

Summary. To sum up: *The external criteria of Divine Revelation are of greater apologetic value than the internal signs* for the following reasons.

1. They manifest the divine origin of an alleged revelation with greater certainty than the internal criteria.

As stated above, under certain circumstances, the positive internal criteria beget certitude; but they exert this influence only on those who, by reason of their greater intellectual powers, are able to examine the content of the doctrine in all its aspects and properly to evaluate it. On the other hand, there is always the danger that man's judgment of a given doctrine, especially as regards its sublimity and its capacity for satisfying the innermost needs of man, may be too subjective. The positive external criteria, on the contrary, can be appreciated by all, even the ignorant and unlettered, because they rest upon historical facts which are easy to ascertain. For the same reason (namely, because there is question of *objective facts*) the danger of deception is practically excluded.⁴³

2. They can be known also more easily.

In applying the external criteria it suffices to investigate a few historical facts, whereas the application of the internal criteria demands a careful analysis of the entire content of the doctrines said to be divinely revealed. It is obvious, however, that the more varied and comprehensive the subject-matter to be examined, the easier it is for error to creep in.

3. The fact of Divine Revelation can be known more quickly by means of the external criteria.

This is plain from the fact that, instead of the many truths which constitute the subject-matter of an alleged revelation, only one needs to be considered, that is, the question relative to the *Fact* of Divine Revelation. Once this has been proven with certainty by the application of the external signs, there can be no doubt as to the divine origin of the *content* of the Revelation. The whole inquiry is focused on the question of the credibility of the witness

⁴³) J. Brunsmann, S. V. D., *Lehrbuch der Apologetik*. St. Gabriel bei Wien. 1924, I: "*Religion und Offenbarung*", p. 149; English adaptation, "*A Handbook of Fundamental Theology*", by A. Preuss, St. Louis, Mo. 1929, II, p. 71.

of the alleged revelation, that is to say, the divine mission of the legate and the divine origin of his message.⁴³

At the same time, however, it must be admitted that the internal criteria, per se, are in many respects superior to the external signs.

They lead the inquirer into the essence of the subject in question, and are calculated to awaken a more joyful mood or attitude, since they demonstrate not only that Christianity is a Revealed Religion, but also open up its intrinsic value and its content of truth. Moreover, they are perhaps more congenial to the character and mentality of the "modern man", who is educated in the thought of natural science and for whom Miracles are, often enough, a difficulty and an obstacle rather than an aid to Faith. Nevertheless, despite these advantages the application of the external criteria may not be dispensed with. For their proving force is far more conclusive. The sublimity of the doctrine and the world renewing power of Christianity do not disclose its divine origin so palpably as Miracles do, since it is very difficult to establish the precise measure of achievement, which the power of man, relying on his native resources alone, can attain in spiritual and moral respects.

*Therefore, the proper method to be employed is that which seeks to combine the external and the internal criteria into a harmonious unity.*⁴⁴

Chapter III

THE SUBJECTIVE CRITERIA OF PROTESTANTISM

From the earliest Christian times to the present, there have been advocates of an *internal proof* "of spirit and power" for the truth of Christianity, based on a higher intuition and an experience of the heart. The *external proof of fact*—namely, Miracles and Prophecies—, so it has been said, ought either to be wholly abandoned or

Historical
Retrospect.

⁴³) Brunsmann, S. V. D; *ibid.*, I, p. 149; Brunsmann-Preuss, *ibid.*, II, pp. 71, 72.

⁴⁴) Fr. Sawicki, *Die Wahrheit des Christentums*. Paderborn. 1920 (4^{ed.}), p. 342; cf. Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis theologiae dogmaticae*. Romae, Tornaci, Parisiis. 1922 (19^{ed.}), I, pp. 134-137.

relegated to a subordinate position. Christianity must manifest itself, above all else, as a religion of salvation and a saviour religion for the inner man; it must prove itself by means of a spiritual vision and an emotional bliss. As such, it must authenticate its claims for him who does not yet believe, but far more for the believer who lives by Faith and experiences its truth within himself. Thus, the primacy of value belongs to the subjective and the mystic criteria.

Meaning of
Term "Mystic".

There is hardly a more ambiguous term than the word "*mystic*". In general, it denotes something hidden, mysterious. In the *objective* sense we call everything mystic, which by reason of its nature or origin is mysterious, whether relatively, that is, for this or that person, or absolutely, for each and every person. In the *subjective* sense all activities are termed mystic, which are mysterious. Thus, we speak of a mystic life of man, a mystic vision, feeling, striving, a mystic vital operation, accordingly as that life is enigmatical or mysterious in its quality or cause, whether it be natural, diabolical or supernatural.

In the matter under discussion, the problem is whether there is a *natural* mystical experience, which may serve as the medium for arriving at the supernatural. Whether there is an *intellectual* experience of the supernatural, or an *emotional* and *volitional* experience of the satisfying power and efficacy of the supernatural, which may function as an *internal subjective* criterion of its objective truth.¹

History testifies that the different tendencies, which have sprung from the attempts to demonstrate the truth of the Christian Religion by means of these mystical criteria, have issued either in a kind of *Rationalism*, in that they have made the content of Christianity the subject of a natural intuition and an emotional experience of the spiritual man, thus appearing as *theosophical Gnosticism*, a higher *empiricism*, or have ended in an *exaggerated Supernaturalism*, which sought to accredit the content of Christian doctrine by means of an internal testimony of God, thus anticipating the future bliss of the life to come.

¹) Al. v. Schmid, *Apologetik als spekulative Grundlegung der Theologie*. Freiburg i. B. 1900, pp. 174, 175.

In direct opposition to these tendencies we note another tendency, which has also been active from the earliest Christian times to the present, and which has sought to preserve unimpaired the *spiritual Mysticism* of Christianity. It likewise strove for a proof of the Christian Faith on internal mystical intuitions and experiences, but carefully avoided the extremes of Rationalism and an exaggerated Supernaturalism.²

Space will not permit us to review all these divergent tendencies.³ We shall restrict our study to three modern applications of these subjective, mystical criteria, which the apologist may not ignore, namely, the *Protestant*, *Pragmatist* and *Modernist* evaluation.

PROTESTANTISM

From the very beginning of the so-called Reformation, orthodox Protestantism made light of and, to a certain extent, even repudiated the objective, especially the external, criteria of Divine Revelation. It championed a subjective and sentimental apologetics.

I. *Luther* did not indeed absolutely reject the external criteria, but he did look upon "such vain, trifling and almost childish tokens" merely as signs for the *ignorant and unbelieving crowd*, for whose sake they have still to be performed. But the faithful, who already know them, have no further need of them. Miracles are wrought for the benefit of the heathens; but Christians require higher and heavenly signs in comparison with which visible Miracles are still earthly. It is not surprising, then, that such signs have ceased, now that the Gospel has been preached everywhere. Those who were ignorant of God had to be drawn and enticed to Him by means of external signs, just as one

Early Reformers.

²) Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 175.

³) For the *Patristic Period* the student might consult Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 176-180; also Chas. M. Sauvage, art. "Mysticism", CE. X, p. 664; for St. Augustine's position cf. Erich Przywara, S. J., *Religionsbegründung*. Freiburg, i. B. 1923, pp. 258 sq. For the *Middle Ages* cf. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 180-186. For the *Post Middle Ages up to the twentieth century*, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 186-194; also J. Pohle, *Natur u. Übernatur*, in RCK, I, pp. 393-397. For the *Modern Period*, cf. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 194-200.

casts "apples and pears" before children, in order that God might be able to perform within them the really exalted Miracles, that is, the *spiritual* wonders. We, on the contrary, ought to praise and extol the great and glorious miraculous deeds, which Christ performs daily in His Christianity, in that it overcomes the power and might of the devil, and snatches so many souls from the jaws of death and Hell. For Christians and believers these are the really great Miracles, which Christ's divine and almighty power, namely, preaching, prayer, baptism, etc., effect unceasingly in Christianity. These Miracles are the casting out of devils, the chasing away of serpents, the speaking with new tongues, of which we read in Mark xvi, 20.⁴

This same viewpoint recurs in the *Lutheran dogmatic theologians* of the early Reformation period.⁵

Testimonium
Spiritus
Sancti.

Starting with the basic conception that fallen man finds himself in a relation of contradiction as regards supernatural and Christian Revelation, orthodox Protestantism, both Lutheran and Reformed, concluded that man is, for the most part, incapable of arriving at a natural knowledge of credibility, and unable to acquire a fides humana, which is firm and free from doubt, relative to the divine origin of Revelation and of the Sacred Scriptures, as the documents of God's revealed message. But neither does man require such a natural knowledge, since he is able to arrive at a fides divina in God's Revelation and in the Holy Scriptures (both being generally regarded as identical) upon the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*. For, when man hears the consoling and blissful word of the Gospel, that is, the glad tidings that he is able to find justification (forgiveness of sin), regeneration and divine sonship by Faith alone, or by a simple trust (*fides fiducialis, specialis*), he can look upon that experience of salvation as the testimony of the salvific spirit of God, and thus acquire a *certain* Faith, *free from*

How do we
know it is
Holy Ghost?

another
criterion not
necessary.

⁴) *Luthers Werke*, ed. Erlangen, XII, Abtl. 1, pp. 218-221; cf. XII, Abtl. 2, pp. 235-238; ed. Weimar, X, Abtl. 3, pp. 144-147; cf. also Bretschneider's summary of these teachings in "*Luther an unsere Zeit*", p. 197 sq.

⁵) Quenstedt, *Theol. didactico-polemica*, I, p. 97; Baier, *Compendium theol. positivae*. Lipsiae. 1680, p. 106; Gerhard, *Loci theol.* 23, c. 11 (vol. XI, p. 319 sq.)

doubt, regarding the divinity of the content and origin of the Sacred Scriptures. Thus, for the individual, the objective ground of justifying faith (*ultima ratio propter quam creditur*) is the testimony of the Holy Spirit; the subjective ground is the internal, mystic experience of this testimony.⁶

Accordingly, the early Reformers looked upon the *rational* substructure of Faith, which had hitherto been so strongly emphasized by traditional apologetics, as absolutely useless. The divine origin of Revelation was now held to be knowable solely through the divinely inspired Scriptures, and the divine inspiration of the Scriptures was said to be discernible upon the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, Who, when we read the Bible, recognizes His own work.⁷ Therefore, the thread binding objective Revelation with the subject who receives it, is again a supernatural Revelation. This thread between the believing soul and objective Revelation cannot be spun by human reason; for reason is utterly incapable of performing such an act. Indeed the Reformers stigmatized, as godless and wicked, the thought that things spiritual and divine (hence, Faith also) can be acquired through human activity. "The reason is obvious; namely, because, according to them, the hereditary evil (original sin) consists in an obliteration of the divine image from the human breast: and this is precisely the faculty capable of co-operating with God. Accordingly, they teach, that man remains quite passive, and God is exclusively active."⁸ For in man, everything in an upward direction, in religious matters, is dumb; there is no voice that speaks for God; nothing bears witness to Him. Hence, the teaching that, if a religious voice is audible within man, it is the voice of God and the parallel

⁶) Al. v. Schmid, *Apologetik*, p. 210.

