we are groping for wisdom, comprehensive judgment, consecrated common sense, to rein up the runaways and direct them toward industrial peace!

What shall we say, finally, of the teaching of religion—this which has in the past seemed so simple a matter, addressing itself to the individual will and heart and to the end of personal conversion? Why is it that the Christian ministry has lost so much of its leadership, and is already regarded by millions as a mere survival of the days of faith, a side-tracked, ecclesiastical, specialized profession, looking toward the past with pious sentiments rather than to the future with masculine authority and interpretative power? It is certainly not because the characteristic traits of service, devotion, consecration, sympathy, and pity are lost;

for there never was in fact a more generous and comprehensive love of man than prevails in the Christian Church to-day. It is because the representatives of religion have not matched their love of service with adequate knowledge, are not equipped for the work of a new world, speak precipitately, pledge themselves to impracticable panaceas, and stamp Utopian programmes of reform with the name of Christ. Among the perplexing issues of our national life, its industrial conflicts, its problems of races at home and of dependencies abroad, what sillier words have been spoken than by tender-hearted Christian ministers, who have fancied that kindly emotion was a sufficient substitute for educated training in the economic and ethical problems of the day? The new world, that is to say, not only calls for new artisans, new charity-workers, new temperance reformers, new captains of industry; but for a new ministry, a new expansion of the range of studies appropriate to the teachers of religion; that the ancient spirit of unselfish service may be directed by a new education which shall make men fit to control the forces of the time.

If, then, this is in any degree a true picture of the modern world, we are

brought to a most striking and suggestive situation. On the one hand is the demand of the age for service as the end of knowledge; on the other hand is the need of the age for knowledge as the means for service. One cannot justify education to-day except in terms of social welfare; but one cannot get far in the promotion of social welfare except through education. The very complexity of modern life makes its disentanglement the task of the age; but this task involves the patience, insight, and versatility of the educated mind. Such a situation is full of significance, both for the future of education and for the future of social service. On the one hand it indicates a new theory of education; and on the other hand it gives a new dignity to work. It democratizes the one and it idealizes the other; and both these changes must be recognized with care.

First, there is the change in the theory of education. If the test of education is service, then that man is educated who is best adapted for the environment of duty which his special life must occupy and use. To many a mind, trained in the earlier tradition, such a definition of education seems a break with sound learning, which must be deplored and contended against

to the last. Education to almost every one who began life fifty years ago was comprehended in one uniform type of liberal learning, which was practically a survival of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. At the centre of such culture stood what we still call the classics, as though no modern language and but two ancient languages were sources of noble thoughts and vigorous style; and round these essentials of an educated man were grouped much mathematics, a little history, chiefly of Greece and Rome, some speculative philosophy, and here and there a smattering of hearsay science. The finished product of this education was a refined, appreciative, tolerant mind, a citizen of the world, — or, rather, of the ancient world, — with the consciousness of belonging to a separate and Brahmin class, who could be called gentlemen. Educated men all the world over could recognize each other. They used the same dialect; they quoted from the same authors; they could appreciate each other's citations from the classics. The last thing which concerned them was the applicability of knowledge to service. It was even urged that a subject lost its educational value if it was assumed to be of practical utility. The bread-and-

better sciences were distinguished from the liberal sciences. The educated class were thus the spiritual descendants of the monastic orders, with the same intellectual leisure and the same quiet superiority to the toiling, downward-looking, productive masses of men. I have heard the claim proudly made by an institution of learning that its curriculum was devised six hundred years ago; and the claim reminds one of Longfellow's picture of the pious monk, looking down from his monastery to the shore:—

“ Where the waves and mountains meet,
Where, amid her mulberry trees
Sits Amalfi in the heat,
Bathing ever her white feet
In the tideless summer seas.

* * * * *

On its terraced walk aloof
Leans a monk with folded hands,
Placid, satisfied, serene,
Looking down upon the scene,
Over wall and red-tiled roof;
Wondering unto what good end
All this toil and traffic tend,
And why all men cannot be
Free from care and free from pain,
And the sordid love of gain,
And as indolent as he.”