⁷) cf. D. Fr. Strauss, *Die christliche Glaubenslehre*. I, p. 354.

⁸) John A. Möhler, *Symbolik*. Regensburg. 1921 (10th ed. by F. X. Kiefl), p. 107; English transl. "*Symbolism*" by James Burton Robertson. London. 1906 (5th ed.), p. 88.

teaching that the Sacred Scriptures, of themselves alone, are the norm and judge in matters of Faith.⁹

Calvin writes: "The Scripture exhibits as clear evidence of its truth, as white and black things do of their color, or sweet and bitter things of their taste . . . Let it be considered, then, as an undeniable truth, that they who have been inwardly taught by the Spirit, feel an entire acquiescence in the Scripture, and that it is self-authenticated, carrying with it its own evidence, and ought not to be made the subject of demonstration and arguments from reason; but it obtains the credit which it deserves with us by the testimony of the Spirit . . . We seek not arguments or probabilities to support our judgment, but submit our judgments and understandings as to a thing concerning which it is impossible for us to judge".¹⁰

Luther's antipathy to the co-operation of reason in matters of Faith is too generally known to require elaboration.¹¹ If, nevertheless, there arose among Protestants a rational theology, and, the catch-word "pure doctrine" came into vogue, it was largely due to the efforts of Melancthon.¹²

⁹) A. Gisler, *Der Modernismus*. Einsiedeln. 1913 (4^{ed.}), p. 243.

¹⁰) *Institutiones*, I, c. 7, nn. 2, 5; English transl. "*Institutes of the Christian Religion*" by John Allen. Philadelphia, Pa. 1841 (3rd American ed.), pp. 77, 79, 80.

¹¹) *Luther* (*In Genes.* c. xix) delighted in comparing fallen man to a pillar of salt, a clod of earth, incapable of working with God. He sarcastically calls reason "Lady Hulda, the mad fool" from Mount Venus (*Luthers Werke*, ed. Weimar, XXIV, p. 516; ed. Erlangen, XXXIV, p. 138); "the clever prostitute, whom the heathens followed, since they wished to be most wise" (*ibid.*, X, p. 295, resp. XVI, Abtl. 2, p. 532); "the devil's harlot", that can do nothing save blaspheme and dishonour everything that God says and does (*ibid.*, XVIII, p. 164, resp. XXIX, p. 241).—*Luther's* spirit gained so complete a victory that his views, nay his very expressions, were adopted into the public formularies. For example, *Konkordienformel, Solida Declaratio, I, De peccato originis* (ed. C. A. Hase, Lipsiae. 1827, p. 640; English transl. "*The Book of Concord or the Symbolic Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*", by Henry E. Jacobs, Philadelphia, Pa. 1912, p. 542), states: "That we all have by nature inherited from Adam such a heart, feelings, and thoughts as, according to their highest powers and the light of reason, are naturally inclined and disposed directly contrary to God and his chief commands"; II, *De libero arbitrio* (*ibid.*, p. 657, resp. p. 553): "The more diligence and earnestness they (namely, who do not yet believe) employ in order to comprehend, with their reason, these spiritual things, the less they understand or believe, and before they become enlightened, or taught of the Holy Ghost, they regard this only as foolishness or fictions".

¹²) Gisler, *ibid.*, p. 243; cf. Möhler, *ibid.*, 44, 59, 66.

The Lutheran and Reformed theologians of the seventeenth century systematized this fundamental conception of their founders. The testimony of the Holy Spirit and of His interior, mystic experience together with the power of begetting certitude, extends, according to them, first, to the consoling article of justification by Faith alone in the exclusive merits of Christ, as the chief content of the Sacred Scriptures, (*material* principle of Christian Faith), and then reaches out also to all the remaining content of the Bible, according as this content is interpreted by the symbols of both the Lutheran and Reformed confessions; moreover, it embraces all the historical facts attested to in the Sacred Scriptures, and the fact of their supernatural divine revelation in the Bible, as well as the divine inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures (*formal* principle of Christian Faith). In the minds of many, this divine inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures extended not only to the content (*real* inspiration), but also to the very last syllable and point in the text (*verbal* inspiration), as well as to the origin of the canonical, divinely inspired Scriptures.

Upon the foundation of such a Faith rested also the science of Faith or Theology. To reason was conceded only a formal, instrumental use (*usus organicus, instrumentalis*) relative to the truths of Faith. Consequently, the basis of Faith and of Theology was a kind of *mysticism*, and from this coin of vantage the early theologians sought to combat all *pseudo-mysticism*. They looked upon the power and efficacy of the Holy Spirit as joined to the word of the Sacred Scripture and bound to it, precisely inasmuch as the word of the Bible appeared to them to be true and genuine in the light of the interpretation set down in the symbols of Faith. They regarded the word of the Bible, thus interpreted, as a weapon of defence, to combat the *pseudo-mysticism* of the so-called enthusiasts and the theosophical mysticism of Valentin Weigel, J. Boehme, J. G. Gichtel and others. On this mystic foundation of the testimony of the Holy Spirit was reared the *Pietism* of a Spener and a Franke, with this difference, however, that *Pietism*, in contrast with orthodoxy, regarded a pious life operative in charity and good works, and an interpretation of the Holy Scriptures in harmony with such a life, as the essence of Christianity, without holding strictly to the letter of the formulated confessions. It was only at the turning-point of the eighteenth century that this conception, which made Divine Faith rest upon the mystic basis of the testimonium Spiritus Sancti, was abandoned, and in its stead was intro-

duced, through the school of Wolff and Storr, a rational-historical, or a biblico-historical, foundation.¹³

Summary.

To sum up: Orthodox Protestantism either underestimated the value and power of external Miracles, as compared with the *spiritual Miracles* wrought by God in man's heart, or, in place of the criteria always in vogue in the Church, appealed rather to a new *mystic* testimony, which can be termed an internal criterion only in that it manifests itself, not through an external, but rather an *internal* Miracle. Moreover, since the Miracles of Christianity bear witness solely to the Church, Protestants denied all extra-evangelical Miracles and, in their polemics against the Church, were obliged to invoke "the interior testimony of the Holy Spirit", "the interior experience of the individual", and similar mystical criteria.¹⁴ Thus, for the early Reformers the *credibility* of the mysteries of faith signified their *aptitude for belief, inasmuch as under private inspiration they appear as divinely revealed*.¹⁵

Criticism.

1. It is, indeed, true that external physical Miracles possess less value and power than internal spiritual Miracles; however, the latter cannot prove the divine origin of Revelation, since they are invisible. The question at issue is: Whether this interior testimony is really the testimony of God, or merely the testimony of a wicked spirit, or of our own spirit. Hence, we must judge whether the interior experience is a divine inspiration, or simply the expression of our own subjective feelings. And so, after all, we are obliged to appeal to another criterion. Moreover, as we shall show in detail below, this testimony of the Holy Spirit, this internal experience, is a very *indefinite* and *dubious* concept.¹⁶

¹³) A. v. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 210, 211; IDEM, *Untersuchungen über den letzten Gewissheitsgrund des Offenbarungsglaubens*. München. 1879, pp. 111-131.

¹⁴) Gutberlet, *Lehrbuch der Apologetik*. Münster i. W. 1904 (3' ed.), II: "Von der geoffenbarten Religion", p. 100.

¹⁵) P. Fr. Reg. Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *Theologia Fundamentalis secundum S. Thomae Doctrinam*. Romae et Parisiis. 1918, I, p. 519; (3'ed.), p. 269.

¹⁶) Gutberlet, *ibid.* II, p. 100.

2. This theory of credibility leads to *false consequences*. For, in the first place, if it is an internal revelation of the Holy Spirit, which enables one to recognize an external revelation as divine, the court of last appeal, and the highest principle of supernatural truth and certitude, is not Revelation, but rather this same internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. Thereby every vagary of *visionary mysticism* would be justified and religious truth, stripped of its objective dignity, would be at the mercy of every fantastic opinion.¹⁷

Thus, *George Fox*, the founder of the Society of Friends (Quakers), taught, as the central dogma of his sect, the tenet of "the inner light", which is supposed to be communicated to the individual soul directly by Christ, "who enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world". To walk in this light, and to obey the voice of Christ speaking within the soul, was for Fox the supreme and sole duty of man. Creeds and churches, councils, rites and sacraments, were discarded as so many outward things. Even the Sacred Scriptures were to be interpreted by the inner light.¹⁸

Secondly, apart from this questionable immediate internal revelation of the Holy Spirit, the divinity of this

¹⁷) Hettinger-Weber, *Lehrbuch der Fundamentaltheologie oder Apologetik*. Freiburg, i. B. 1913 (3'ed.), pp. 190, 191.

¹⁸) cf. James F. Loughlin, art. "Society of Friends", in CE. VI, p. 305 sq. Robert Barclay, one of the ablest apologists of the society, writes: "Unum addam argumentum ut probem hanc internam immediatam et objectivam revelationem solum esse immobile et certum fidei fundamentum. Illud, ad quod omnes christianitatis professores ultimo recurrunt, cum ad extremum pressi sunt, et cujus causa certa omnia fundamenta commendantur et creditu digna habentur, et sine quo rejiciuntur, oportet esse solum, certissimum, immobile fundamentum omnis fidei christianae. Sed interna immediata Spiritus revelatio illud est; . . . ergo est solum certissimum immobile fundamentum". (*Apologia theologiae vere christ.*, thes. 2. London. 1676); cf. *Confession of the Society of Friends, Commonly called Quakers*, A. D. 1675, in Phillip Schaff's "The Creeds of Christendom", N. Y. 4'ed. revised and enlarged, vol. III, pp. 789, 790; also Möhler's *Symbolik*, p. 492 sq., English transl. by Robertson, p. 390 sq. Neither Barclay nor Wm. Penn have been able to explain successfully, in what respect the "inward light" differs from the light of reason; neither have they been able successfully to reconcile the doctrine of the supreme authority of the "inner light" with the "external" claims of the Bible and the historic Christ. In fact, these doctrinal weaknesses were the fruitful germs of dissensions in later times.—For the modern viewpoint, cf. Rufus Matthew Jones, "Why I am a Quaker", in "Twelve Modern Apostles and Their Creeds", N. Y. 1926, p. 110 sq.

testimony has, as its witness, something or other in the human spirit, namely, either the feelings or thought. Modern liberal Protestants, championing the former alternative, have substituted for this private inspiration the criterion of the natural religious sense, with the consequent naturalistic disintegration of the content of historic Christianity. On the other hand, if thought or reason is made the witness, the lapse into Rationalism is not far removed.¹⁹ Therefore, the definition of credibility proposed by the early so-called Reformers, while minimizing the rights of reason and materially exaggerating the supernatural character of faith (*pseudo-supernaturalism*), actually leads to Naturalism and Rationalism²⁰

Modern Protestantism.

II. As the older orthodox Theology of the Lutheran and Reformed confessions, so, too, Protestant Theology of the past century, which took the field against vulgar and speculative Rationalism, sought to ground the Christian Faith and its science chiefly upon a *mystic* basis, but partly also upon a biblico-historical foundation. Here we are concerned only with the former of these tendencies, as championed by some of its principal representatives.

Difference between Early and Modern Protestant Theology.

First, however, let us outline the *characteristic differences* between Protestant Theology of the last century, in so far as it seeks to ground the Christian Faith through the medium of an inner, mystic experience, and the orthodox Theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The older Theology answered the question: Why do you believe?, by the statement: Because the Holy Spirit bears witness to, and guarantees the truth of the content of the Sacred Scriptures. Modern Protestant Theology, on the other hand, has come to realize that one cannot make the testimony of the Holy Spirit the ground of the certitude of Christian Faith without, at the same time, assuming and holding as true the genuine divinity and credibility of that testimony; in other words, without a *petitio principii*. Hence, it recognizes that this certitude can be obtained only by means of an *inner* experience, which is perceived

¹⁹ cf. D. F. Strauss, *Die christliche Glaubenslehre*, I, p. 136.

²⁰ Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 519, (3^{ed.}), p. 269.

through the *blissful impressions or effects exerted upon our emotional and volitional life*. Therefore, modern Protestant Theology proclaimed, as the ultimate ground of the certitude of Christian Faith, the impressions of consolation and joy experienced within the soul, which the saving Gospel message produced in the individual. Through these impressions the individual becomes aware of God, as the primal source of these feelings, and thus the truth of God's testimony is rendered credible by means of the testimony of one's inner spiritual experience. Thereby the doctrine of fiducial faith received a greater *subjective* motivation, inasmuch as the *genesis* of that faith was thrust into the foreground.

Moreover, modern Protestant Theology, in contrast with the earlier form, also set a greater value upon the powers of fallen man and, in consequence, also upon the measure of philosophical and apologetic knowledge, and the evidential value of the criteria *externa et interna credibilitatis*, although it still refuses to ground the *fides fiducialis et salvifica* upon these motives.

As regards the *content* of Faith, modern Protestant Theology no longer conceives Revelation so strictly according to the meaning of the older confessions of Faith, particularly since the State (in Germany) endeavored to bring about a union of the Lutheran and Reformed churches, on the occasion of the three hundredth anniversary of the Reformation.

Modern Protestant Theology appears partly as a "*mediating*" theology (*Vermittlungstheologie*), which no longer acknowledges the supernatural in its strict theological connotation, partly as a theology of *repristination* or *restoration*, which, in so far as it continued to rest upon a confessional basis, very often undertook a revision of the Lutheran and Reformed symbols, or asserted that the symbols were obligatory only in so far as they were in harmony with one another, or finally, ascribed normative value to the Bible alone, variously interpreted in a positive believing sense. Still claiming that subjectively the inner spiritual experience of the individual is the ultimate ground of faith, modern Protestant Theology, now in a neo-Kantian, now in a Pietistic guise, has strayed into the many and multifarious paths of a "liberalized" Christianity, even with respect to the Apostles' Creed. It differs from the earlier Theology finally, in that it makes a more careful distinction between Revelation and the documents of Revelation, the content of Revelation and the content of the Sacred Scriptures, the inspiration of Revelation and the

inspiration of the Bible; moreover, it no longer asserts that the proof that a doctrine is in conformity with Sacred Scriptures, is *eo ipso* the proof of its truth; lastly, it subjects not merely the genuinity and integrity of the biblical writings, but more so even their inspiration, to the inquiries of "untrammelled" criticism, and no longer admits strictly verbal inspiration, nay even surrenders the real inspiration of many or even of all the biblical writings and thus, for various reasons, opens the way to a more liberal interpretation of the Bible.²¹ In point of fact, so-called "Modern Christianity", "Progressive Christianity", "the New Theology", as it is variously termed, retains very little of primitive traditional Christianity.²²

Reaction against
Illuminism.

The *Illuminism* of the eighteenth century had rudely shaken men's faith in dogma, but its own efforts at spreading a rationalistic religion had met with scanty success. Protestant Theology, so *Fr. Aug. B. Nitzsch* writes,²³ faced new tasks. Among other things the position of religion, in the spiritual life of the individual and of history, had to be re-investigated and theoretically defined in accordance with the temper of the age, with its predilection for the vital, personal and affective element of man's nature. On the other hand, Theology had to be harmonized with the most recent results of criticism, as applied to the Bible and the history of dogma.

Idealism,
Romanticism,
Schleiermacher.

Modern Protestant Theology found an important preparation for its new tasks, on the one hand, in *German Idealism*, which made the high-tensioned inner life of man the fountain-head of a new philosophy and ideal of life. In place of mere reason it proclaimed the rights of the immediateness, oneness and individuality of man. On the other hand, Theology joined hands with the *Romanticism* of the earlier period of Protestantism. And out of the fusion of Kantian and romanticist impulses issued a new philosophy, which, in its attempts to dominate all the spheres of life and knowledge, naturally also

²¹) A. v. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 213, 214.

²²) cf. Errett Gates, *The Development of Modern Christianity*, in *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, ed. G. E. Smith. Chicago, Ill. 1917 (2nd Impression), pp. 431-482.

²³) *Lehrbuch der evangelischen Dogmatik*, ed. by Horst Stephan. Tübingen. 1912 (3rd ed.), p. 38.

included religion, and thus became of primal significance in the development of modern Protestant Theology.²⁴ This is not the place to trace in detail the various efforts that were made in the past century, to translate "inherited doctrines into modern philosophical form with as little disturbance to faith as possible".²⁵ The attempts to intermingle the older religious attitude with modern philosophy inevitably led to confusion.

A third and most important factor in the development of modern Protestant Theology is the influence of *Friedrich Schleiermacher*, whose definition of Theology as the interpretation of the experience of Christian men, introduced a new epoch in the history of religious thought. Ever since his day this appeal to *Christian experience*, as the test of the truth of religion and morality, has become increasingly predominant in Protestantism.²⁶

The influence of Schleiermacher in this respect is expressed by a recent Protestant writer in the following words: "For the type of theology which finds the content of doctrine in an authorized system the primary question must be as to the validity of this authority. Thus, the authenticity of Scripture must be established by orthodox theology before one is scientifically justified in deriving doctrines from Scripture. If, however, we regard doctrines as the creations of religious thinking for the purpose of interpreting religious experience, the first task of the theologian must be to inquire concerning the nature of religious experience. This approach to the study of theology was initiated over a century ago by Schleiermacher, whose famous *Discourses on Religion* are today as stimulating as anything which one may read on the subject of religion". Hence, the student of Protestant Theology is urged to "realize that his primary task is to understand the vital nature and function of religion. If interest is once aroused in this direct subject-matter, many of the formal topics of theological controversy—such as discussion concerning the exact location of 'authority'—cease to be of importance".²⁷

Old and New
Theology.

²⁴) Nitzsch, *ibid.*, pp. 38-40.

²⁵) Gerald Birney Smith, *Systematic Theology and Christian Ethics*, in *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*. Chicago, Ill. 1917 (2nd Impression), pp. 504, 505.

²⁶) *Ibid.*, p. 499.

²⁷) G. B. Smith, *ibid.*, pp. 508, 509.

Conclusion.

In the light of this brief historical survey of modern Protestant Theology, the tendency to divorce religion from reason and to unite it, on the one hand, with the *will*, and on the other hand, with the *emotions*, the movements of the *heart*, is not difficult to understand. This will become clearer, if we study the writings of some of the more representative advocates of *Voluntarism* and *Emotional Religion* in modern Protestant thought. At the same time, the relative value of the subjective and mystic criteria of Revealed Religion, as understood by the great majority of modern Protestants, will appear in clearer light.

I. VOLUNTARISM

Kant.

1. For Protestants "one of the principal fountains from which the main stream of modern theology has flowed"²⁸ is *Immanuel Kant* (1724-1804). The primacy of value, which the "will" enjoys in religion and faith among large sections of present day Protestantism, is mainly due to his influence.

For clarity's sake, we must remind the student that we are *not* concerned here with the question as to the influence of the will in the *exercise* of religion and faith; for doubtless in this practical respect, the will does occupy the primary and most important position. For us the problem is rather this: What is the extent of the will's influence in the matter of religious *convictions*? Or more precisely: What value attaches to the will as a criterion of the natural knowability of Divine Revelation?²⁹

Pascal had already emphasized in a one-sided fashion the motives of the will or the heart, which "has its reasons that the mind knows not of".³⁰ But it was *Kant* who proclaimed the perfect independence of practical reason; upon it and the will only, so he insisted, devolves the task

²⁸) Errett Gates, *ibid.*, p. 455.

²⁹) J. Mausbach, *Die Religion und das moderne Seelenleben*, in RCK, I, p. 62.

³⁰) cf. J. Lataste, art. "Blaise Pascal", in CE. XI, p. 512.

of giving to a philosophy of life that final consummation, which speculative reason must despair of attaining. For Kant the existence of God is not a truth of knowledge, but rather a practical assumption on the basis of the moral consciousness, a postulate, which becomes a reality through the medium of the moral *will*. This "faith" fills in the lacuna which the abdication of reason produced in man.³¹

Kant's ideal is a *religion of pure reason*, which pre-Kant's Philosophy of Religion. cedes from every positive Revelation and statute. Its doctrinal content is meager, being limited essentially to the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the moral law.

Kant does not indeed absolutely reject a *belief in Revealed Religion* resting on historical facts; he is inclined to concede to it a provisional significance, even though he does not acknowledge its supernatural origin. However, he is willing to tolerate such a faith only under certain limited conditions. It may not lay claim to any unique value; it may serve only as a means of visualizing the truths of natural reason. Neither may this faith be regarded as an essential condition of salvation. Its explanation is to follow the spirit of the religion of reason, as its highest norm; that is, its individual doctrines are to be interpreted as the investiture of ethical ideas: "The reading of these sacred writings or the inquiry into their content has as its final end, to make better men; but the historical element, which does not contribute anything thereto is, in itself, something entirely indifferent, which one can regard as one wills".³² Kant himself transmutes the central dogmas of Christianity in this spirit. Thus, for him the eternal Logos is simply the divine idea of morally perfect man. Inasmuch as this idea proceeds from God's essence, the Logos is God's only begotten Son. Christianity rightly recognizes the highest realization of the ethical idea in a man, who, despite the strongest temptations and the greatest sufferings, remains steadfast in the faithful performance of duty until death. Union with this ideal man guarantees salvation.³³ Meanwhile, however, one may not tolerate the idea that this faith even in its present form will last forever; in the course of

³¹) Mausbach, *ibid.*, p. 64.