What has become of this detached, self-centred form of education? It lingers only as a survival in little groups of English dons and dilettante scholars, who sit on the edges of the stream of modern life and do not fling themselves into the age of service. To name any uniform type of training which stamps a man as educated is no longer possible. One is educated when he is master of himself and of his task. The trade-school educates a man to be a plumber or a bricklayer; the technical school educates another to be an engineer; the college a third to be a teacher; but all have their part in the new education which is to make, not one corner of the world, but the whole diverse world of social life, the field of service for an educated man. What is this, indeed, but one more step in the history of democracy? We have become familiar with the democratizing of government, we are in the midst of the movement to democratize industry, and now we are bidden to the democratizing of knowledge. "Democracy," Mr. Lowell once said, "means, not, I am as good as you are, but, you are as good as I am." The first prejudice which democracy overthrows is the prejudice of caste, the patrician temper, the aristocracy of acci-

dent, privilege, or status. I was talking the other day with a young negro at Hampton who was mending a wagon wheel, and I remarked that I should be sorry to have that job set before me. "Yes," replied the young man with perfect simplicity and self-respect, "but there are many other things which you can do and which I cannot." Was not that a perfect statement of the scope, diversity, and dignity of democratic education?

Does all this mean, then, one may apprehensively ask, that the day of liberal culture is gone? Are gentle manners, classic style, and literary appreciation to be supplanted by technical, bread-winning, wagon-mending training? On the contrary, the age of service, rightly understood, is precisely the age when intellectual discipline and insight, power of expression and scientific habit of mind, are needed as never before to direct and interpret the world. A time so complex in its problems, so intense in its desires, so restless in its purposes, is just the time for the academic, scholarly, unmaterialized mind to have its full effect; and it is one of the most striking facts of the progress of the elective system in university life that, while large groups of students are led, as they should be led, to

those applied sciences where their minds naturally belong, the interests of literature, classical learning, and pure science were never so devotedly or so productively served.

In short, the principle of service sees the world no longer as divided, fragmentary, a disconnected series of spheres, in which various grades of education may be set; but as one world, an organism, a Cosmos, a single sphere, in which is no higher or lower, no academic aristocracy or detached group of the learned, but an interdependent, associated, common life, involving the researches of the recluse and the bent back of the man with the hoe. There are diversities of gifts and of workings, says the apostle, but one spirit. To one is given the word of wisdom and to another gifts of healing, and to another the interpretation of tongues, but in the philosopher and the physician and the linguist alike works the selfsame spirit, dividing to each one severally as he will.

If it is thus true that the effect of service is to be the democratizing of knowledge, it is equally evident that the effect of knowledge is to be the idealizing of service. Utility, efficiency, serviceableness — these words still have to many

minds a sound of cheapness, narrowness, and materialism, as mottoes of uneducated and merely practical men. But suppose that instead of a world divided between utility and learning, practice and theory, service and knowledge, one sees the world as undivided and integral, where the whole moves forward if one part is stirred. Suppose one thinks of human lives as in an organic world, as members one of another in the social body,—then the dignity and significance of each life become determined, not by the kind of service it performs, but by the performance of that specific service to which it is assigned.

Here, for instance, at one end of the working world, is the man of pure science, detached from all consideration of human welfare, investigating with equal enthusiasm poisons and antidotes, disease and health, bacteria that kill and bacteria that cure. What, to him, is a practical age? What sympathy has he with the people who are running up and down trying to do good? Does not the thought of utility even vitiate his research? Shall he not hide in his laboratory from the spirit of the age of service? Yes, this is the pure search for truth, the passion for knowledge, the asceticism of the scholar. And

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yet, both the inspiration and the romance of the scholar's life lie in the perfect assurance that any truth, however remote or isolated, has its part in the unity of the world of truth and its undreamed-of applicability to service. This is what makes the history of pure science so full of dramatic interest — that as one traces the new resources and conveniences and securities of life to their origins, he comes upon some lonely student in his laboratory, or upon some series of investigators dealing with abstract truths, and sees them, without conscious participation in the affairs of the world, becoming the benefactors of their race. The unity of the world gathers them, whether they will or no, into the life of service; and the truth they discover becomes the truth which makes men free. It is said of Faraday that, in his investigations concerning the insulating properties of various materials, he was asked of what use such work could be, and answered, "Of what use is a baby?" and behold, within a generation, the practical serviceableness of his infant discovery found undreamed-of applications, and every electric cable was wrapped in the material which he in his laboratory had found best.