³²) *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, ed. Reclam, Leipzig, p. 118.

³³) *Ibid.*, p. 62 sq.

time it must give way more and more to the faith of pure and unveiled Reason.

Religious action, in so far as it is justifiable, consists only in the fulfilment of ethical duties. Religion and morality are really identical. Moral life becomes religion, when the moral law is acknowledged as the law of God. Hence, the definition: "Religion (looked at subjectively) is the acknowledgment that our duties are divine commandments".³⁴ This definition precludes the erroneous conception, which would make religion a complexus of particular duties immediately directed to God, and prevents our accepting *court service* in addition to the ethical and civil duties of man.³⁵

The religion of pure Reason, at least, limits itself to moral conduct. In the existing religion, side by side with moral laws, there are still "statutory" laws, which impose on man particular duties in respect of God and impel him to perform particular religious practices. Kant regards these as grounded in human nature and is unwilling to condemn them, so long as they remain subordinated to ethical purposes or ends. But just as soon as the idea obtains, that such exercises are pleasing to God, they become an abuse.³⁶ Kant goes so far as to reject absolutely every *prayer* as divine worship in the proper sense of the term.³⁷ God has no need of "court service" and cannot be moved by flattery and prayers. He sees our needs and of Himself gives us what His goodness wishes to bestow.

As regards the *religious community*, Kant is of the opinion that it results, like religion itself, from ethical considerations. The full domination of the good can be realized by "the establishment and spread of a society according to the laws of virtue", by the organization of a "kingdom of God", a "church". Kant's ideal church is an "ethical republic", which discards all dogmatic definitions and accepts "rational faith", as its guide in all intellectual matters, and establishes the reign of the kingdom of God on earth by bringing about the reign of duty. In this church there will be no external authority and human statutes any more.³⁸ In harmony with Kant's Agnosticism, the criteria of Miracles and Prophecies are, of course, rejected as unknowable.

³⁴) *Ibid.*, p. 164.

³⁵) *Ibid.*, p. 164.

³⁶) *Ibid.*, pp. 184, 186.

³⁷) *Ibid.*, p. 213 sq.

³⁸) *Ibid.*, p. 130. cf. Franz Sawicki, *Lebensanschauungen moderner Denker*. Paderborn. 1920 (2-3rd ed.), pp. 40-44; Wm. Turner, art. "Philosophy of Kant", in CE. VIII, p. 603 sq.

2. *Arthur Schopenhauer* (1788-1860)³⁹ also championed the primacy of the will over knowledge in the apprehension of the Absolute. According to him the will itself is the Absolute; the basic essence of all things is a blind striving and willing, to which the intellect associates itself merely later on, in a secondary, ancillary capacity. This predominance of willing, as compared with thinking, manifests itself in all the details of life; men's judgments, whether they believe or doubt, love or hate, yes, even when they err in computing or counting, are according to Schopenhauer dominated by their interests and their individual advantages.⁴⁰

3. Many modern thinkers gratefully acclaimed this *voluntaristic* tendency as a defence against bold Materialism, as a means of rescue from the faintheartedness of subjective Idealism, and incorporated it into their own system. In the deepest problems of life, so they claimed, the decisive factors are not "judgments of existence", but rather "judgments of value" and "feelings of value", which express the tendency of man's personal will. If there is still a metaphysics, the most that it can accomplish is to lead one to an absolute ground of the world, but not to God, as the content of the good, that is, not to the God of Theism. It is the will, the *practical need*, that decides one's philosophy of life in the latter sense; we cannot "live" without God; we cannot sustain our personality, in the face of Nature's forces, without God (Paulsen, Windelband, R. A. Lipsius, Tolstoi). The underlying thought of this philosophy of religion may be summarized thus: I hold fast to my religion, not because it is the true religion; but it is the true religion, because and in so far as it corresponds with my needs. Accordingly, faith has no "objective validity, but only a subjective inevitableness". This voluntaristic conception finds its logical expression in so-called *Pragmatism*; also in the school of *Ritschl* with its aversion for meta-

³⁹) *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 1819, II vol. 1844, with essays "Parerga" and "Paralipomena". English transl. "The World as Will and Idea" by Haldane and Kemp. London. 1886.

⁴⁰) J. Mausbach, *Die Religion und das moderne Seelenleben*, in RCK, I, p. 64; cf. A. B. Sharpe, art. "Pessimism", in CE. XI, p. 740 sq. Fr. Sawicki, *ibid.*, p. 59 sq.

physics and its theory of faith closely akin to Luther's; finally, in certain *Modernists*, for whom, however, the purpose of this practical need is simply to create the right disposition for religion; religion itself, the real faith in God, rests rather upon an experience of the feelings.⁴¹ We shall treat of the pragmatic, Ritschlian and modernistic viewpoints more in detail below.

Balfour. 4. *Arthur James Balfour* expounds a characteristic theory of belief on the equivocal grounds, that it is no less certain than scientific theory and method. Our beliefs are largely determined by *non-rational* causes, and, even when evidence is their motive, what we regard as evidence is settled by circumstances altogether beyond our control.⁴² Starting with Kantianism and Positivism he questions the value of metaphysics; the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the freedom of the will are inaccessible to rational demonstration; the practical reason, faith, must step into the breach.⁴³

Balfour strives to show "how, in the face of the complex tendencies which sway this strange age of ours, we may best draw together our beliefs into a comprehensive unity, which shall possess at least a relative and provisional stability".⁴⁴ The logical use of modern speculative reason on the data of experience, which he labels "Naturalism" (that is, Positivism, Idealism, Rationalism), in his opinion leads to the negation of religion and morality—to Agnosticism. Their principles or methods rest upon indemonstrable and inevident postulates; and yet, men cannot and will not and ought not to abandon religious and moral beliefs. Hence, an adequate motive for these beliefs must be found. "Not reasoning, inductive or deductive" lies at the basis of "the immediate beliefs of experience", but rather *non-rational* processes, especially *authority*, by which *Balfour* understands, "a convenient collective name for the vast

⁴¹) Mausbach, *ibid.*, I, pp. 64, 65.

⁴²) Balfour, *Defence of Philosophic Doubt*. London, 1879, chap. xiii.

⁴³) cf. G. Fonsegrive, *Le catholicisme et la vie de l'esprit*. Paris, 1906, p. 52. Renouvier takes a similar stand. Every proposition, in order to be affirmed with certainty, demands an act of the will; science is the result of an act of faith and the whole of science accordingly rests upon faith (cf. Fonsegrive, *ibid.*, p. 45).

⁴⁴) Balfour, *The Foundations of Belief*. Being Notes introductory to the Study of Theology. London, 1919 (11th Impression), p. 345.

multitude of psychological causes of belief, *not being also reasons for it*, which have their origin in the social environment, and are due to the action of mind on mind".⁴⁵ Thus, the immediate cause or motive for man's beliefs is the combined influence of all the factors, which constitute a man's social environment and make up the "psychological atmosphere", in which his mental life is steeped and formed.

But, then, man cannot and does not live (his intellectual, moral, religious life) on reasons alone; "certitude is found to be the child not of reason, but of custom". Man must hold to his beliefs despite the "rational" negations of Agnosticism, not by attempting the hopelessly difficult, if not impossible, task of rationalizing these beliefs; nor by attempting the equally hopeless task of finding adequate rational grounds for the authority of the various social institutions, whether civil or religious, which propound these beliefs to him as true.

Since the beliefs of which Naturalism is composed must on its own principles have a non-rational source, there is no contradiction if in other spheres, for instance, in theology, the same condition prevails. Hence, it is only right and proper and natural for man to trust the instinctive "non-rational" impulses and yearnings of his soul, and so to hold firmly to moral and religious beliefs,—beliefs which so obviously harmonize with all that is best and noblest in man's nature, and the loss of which would degrade man to an unnatural condition of mere animality.⁴⁶ "If no better ground for accepting as fact a material world more or less in correspondence with our ordinary judgments of sense perceptions can be alleged than the *practical need for doing so*, there is nothing irrational in postulating a like harmony between the Universe and other Elements in our nature, 'of a later, a more uncertain, but of no ignoble growth'".⁴⁷

Balfour then contends that his argument shows "that the great body of our beliefs, scientific, ethical, aesthetic, and theological, form a more coherent and satisfactory whole in a Theistic than in a Naturalistic setting". Pressing the argument further, he maintains that these departments of knowledge, or any of them, are more coherent and satisfactory in a distinctively *Christian setting* than in a purely Theistic one.⁴⁸ He thinks that it can be shown that the central doctrine of Christianity, the doctrine which essentially differentiates it from every other religion,

⁴⁵) *Ibid.*, p. 390.

⁴⁶) cf. P. Coffey, *Epistemology*. London, 1917, vol. II, pp. 345, 346.

⁴⁷) *The Foundations of Belief*, pp. 391, 392. Italics inserted.

⁴⁸) *Ibid.*, p. 397.

namely the Incarnation, "has an ethical import of great and even of an increasing value". He enumerates three aspects of this doctrine "in which it especially ministers as nothing else could conceivably minister, to some of the most deep-seated of our moral necessities".

a) "The whole tendency of modern discovery is necessarily to magnify material magnitudes to the detriment of spiritual ones. The insignificant part played by moral forces in the cosmic drama, the vastness of the physical forces by which we are closed in and overwhelmed . . . increase (on the Theistic hypothesis) our sense of the power of God, but relatively impoverish our sense of his moral interest in his creatures. It is surely impossible to imagine a more effective cure for this distorted yet most natural estimate than a belief in the Incarnation".⁴⁹

b) "Again, the absolute dependence of mind on body . . . is of all beliefs the one which, if fully realized, is most destructive of high endeavor. Speculation may provide an answer to physiological materialism, but for the mass of mankind it can provide no antidote; nor yet can an antidote be found in the bare theistic conception of a God ineffably remote from all human conditions, divided from man by a gulf so vast that nothing short of the Incarnation can adequately bridge it".⁵⁰

c) "A like thought is suggested by the 'problem of evil' . . . Of this difficulty, indeed, the Incarnation affords no speculative solution, but it does assuredly afford a practical palliation . . . Christianity brings home to us, as nothing else could do, that God is no indifferent spectator of our sorrows, and in so doing affords the surest practical alleviation to a pessimism which seems fostered alike by the virtues and the vices of our modern civilization".⁵¹

Summary.

To sum up: The advocates of Voluntarism, divorcing the reason from the will, closely associate the origin and the essence of religion and faith with the *volitional* part of man's nature and with the exigencies of *practical life*. Repudiating the traditional apologetics of reason, they seek to ground religious faith upon voluntaristic motives of credibility. Accordingly, by the *credibility* of the truths of religion and ethics, they mean their *aptitude for belief, inasmuch as they appear conformable with the*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 398; cf. pp. 333-338.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 398; cf. pp. 338-341.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 398-399.