Here again, at the other end of the working world, are the drudgery, routine, and mechanical toil to which many lives seem altogether condemned, and from which no life can wholly escape. This is the service which is as far from knowledge as pure science is from service, — the animal drag and automatic duties of the daily tasks. How to idealize drudgery, how to dignify routine, how to rescue one's soul from being a mere cog in a great machine, — that is the cry of those who are caught, as which of us is not, in the incessant mechanism of the modern world. To this cry for a human life, this demand for a *menschenwürdiges Dasein*, the answer is plain. It is not to be reached, as many a chafing spirit has fancied, by escaping from the machinery of the world and reverting to nature, simplicity, and liberty. That is the method of the runaway, who would save himself and let the world be lost. Nor may one imagine that a change in conditions will free him from the sense of weariness or compulsion; for no social class is so overwhelmed by *ennui*, despondency, and mechanism as those who would seem to be most unconstrained and free. No, the satisfactions of life must be obtained just where one is, and the escape

from drudgery is discovered not by going round it but by going through it.

Suppose, however, that knowledge comes to the rescue of service ; suppose that the routine of life is perceived to be the essential machinery which harnesses spiritual power ; suppose that one may look upon his task as an essential part of the total work of the world ; detached, it may seem, like the pure science of the scholar, from all appearance of utility, but held no less in the unity of social service, — then what new dignity is given to labor, and what spiritualizing to the mechanism of life, and what significance is restored to insignificance, and what self-respect stirs within the unimportant, shut-in, effaced life ! One starts up with a happy surprise and says, I am not a machine, I am not a wheel, I am not a cog ; I am a living factor in the creative purpose, an instrument of the total plan ; and fidelity in my own place is the test of effectiveness in the whole vast design. Thus, the unity of the world, which has democratized knowledge, turns itself now to the idealizing of service, and as it saves some men from the conceit of wisdom, so it saves other men from the despondency of work.

So far we are brought, then, by these correlations of knowledge and service toward

the new idealism which holds the scholar and the hand-worker in the unity of the new world. But having come thus far we must speak one final word; for the conclusion we have reached carries us in reality quite beyond the region of philosophy and of social service into that frame of mind which marks the religious experience of an educated man; and the dedication of knowledge to service which we have traced reproduces the social ideal of the teaching of Jesus Christ.

Nothing is more striking in the gospels than the balance of the Master's mind, as he deals on the one hand with the life of the individual, and on the other hand with the truth of the unity of the world. First he turns to the person as the instrument of his purpose. Nothing is so precious to Jesus as the single soul. The shepherd seeks the one sheep; the woman searches for the one coin. The first discovery of Jesus Christ, it has been said, was the discovery of the preciousness of the individual. But why is the single soul thus precious? At once the other side of the teaching of Jesus answers the question. The individual is precious for the sake of the kingdom which Jesus came to found. He came, says the

first statement of his purpose, into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom. With the vividness and completeness of one to whom the movement of history was disclosed, he conceived of the scattered atoms of personal lives as wrought into the organism of social service; and the limited Hebrew thought of the kingdom of God expanded in his hands into the comprehensive unity of the Christian commonwealth. The kingdom was ever the end, but the person the means to that kingdom. The redemption of Jesus was not to be of persons from the world, but of the world through persons; not an escape from the sinking ship of the world, but a discipline fit to save the whole ship-load of human desires and needs and bring it to its destined port.