*dictates of practical reason, or with the practical needs of man's religious and moral life.*⁵²

1. We are not now concerned with the problem as to the measure of influence, which the will exerts on knowledge, especially in the sphere of religious faith.⁵³ Neither is this the place to enter upon a criticism of Kant's theory of knowledge in its application to voluntaristic faith. The student is referred to philosophy, especially to epistemology, for an *ex professo* discussion of these questions.⁵⁴ This much, at least, is certain: Whoever separates theoretical from practical reason, builds upon a precarious foundation. Faith is powerless to reconstruct the beautiful world which critical reason has deliberately demolished. Doubtless the natural and moral tendency of the will is of the greatest value, in the matter of inspiring and promoting thought activity and of giving to it earnestness and profundity. But if the will neglects this task, if it surrenders thought activity to a false propensity or inclination to individualistic self-disintegration, it is impotent to create a *certain* religious conviction. There is a natural connection between the true and the good, between "judgments of existence" and "judgments of value"; in the good is contained an intensified truth and reality; in a judgment of value there is contained the acknowledgment of the excellence and dignity of existence.⁵⁵ Hence, it is not surprising that in the history of modern ethics Kant stands almost alone, when he asserts that the categorical imperative (the moral legislation of practical reason) is the primary, *a priori* truth, which evidences itself to every one without proof, and which gives to the whole realm of conscience, to morality, its unconditional validity and unction. This undervaluing of the vital tasks, of the pregnant and inspiring purposes, of morality, has finally been rejected almost universally as an artificial and impotent formalism.⁵⁶

2. The question that interests us here is: What is the value of this *voluntaristic criterion* as regards the natural *knowability* of Divine Revelation? And in this respect Voluntarism, in common with other subjective systems of thought, makes "the common mistake of leav-

⁵² Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 519; (3rd ed.), pp. 269, 270.

⁵³ cf. Mausbach, *ibid.*, I, pp. 65-72; Chas. R. Baschab, *A Manual of Neo-Scholastic Philosophy*. St. Louis, Mo., 1924 (2nd ed.), pp. 177-184.

⁵⁴ cf. P. Coffey, *Epistemology*. London, 1917, II, pp. 330-344.

⁵⁵ Mausbach, *ibid.*, I, pp. 75, 76.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

Criticism

Voluntaristic Criterion leaves Problem of Certitude Unsolved.

ing the problem of *certitude* without solution. Sceptics themselves admit this more or less necessary impulse of our nature to assent to certain truths. But the whole point at issue is to ascertain whether this impulse is blind or justified. If any claim is made to justify it, recourse must be had in the last resort to some other motive than the nature of the subject, to a motive whose foundation the *intellect* can itself perceive, in a word, to a criterion which is *objective*'.⁵⁷ All anti-intellectualistic theories, which would ground certitude ultimately on non-rational motives, produce not assents of certitude, but only of a *prudent probabilism*. An appeal to subjective feeling or sentiment, to the "will to believe", must show its credentials before the bar of reflecting reason. An appeal to such extrinsic influences as are not directly rational, influences that are *motives* or *causes*, but not *reasons* (Balfour), of assent, cannot lay claim to my submission, until I know that what they prompt me to do is true. It is indeed proper for me to believe; to trust my faculties; to trust the moral and religious promptings of my nature. But only, *when I convince myself that there are reasonable grounds for my doing so*; but not sooner. It is wrong for man to abdicate his dignity as a rational being by trusting or believing blindly. He must use his reason to discover satisfactory objective grounds for believing; such grounds will be the ultimate test of the truth of what he is to believe; they will be the ultimate motive of his certitude; then his belief will be a reasonable belief, an *obsequium rationabile*. When the individual holds beliefs "because he is rationally convinced, rationally certain, that he has adequate grounds for their credibility, for the truth of what they propose to him, then and then only does he believe rightly and rationally. For, as *St. Thomas* says, "Ea, quae subsunt fidei . . . aliquis non crederet nisi videret ea esse credenda"; and not only would the individual *de facto* refuse, but he would be

⁵⁷) Cardinal Mercier, *A Manual of Modern Scholastic Philosophy*. Authorized translation and eighth edition by T. L. Parker and S. H. Parker. London & St. Louis, Mo. 1916, vol. I, p. 366.

right in refusing, to 'believe them unless he saw them to be credible'". The man of average intelligence can *de facto* easily see both within him and around him, in his own nature, in the world of experience, and in the light which those truths throw both on his own nature and on the world around him, adequate objective evidence of the credibility of the truths to which he assents, for *truth* makes to the human intelligence an objective evidential appeal, which is not forthcoming in the case of *error*. He can finally meet and settle all satisfactorily, according to the measure of his capacity and opportunities, such difficulties as may *de facto* happen to arise against the credibility of what he believes. Thus, the certitude of his belief is a reflex, reasoned and reasonable certitude'.⁵⁸ The voluntaristic criterion is, therefore, insufficient to enable us to arrive at a certain knowledge of Divine Revelation.

II. EMOTIONAL RELIGION

Protestant Theology, for the most part, still looks upon the inner experience of the power and efficacy of God's revealed word to satisfy our *feelings* and our *striving for happiness* as the primary criterion of the Christian Faith. It regards this criterion *not* as an *intellectual*, but rather as an *emotional* experience, an experience of the sentiments or the heart. Hence, the ground of the certitude of salvific Faith, and of the science upon which it rests, is not an inner experience in the sense of an intellectual intuition or perception, but an inner experience in the sense of a feeling of that, which satisfies our striving for bliss and of whatever goes to make up our happiness. This criterion is said to be an adequate sign of certitude, even apart from *previous metaphysical* or *apologetical* proofs, and without in the end needing Kant's proofs of the moral reason. We have already called this criterion "*mystical*" and so, too,

Mystical
Criteria.

⁵⁸) Coffey, *ibid.*, II, pp. 346-348.

many Protestants term it.⁵⁹ For obvious reasons we are obliged to restrict our study to some of the more typical representatives of this viewpoint.

Jacobi. 1. *Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi* (1743-1819)⁶⁰ protested most vehemently against Kant's ethical faith in God and religion. To it as well as to Lessing's and Herder's pantheistic concepts of God and religion, he opposed a *sentimental religious faith* and was, therefore, like Rousseau before him, the protagonist of a sentimental religious Illuminism. For him religion was not merely a mediate postulate of morality, not only an adjunct of ethics, but rather something original, immediate, something that could be grasped by a sentimental rational faith, no matter how imperfect it might appear to the understanding. He visioned man as caught between the devil and the deep blue sea: in heart man is a Christian, but in understanding a heathen, an atheist and a pantheist.⁶¹

Jacobi created a complete philosophy of Revelation. For him Revelation like Faith is the term or expression for the *irrationality* of the world. Accepting the conclusion of Kant's "*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*", namely that human "understanding" (*Verstand*) cannot transcend the limits of sense experience and arrive at a knowledge of the "*noumenon*" or essence of things, Jacobi maintained that our conviction concerning the existence of things rests upon Revelation and Faith. It is especially the *irrational* powers within ourselves, the basic impulse of the true, the good, and the beautiful, the sentiments of reason (*Vernunftgefühle*), which must be utilized as God's Revelation; by their means God becomes immediately present within us.⁶² In other words, "he proclaimed that man is endowed with a higher

⁵⁹ A. v. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 236, 237. Other Protestant theologians, however, designate as "*mystic*" only those tendencies, which assume an immediate union of the soul with God and Christ in the *formal* meaning of that term, or which unduly dissociate the inner Christian experience from the *external, objective* basis of the Person of Christ, as He continues to live in the community and appears to us in the Bible. Others call only that experience mystical, which emanates from *exceptionally vital and intensive* emotions (Pietism, Methodism etc.), or from an immediate ecstatic absorption into the Divine, etc. To that extent it is only a *quaestio vocis*. (Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 237, foot-note) cf. R. H. Fisher, *Religious Experience*. The Baird Lectures for 1924. N. Y., pp. 48-70.

⁶⁰ *Werke*, 6 vols., Leipzig. 1812-1825; *Briefwechsel*, 2 vols., 1825-1827.

⁶¹ Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 75, 76.

⁶² Nitzsch-Stephan, *Lehrbuch der evangelischen Dogmatik*, pp. 150, 151.

faculty than this 'understanding', which reasons logically from the data of sense. This higher faculty (*Vernunft*: 'reason') works in a hidden, mysterious way in the supra-sensible domain of the true, the good, and the beautiful, as a sort of spiritual feeling or sentiment (*Geistesgefühl*). It is prior to, and deeper than, all reasoning: we cannot seize or analyze it: we simply *believe* in it and accept its dictates. It has nothing to do with the *phenomena* but gets us into contact with *noumena*, with reality. Through it we escape scepticism and rise superior to all the doubts and limitations of the mere logical faculty, the understanding. Thus, human certitude is based ultimately not on any *intelligent* apprehension of reality as the object of the human understanding, but on an *inevident dictate of sentiment or feeling*.⁶³ The following study will show how this "philosophy of sentiment"—sentiment or feeling variously described as "rational", "moral", "esthetic", "religious", "spiritual",—as contrasted with the so-called "reasoned" systems with their claims for the supremacy of intellectual evidence as the basis of certitude, permeates a very great portion of modern Protestant Theology.

Jacobi's Christianity is certainly not a positive, but rather a deistic sentimental Christianity. And even for the latter form of Christianity he had no certain scientific criterion, because of its basic irrationalism.⁶⁴

2. Modern Protestantism hails *Friedrich Schleiermacher* (1786-1834) as its great theologian and the founder of the so-called "mediating" theology (*Vermittlungstheologie*), which sought to reconstruct the bridge between supernaturalism and rationalism, Revelation and nature, faith and science, orthodoxy and idealistic philosophy.⁶⁵ He made a clean sweep of Melancthonism and poked fun at the "finished plaything" of "natural theology".⁶⁶ "In an age which was inclined to hold religion in contempt, and to array scientific knowledge and philosophical reflection against it", says a mod-

Schleiermacher.

⁶³ P. Coffey, *Epistemology*, vol. II, pp. 318, 319.

⁶⁴ Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 76.

⁶⁵ W. Koch, art. "*Schleiermacher*", in *Buchbergers Kirchliches Handlexikon*. Freiburg i. B. 1912, vol. II, colls. 1969, 1970; IDEM, art. "*Vermittlungstheologie*", II, col. 2584.

⁶⁶ Gisler, *ibid.*, p. 243.

ern Protestant writer,⁶⁷ "he sought a defense for it. To this end he prepared the epoch-making 'Reden' for the 'cultured despisers of religion'". Banishing metaphysics from Christian philosophy, Schleiermacher "finds Religion, as Kant had found the fundamental moral law, in the human consciousness as such—it is a necessary and inalienable constituent element of human experience in its highest interpretation. It cannot, therefore, be a product of thought (it is not to be identified with a doctrine or sum of doctrines or to be viewed as the effect of such); or of moral action (it is not an inference from moral principles or a belief involved in the subjection to a universal moral law); but it is an original human endowment. Indeed, in human experience it is antecedent to all knowledge and action, for it appears in that rudimentary consciousness in which the distinction of subject and object, self and not-self, had not yet appeared. In this priority, religion is exhibited as superior to knowledge and morality. Here the soul is the subject of the action of the universe; it is wedded to infinity".⁶⁸ Subjectively, religion consists in *feeling*, that is, much more than sensation; "it is that sense of oneness with the whole of existence which is peace and blessedness. It comes into vivid consciousness in those deep emotions which are aroused by, or expressed in, elevated discourse or poetry or song. It does not submit itself to minute analysis or theological process. It is an immediate possession".⁶⁹ Philosophically, "it is the universe expressing itself in the human consciousness. Therefore, it occurs in and with man's relationship to the world. In one aspect it may be designated as the human self-consciousness itself in its highest interpretation, and in another aspect as a function of the universe, the universe coming to self-conscious-

⁶⁷) Errett Gates, *The Development of Modern Christianity*, in *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, ed. by G. B. Smith, Chicago, Ill. (Second Impression), 1917, p. 455.

⁶⁸) Geo. Cross, *The Theology of Schleiermacher*. A Condensed Presentation of his chief work, "The Christian Faith". Chicago, Ill. 1911, pp. 106, 107.

⁶⁹) *Ibid.*, p. 107.

ness in man".⁷⁰ "Religion is an immediate, or original, experience of the self-consciousness in the form of feeling";⁷¹ "in the feeling of absolute dependence God is immediately given to the religious man".⁷² Thus, *religion is not knowledge, but feeling* and the science of faith is fundamentally different from rational science. Whoever possesses this feeling is according to Schleiermacher pious, religious, even though he does not know that this sentiment is religion, and does not realize and acknowledge the Infinite as a personal something, but views it merely as something living and operative in the universe.⁷³

As the feeling of dependence upon the Infinite is the ground of religion in general, so, too, the *feeling of the need of redemption* and the *certainty that the influence of Christ has put an end to the state of being in need of redemption*, or the *experience of redemption*, are the ground of the Christian Religion, the Christian Faith. This faith is merely a *sentimental* faith. It is "the incipient experience of the satisfaction of that spiritual need by Christ" and is, therefore, an emotional, experiential faith. Even though it is acquired under the impulse of the Holy Spirit and the ecclesiastical symbols, still it cannot be demonstrated "by means of the Miracles, which He performs, or the Prophecies which predicted Him, or the special character of the testimonies originally borne to Him, regarded as the work of divine inspiration". "From all this it follows that, if faith in the Revelation of God in Christ, and in redemption through Him, has not already arisen in a direct way through experience, as the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, neither Miracles nor Prophecies can produce it, and moreover this faith would be just as unmovable even if Christianity had neither Prophecies nor Miracles to show". The New Testament writings in par-

Ground of
Christian Faith.

⁷⁰) *Ibid.*, p. 108. ⁷¹) *Ibid.*, p. 119. ⁷²) *Ibid.*, p. 315.

⁷³) Schleiermacher's *Werke*, 30 vols. 1834/64, vol. I, pp. 254-257; 269; 279-281. His "Reden über die Religion an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern". Berlin. 1799, has been rendered into English by John Oman under the title "On Religion", London. 1893.

ticular have been *inspired* by the Holy Ghost only in the sense that He is "the common spirit of the Church, and hence the source of all spiritual gifts and good works"; and "all thinking, so far as it pertains to the kingdom of God, must be traced back to and inspired by the spirit". These writings are *authentic* inasmuch as they are the genuine products of this common spirit, even though they come from other and later authors than those whose name they bear on their face.⁷⁴

Criticism.

Thus, Schleiermacher divorced faith from science and made a *judgment of credibility impossible*. And yet, despite this valedictory to traditional apologetics, he was unwilling to forego every defense of Christianity; therefore, he sought a new approach to apologetics, namely, through the *philosophy of religion*. He regarded apologetics as a branch of philosophical theology, and aimed at showing how Christianity is deduced from the universal concept of religion. By the help of his philosophy he hoped to establish the peculiar essence of Christianity, as contradistinguished from other kinds of faith, by presenting the differences, on the one hand, and by offering an insight into the details, on the other hand; thus, he hoped to strengthen the conviction as to the truth and divinity of the whole. This procedure, however, is *not a proof*, but merely an exposition, a characterization, of Christianity by means of the science of comparative religion. The sum-total of such an apology is not the unique character, the absolute truth, of Christianity, but only its *relative* value and excellence. A very meager result indeed; but whoever assumes with Schleiermacher that one's religious philosophy of life is not an objective mirror of real cosmic conditions, but purely the subjective product of one's own feelings and will, cannot accomplish more as an apologist.⁷⁵

⁷⁴) Schleiermacher, *Der christliche Glaube nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhang dargestellt*. Berlin. 1843, 1st Abt. Zur Theologie, I, § 14; § 130. 131. English translation of the second German edition. Edited by H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart. Edinburgh (T. & T. Clark), 1928, under the title: "*The Christian Faith*".

⁷⁵) Gislser, *ibid.*, p. 244.

3. The first attempt to establish a formal "System of Christian Certitude", on the basis of interior spiritual experience, was made by *Franz H. R. Frank* (d. 1894), a Lutheran theologian of the more conservative type. In his opinion the Reformation practically laid hold of the realities of the Christian Faith, but it left "unsolved" the question as to the *subjective* certitude of that Faith. His work seeks to come to the rescue.⁷⁶ Therefore, it claims to be the ground-work of the "System of Truth" and of the "System of Morality", hence Fundamental Theology. As such, however, it is not identical with apologetics, as some recent theologians would have it. Apologetics cannot ground the *fides divina* scientifically; it can only defend it against the attacks of adversaries. For Christianity is "foolishness" to the natural man and the convictions, to which natural reason can attain, are not only inadequate as compared with the Christian conviction, but also more or less in contradiction with it.⁷⁷ To make apologetics the science which grounds theology is in contradiction with the spirit of "evangelical theology".⁷⁸ Hence, apologetics is only a *practical theological* science. Not so the "System of Certitude". Its aim is not to beget the *fides divina*; rather it presupposes it, in order to raise it to gnosis.

What, then, is the *ultimate ground of the fides divina*? Frank answers: It is not the testimony of the Holy Spirit; rather it is the *spiritual experience of regeneration together with conversion* as a change of the old man into the new; hence, the "testimony of ourselves relative to our condition as Christians". That this new, spiritual man has the Holy Spirit, as efficient cause, must first derive its certainty from that effect.⁷⁹ It is possible that the new Ego of regeneration is already present before conversion, especially in the case of minors. It is only regeneration *with* conversion that is the ultimate ground of the certitude of the Christian Faith. According to Frank this spiritual experience is just as little subject to deception as the experience of bodily convalescence. And granting that instances might occur where the feeling of convalescence is deceptive, still they would constitute no valid argument against the feeling of genuine convalescence.⁸⁰ Finally, in and through this fundamental fact, namely, regeneration and conversion, all those facts and objects, which are *implied* and *assumed* in it, also

⁷⁶) *System der christlichen Gewissheit*. Erlangen. 2nd ed. 1881, 1884, I, 12. English transl. "*System of Christian Certainty*" by M. J. Evans. Edinburgh, 2nd ed. 1886.

⁷⁷) *Ibid.*, I, 20-26.

⁷⁹) *Ibid.*, 138-143.

⁷⁸) *Ibid.*, I, 37.

⁸⁰) *Ibid.*, I, 120-129.

acquire certitude.⁸¹ In other words, starting with "Christian Certitude" in the same sense as Schleiermacher, Frank essays the absolutely impossible task of deducing therefrom all the objects of Faith; in a very uncritical way he attempts to reconstruct the whole Lutheran dogmatics from the fundamental fact of regeneration and conversion.⁸²

Dorner.

4. *Isaac Aug. Dorner* (d. 1884) is also opposed to an external, authoritative and philosophical authentication of the Christian Faith, and seeks to ground it rather on inner mystic experience. He is not a Lutheran theologian like Frank, but a representative of the so-called "mediating" theology. He differs from Frank likewise in regard to the manner of grounding the *fides divina*. According to Frank the experience of regeneration and conversion guarantees the central certitude upon which all other Christian certitude depends; but regeneration and conversion—so Dorner objects—is continually in the making, and is not like justification "something entire and finished in its nature"; moreover, that principle is still too closely akin to Schleiermacher's conception and too subjective, since the consciousness of regeneration would be "semblance and fancy" only, unless it also directly contained God and Christ and the Holy Spirit bearing witness to Himself in us, as its objective ground: "There is an immediate knowledge of God, not only a secondary knowledge, which is first deducible by way of conclusion from effect to cause . . . We are not therefore certain of God, because we are conscious of ourselves (as regenerated and converted), but because we experience and know that God is in Christ for us, therefore, we know ourselves as redeemed".⁸³ A proximate ground for this difference of viewpoint is, that Dorner—obviously in stricter adhesion to the Reformation principle—regards salvific Faith as grounded upon *the experience of regeneration as a mere forgiveness of sin*, and not upon the experience of regeneration, conversion, sanctification, which follow upon it. Then too, Dorner conceives the fundamental certitude of the experience of salvation in an *ontologistic* and a *more intellectualistic* manner than Frank. "Without the Absolute", says Dorner, "there would be not only nothing infinite any more for man, but likewise there would be no knowledge of the finite as such, since without the contrast of the infinite the finite cannot be known".⁸⁴ If natural

⁸¹) Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 215, 216. ⁸²) Nitzsch-Stephan, *ibid.*, p. 49.
⁸³) *System der christlichen Glaubenslehre*. Berlin, 1886 (2^{ed.}), I, 40-41. English transl. "*System of Christian Doctrine*" by Prof. C. M. Mead and Rev. R. T. Cunningham. N. Y. 1887.