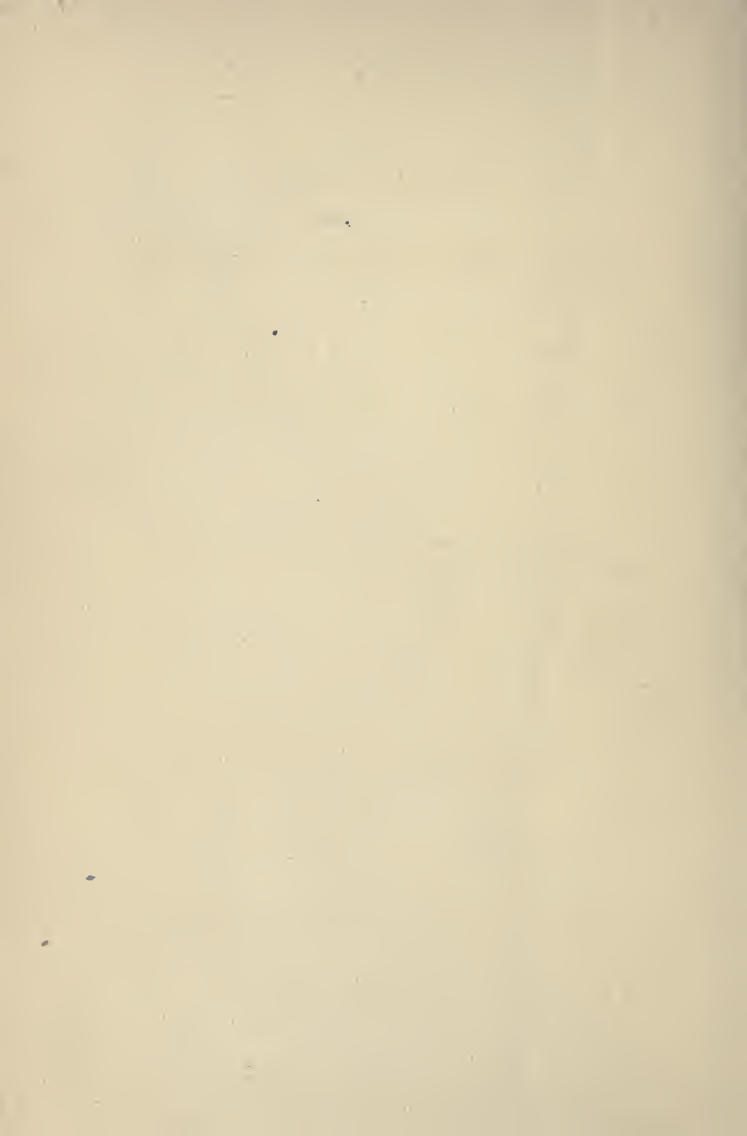
Even of himself Jesus announces that this twofold law of life holds true. "For their sakes," he says, in the greatest words he ever uttered, "I sanctify myself." "For their sakes," — that is the principle of service; "I sanctify myself," — that is the education of the individual; and in the giving of a consecrated individual for the sake of an unconsecrated world the desire of Jesus Christ, even for himself, is fulfilled.

What a deep, strengthening renewal of

fidelity, patience, and self-respect comes to many a hesitating, struggling, ineffective life, as it pauses thus among these issues of knowledge and service and hears the message of Jesus binding together the world of study and of work ! We do not know just how or where the Master of the world is to use the lives that are consecrated for other's sakes. We may not prophesy when knowledge shall become service, or when service shall demand knowledge. But this we know, that it is all one world which holds the scholar and the worker, and that, both for those who study and for those who toil, religion is education and education is religion. We are like those tapestry weavers of Paris, who do their task at the back of the picture they create, and see only the fragments of design which they copy and the tangled threads and loose ends which they leave as they go on, until from time to time they rise from their corner and pass round to the other side and see the total form and color in which their hands have wrought. So, perhaps, some day, in this life or in another, we may be permitted to rise from our corner in the workroom of life and go round to the other side of things and see the total picture in which we have had our insignificant yet essential

part; and then at last it will be plain that the plan of the Great Designer is perfected through the consecration of each servant at his task, and that knowledge and service are but the opposite sides of life, which find their unity in the religion of an educated man.





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