⁸⁴) *Ibid.*, I, 213.

experience already has the experience of God as its presupposition, likewise also in a higher sense the spiritual experience of Christ's saving Revelation. Religion is not a mere feeling, but also knowing and willing; there is need of an "objective norm" to which piety, to be perfect, must conform itself. This norm is to be sought for in knowledge; hence, feeling without knowledge is not religion, even though this knowledge must not be conceptual and scientific.⁸⁵ While this more *intellectualistic* conception of religion is doubtless superior to a mere emotional conception, its *ontologistic* background is decidedly of inferior value for the objective grounding of religion. Hence, the more recent Protestant theologians generally are opposed to Dorner's theory of Faith.⁸⁶

5. More recent writers insist that "*Christian experience covers the entire Christian life*, and not merely the initial act of conversion. It includes the operation in the Christian of all the incentives to activity and spiritual growth, the consolations in sorrow, the motives which lead to the broadening and deepening of the spiritual life, and the hopes for the future, which flow from the peculiarly Christian mode of regarding life and the world".⁸⁷ Its essential elements are said to be "1. The act of the will involved in repentance and faith; 2. the object of faith, God as revealed in Jesus Christ, Who is inwardly made known to the believer through the Holy Spirit; 3. the results in religious adjustment, moral reinforcement and intellectual peace. All these elements are not equally present in all experience", yet "conversion as thus analyzed is the great generic type and norm of religious experience".⁸⁸ Religious experience known as the new birth is the product of supernatural forces; these forces are personal; Jesus Christ as the Revealer of God to man actually works the change within man's nature; and the inner power and witness which he employs for this purpose is the Holy Spirit of God.⁸⁹

Mullins.

If one inquires: *How may Christian experience be verified?* Mullins replies that "this confirmation will in large measure consist of further experiences, rich and manifold in character . . . Sometimes the confirmation will refer to the new birth itself, at others to the divine forces which

⁸⁵) *Ibid.*, I, 545.

⁸⁶) Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 217; cf. Geo. M. Sauvage, art. "Ontologism", in CE, XI, p. 257 sq.

⁸⁷) E. Y. Mullins, *Why is Christianity True?* The American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia, Pa. 1905, p. 266. Italics inserted.

⁸⁸) *Ibid.*, p. 273.

⁸⁹) *Ibid.*, p. 287.

produce it, and sometimes to all these aspects together".⁹⁰ There is, in the first place, the principle of *contrast*. "In conversion one of the most radical and striking contrasts is introduced into experience". Secondly, "Christian experience is verified *through reflection*, which "makes reasonable the idea of the forgiveness of sin". *Assurance* is another phase. Through the new birth doubts, misgiving, and fears, cease and give way to a "deepening conviction and growing intensity of Faith". "Reflection also inevitably affects the Christian's view as to the *creative cause of experience*, the *Person of Christ*". Another test is the *workableness* of Christian experience *in practical life*. "Christian experience actually raises to a higher plane of moral power and attainment". It enables "its subject to rise above the ills of life". *Prayer* is a further verification. Then, too, Christian experience is verified by the *experience* of other Christians; also by "comparison with the earliest literature of the distinctively Christian experience, the New Testament". Finally, the verification through the *witness of the Holy Spirit*". "Every ray of the Spirit's light in the soul can be traced to Christ as the Revealer of God". "All the methods of the verification of Christian experience are progressive. Each re-inforces the other. The cumulative effect of them all produces immovable conviction. The gross result in moral and spiritual attainment is itself the solid basis of outward fact, which fortifies us against any imputation of self-deception. The inner basis of fact is our own experience of spiritual realities operating as causes. There is a mysterious, unexplained side of these inner realities. But the result is as tangible and real to us as that of a tree whose growth we observe, while every particle of material addition to it is as mysterious as life itself".⁹¹

Mullins repeats these same ideas in a later writing. "We accept the deity of Christ along with His humanity, not by authority, but by *discovery*. The lordship of Christ "has come to us by way of experience of His Grace working in us".⁹² Baptists accept the authority of the Scriptures "by the testimony of the Scriptures themselves and by the response of their own spiritual life"; they find that the Scriptures are the word of God. The Bible becomes a spiritual authority "by a spiritual process in which the whole relig-

⁹⁰) *Ibid.*, p. 287.

⁹¹) *Ibid.*, pp. 287-303; cf. also R. H. Fisher, *Religious Experience*. The Baird Lecture for 1924, N. Y., especially pp. 48-92.

⁹²) Mullins, "Why I am a Baptist", in *Twelve Modern Apostles and Their Creeds*. N. Y. 1926, pp. 92, 93.

ious nature of man is active, and in which the self-authenticating power of the Bible is felt".⁹³

6. *Julius Köstlin*, a representative of the "mediating" theology, assuming that reason as such cannot acquire a firm, undoubting knowledge of the existence of God,⁹⁴ contends that the ground of each and every ethical and religious conviction is *inner experience*, apart from metaphysical knowledge. It is a "*mystic*" experience of an emotional kind, "an immediate moving (*Berührtsein*) and stirring (*Ergriffensein*) of our inner self by the Divine, which is present to us in actual, historical Revelation, a perception of the Divine, an immediate consciousness of the impressions received here and now, and of the Divine, which now operates in them, a feeling, which, however, is wholly differentiated from the ordinary feelings of pleasure and pain, an experience, which has the characteristic of immediateness in common with ordinary sensible experiences, but which itself is a supersensible event, indeed a full experience at the center of one's own inner spiritual life". The moral as well as the religious conscience rests upon such a mystic emotional experience, superior to discursive reasoning; pre-Christian, and in a higher way also the Christian conscience, has its origin in such an experience.⁹⁵ Hence, the fact remains: there is no certitude of reality, which does not finally rest upon external and internal experience, upon a consciousness of the senses and of the inner, higher sense.⁹⁶

7. We see the criteria of mystic experience emphasized especially by the *Quakers*, who claim "to reduce religion to its essential traits, to an uttermost simplicity. They believe supremely in the nearness of God to the human soul, in direct intercourse and immediate communion, in mystical experience, in first-hand discovery of God".⁹⁷ Their principle is that "religion is something to be *done*, not a pious theory, or a creed in a book, or a set of notions to preach about". "They do not care much for the spectator theory of truth,—that it is something to be observed and rapturously viewed as an object. Nor do they approve that feeling-theory, that truth is something which produces emotional thrills. Truth is not really truth until you go out to do it, until it has 'motor-effects' and becomes the tissue and

⁹³) *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 94.

⁹⁴) *Die Begründung unserer sittlich-religiösen Überzeugung*. Berlin, 1893, pp. 28-30.

⁹⁵) *Ibid.*, p. 53 sq.

⁹⁶) *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁹⁷) Rufus Matthew Jones, *Why I am a Quaker*, in *Twelve Modern Apostles and their Creeds*. N. Y. 1926, p. 114.

fibre of a good life".⁹⁸ "The Quakers have always felt the weakness of tradition or antiquity as a basis of authority".⁹⁹ "The Quaker endeavors to apply the laboratory method to matters of religion. He asks always for the testimony and verification of experience". The truths of religion can be tested out best "in the laboratory of man's own soul and in the experiences of his own life".¹⁰⁰ They are convinced "that the foundations of faith stand sure because they are built upon the eternal structure of the human soul itself, because the most important facts of religion are facts of experience, and finally because everything that has spiritual significance can be tested and verified in the life of man as he lives in relation to God and in relation to his fellow-men".¹⁰¹

Ritschl. 8. The same problem of the relation between faith and knowledge, between science and religion, that Kant and Schleiermacher had faced, engaged the attention of *Albrecht Ritschl* (1822-1889). "He was governed by the same motive of reconciling them", says a modern Protestant writer, "and followed, in general, the same method of reconciliation. His solution of the problem consisted in a new definition of religion on the basis of Kant's and Schleiermacher's contributions. He combined with them, however, related suggestions from Herbart and Lotze. With Ritschl the philosophy of religion, which has steadily developed from Kant and the faith philosophers through Schleiermacher in the direction of a subjective, independent basis for religion, and of a sharp distinction between religious and scientific knowledge, has come to its final expression in a conception of religion as a 'value-theory'".¹⁰²

Ritschl denied to human reason the power of arriving at a scientific knowledge of God.¹⁰³ Consequently, for him religion cannot have an intellectual, but only a practical-moral foundation. "Religious knowledge is essentially distinct from scientific knowledge. It is not acquired by a theoretical insight into truth, but, as the product of religious faith, is bound up with the practical interests of the soul. *Religion is practise, not theory.* Knowledge and faith are not only distinct domains; they are independent of, and separated from, each other. While knowledge rests upon

⁹⁸) *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁹⁹) *Ibid.*, p. 119.

¹⁰⁰) *Ibid.*, pp. 120, 121.

¹⁰¹) *Ibid.*, p. 122.

¹⁰²) Errett Gates, *The Development of Modern Christianity*, in *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, ed. by G. B. Smith, Chicago, Ill., (Second Impression) 1917, pp. 456, 457.

¹⁰³) cf. Ritschl's *Theologie und Metaphysik*. Bonn. 1887 (2'ed.), pp. 7-40; *Die christliche Lehre von Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*. Bonn. 1888-1889 (3'ed.), pp. 16-20.

judgments of existence (*Seinsurteile*), faith proceeds on independent 'judgments of value' (*Werturteile*), which affirm nothing concerning the essence or nature of divine things, but refer simply to the usefulness and fruitfulness of religious ideas. Anticipating to some extent the principles of Pragmatism, put forward in a later generation by W. James, Schiller, etc., Ritschl declared that knowledge alone valuable, which in practice brings us forward. Not what the thing is 'in itself', but what it is 'for us', is decisive".¹⁰⁴

He is particularly opposed to a "mystic-metaphysical theory of knowledge", and an immediate union of the soul with God and Christ. He champions rather a *mediate* union of the soul, by means of the historical influences proceeding from the community and of the corresponding *functions* of the soul. "Without the medium of the word of God, which is Law and Gospel, and without the exact reminder of this personal Revelation in Christ, there is no personal relationship between a Christian and God". In his opinion the doctrine of Lutheran theology, expounded in the seventeenth century, regarding a mystic union of the soul with God is untenable.¹⁰⁵

Religion is for Ritschl "an interpretation of man's relation to God and the world, guided by the thought of the sublime power of God to realize the end of this blessedness of man . . . In every religion what is sought, with the help of the superhuman power revered by man, is a solution of the contradiction in which man finds himself, as both a part of the world of nature and a spiritual personality claiming to dominate nature".¹⁰⁶ Accordingly, the *ground* of religious faith is *the practical need of happiness*, and *the experience of satisfaction* which morality and religion offer for its fulfilment. In opposition to Kant, Ritschl grounds not only religion but also morality upon the feelings of pleasure and pain, through which man experiences either joy because of his

Judgments
of Value

¹⁰⁴) J. Pohle, art. "Ritschlianism", in CE. XIII, p. 87. Italics inserted.

¹⁰⁵) Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*. Bonn. 1880-1886, II, pp. 10-12, 29-32, 98-100; *Theologie und Metaphysik*, pp. 41-54.

¹⁰⁶) *Die christliche Lehre von Rechtfertigung etc.*, III, pp. 185, 189. English transl. "The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation". The positive development of the doctrine. By H. R. Mackintosh and A. B. Macaulay. Edinburgh. 1902 (2'ed.), pp. 194, 199.

dominion over the world by God's help, or pain because of the want of such help; therefore, in this sense upon *judgments of value*. He writes: "Religious knowledge moves in *independent* value judgments, which relate to man's attitude to the world, and call forth feelings of pleasure or pain, in which man enjoys the dominion over the world vouchsafed him by God, or feels grievously the lack of God's help to that end".¹⁰⁷ He is against making religion a "subordinate appendix to morality".¹⁰⁸ He agrees with Kant in rejecting a natural religion of theoretical or metaphysical reason, but he disagrees with him in that he repudiates a natural religion of the practical reason, for, he insists that religion comes about only through the medium of *positive Revelation*; for there never was a natural religion without positive doctrine and tradition; the Lutheran theologians adhering to Melancthon and Scholasticism have also erred like Kant in this respect. All religions were and are positive religions, the Christian Religion in the fullest measure.¹⁰⁹ Despite this *philosophical-practical* method of grounding the Faith in the Kantian sense, Ritschl exerted such a far-reaching influence in theological circles, particularly by reason of this approximation to Positivism.¹¹⁰

To Positive
Christian
Faith Through
the Church.

Ritschl does not seek to arrive at *positive Christian Faith* like Kant, through a *philosophico-practical* faith based on need; neither does he plan to come to Christ, and through Christ to the Church, like Schleiermacher, by means of a *subjective, experiential faith*. His approach to faith in Christ and His Gospel, and to trust in the forgiveness of sin, to divine sonship and beatitude, in the kingdom of God, Who is Love, is rather through the *ecclesiastical community*.

In the Ritschlian conception "justifying faith is possible only in the Christian community. The Church of Christ (by

¹⁰⁷) *Die christl. Lehre von Rechtfertigung etc.*, III, pp. 194-196; English transl., p. 205.

¹⁰⁸) *Ibid.*, III, 209. 215 foot-note.

¹⁰⁹) *Ibid.*, III, pp. 185-193; *Theologie und Metaphysik*, pp. 65-66.

¹¹⁰) Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 219.

which, however, is to be understood no external institution with legal organization) is, on the one hand, the aggregate of all the justified believers, but, on the other hand, has, as the enduring fruit of the work of Christ, a duration and existence prior to all its members, just as the whole is prior to its parts. Like the children in the family and the citizens in the state, all believers must also be born in an already existing Christian community. In this alone is God preached and in this alone, through the preaching of Christ and His work, is that justifying faith rendered possible, in virtue of which the individual experiences regeneration and attains to adoption as a son of God . . . Since the Christian Faith exists only through personal experience, or subjective acquaintance with justification and reconciliation, the objects of faith are not presented to the mind from without through a Divine Revelation as an authoritative rule of faith, but become vividly present for the Christian only through subjective experience. The revelation of God is given only to the believer who religiously lays hold of it by experience and recognizes it as such".¹¹¹

This approach to Faith is perhaps the reason why, in the second and third edition of his work on "Justification and Reconciliation", Ritschl stresses and puts into the foreground not a *philosophical-practical* method of proof, but rather a *theological-mystic* proof in the anti-Kantian sense¹¹² after the manner of Spener. Theology, so Ritschl writes, cannot enter upon either a direct or an indirect proof of the truth of Christianity, in that it seeks to demonstrate its harmonization with any philosophical or juristic view of life. For Christianity stands really in opposition to these . . . The scientific proof for its truth will have to be sought for along the line of thought already excellently stated by Spener. Whoever fulfils the will of God, will know that Christ's message is true (John vii, 17). Still, the ground of the Christian Faith is only an experience, through the soul's reaction, of the salvific operations of God's word coming from without; it is not, however, a secret union with God in the ground of the soul itself, that is, not a *unio mystica*. Hence, in this *stricter* sense Ritschl's doctrine disclaims the appellation of "mystic".¹¹³

¹¹¹) J. Pohle, art. "Ritschlianism", in CE. XIII, p. 87. Italics inserted. cf. A. E. Garvie, *The Ritschlian Theology*. Edinburgh, 1889, which according to R. Mackintosh is the "standard work".

¹¹²) Kant's *Werke*, ed. Rosenkrantz. X, 310-311.

¹¹³) Ritschl, *Die christliche Lehre von Rechtfertigung etc.*, (2'ed., 1882-1883; 3'ed., 1888-1889, pp. 20-25.

In other words, just as many philosophers of modern emotional religion generally regard the religious feeling as an immediate experience, or laying hold, of the Deity, hence, not as a practical feeling of value, but rather as a kind of mystic knowledge, so, too, in Ritschl and many of his pupils we note a similar *ambiguity*. On the one hand, Ritschl says that the judgments of value, which go to make up the kernel of religious knowledge, have their motive solely in the *feeling* of value, which the objects arouse in the believer; and, on the other hand, he calls the origin of faith also an *inner experience*, thus, passing over to the other interpretation of feeling.¹¹⁴

Kaftan. 9. *Julius Kaftan* essays to define more exactly the relation between the *philosophical-practical* and the *theological-experiential* method of grounding the Faith, in that he attributes only to the latter the power of engendering certitude. Already the feelings and the will, so he writes, and the striving after well-being; direct theoretical knowledge and enable man to find satisfaction in morality and religion, and finally in a *rational speculation* according to *practical norms*. This, however, has nothing to do with subjective mood and arbitrariness, but "is in its way just as objective as the theoretical function of any science", even though with its judgments of value it does not possess such a compelling force as science and, purely as such, does not pass beyond a merely rational postulate, hypotheses, proofs of probability.¹¹⁵ Rational postulates of a kingdom of God offer only *probability*; *certitude* arises only through the Revelation of this kingdom of God in Christianity, and through the preaching of the justifying and reconciling love of God made known to us by that Revelation: "The subjective need in itself engenders no certitude, and just as little does the latter spring from the acceptance on authority of an objectively existing Revelation. Only where the subjective need lays hold of Revelation, as objectively given and self-announcing, is such certitude attained".¹¹⁶ Only thus does rational speculation pass beyond mere rational postulates and hypotheses, mere conjectures and probabilities, and arrive at a full *apologetic* proof of the reality of that kingdom of God in Christianity as the grounding of dogmatics.¹¹⁷ Thus, apologetics and the System of Christian Certitude are not separated from each other, as in Frank's

¹¹⁴) J. Mausbach, *Die Religion und das moderne Seelenleben*, in RCK. I, pp. 81-82.

¹¹⁵) *Die Wahrheit der christlichen Religion*. Basel. 1888, pp. 393-440. English transl. "The Truth of the Christian Religion", by Geo. Ferris. Edinburgh. 1894, 2 vols.

¹¹⁶) *Ibid.*, pp. 549-553. ¹¹⁷) *Ibid.*, pp. 490 sq; 547-554; 569-571.

system, but they are regarded as one and the same for the purpose of laying this foundation of Faith.¹¹⁸

10. *Richard Lipsius* opposed this positivistic conception of Revelation, which Kaftan assumed as regards Ritschl and his school. With Fr. A. Lange he also championed the neo-Kantian theory of knowledge. *Knowledge* comes only through internal and external experience; over and above this, there are only ideal conceptions of *speculative reason*, winged by fancy, and the *practical* experiences of truth that satisfy the feelings. Like morality, religion, too, owes its origin to the "self-assertiveness of man in the face of the external natural world"; to that extent moral and religious ideas are like two branches of a *common root*. Religion has as its presupposition the Revelation of God; both are correlative concepts. To both sides of *subjective religion*—piety and faith—there correspond *objectively*, as aspects of Revelation, manifestation in nature and history, and inspiration within the spirit.¹¹⁹ But faith in Revelation does not come into being, so Lipsius thinks, merely in an external way, through the spirit of Christ forever operating in the community, but also in an internal manner, through the authentication of Revelation within ourselves by the testimonium Spiritus Sancti, by an immediate touching of our spirit by the Holy Spirit and the unio mystica with Him.¹²⁰ As regards content, Lipsius' theology largely coincides with the "liberal theology" of Ritschl.¹²¹

11. In France, *Auguste Sabatier* (d. 1909), Dean of the Protestant theological faculty at Paris, stirred up much interest and exerted a wide-spread influence, even in many circles of Catholics in France, by his theology, which in many points manifests contact with the theology of Ritschl, Kaftan, and Lipsius. Sabatier's method of grounding the Faith is partly a philosophical-practical in the neo-Kantian sense, and partly also a theological-mystic method, although the distinction between the two methods is not always clearly discernible.

The opposition between the theoretical and the practical reason, between nature and the spirit, between cosmic and

¹¹⁸) A. v. Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 221.

¹¹⁹) cf. Lipsius, *Dogmatik*. Braunschweig. 1879 (2^{ed.}); *Theologische Prinzipienlehre*, § 16-17; *Neue Beiträge zur wissenschaftlichen Grundlegung der Dogmatik*, I-V, in *Jahrbücher der prot. Theol.* 1885, pp. 177 sq.

¹²⁰) cf. Lipsius, *Dogmatische Beiträge zur Verteidigung und Erläuterung meines Lehrbuches*. Leipzig. 1878, pp. 16-17; *Ritschl'sche Theologie*. Leipzig. 1888, pp. 24-25.

¹²¹) A. v. Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 221.

self-consciousness, is to be resolved according to him by religion in the *heart* of man. Essentially this is a religion of the heart or the feelings. It arises from the practical need of protection in the face of the limitations and the threats of the physical world, from the initial contradiction of the inner life of man. "All human development springs from religion and ends with it. Art, morals, science itself, fade and waste away, if this supreme inspiration be wanting to them".¹²² Confidence in God's assistance, and the intercourse of the heart with God through prayer, are the vital pulse of religion.¹²³ Natural religion is not a religion, because "it deprives man of prayer; it leaves God and man at a distance from each other".¹²⁴ "In all piety there is some positive manifestation of God. The ideas of religion and Revelation are, therefore, correlative and religiously inseparable. Religion is simply the subjective Revelation of God in man, and Revelation is religion objective in God".¹²⁵ Revelation is supernatural in cause, natural in its realization and appropriation. There are not two Revelations: different in nature and opposed to each other. "Revelation is one, in different forms and various degrees. It is at once supernatural and natural: supernatural by the cause which engenders it in souls, and which, always remaining invisible and transcendent, never exhausts or imprisons itself in the phenomena it produces; natural, by its effects, because, realizing itself in history, it always appears therein conditioned by the historical environment and by the common laws which regulate the human mind".¹²⁶

Miracles are not the criteria of Divine Revelation.¹²⁷ "It is nonsense to demand a criterion of evangelical Revelation other than itself, any other evidence, *i. e.*, than its own truth, beauty, and efficiency".¹²⁸ "Only one criterion is sufficient and infallible: every Divine Revelation, every religious experience fit to nourish and sustain your soul, must be able to repeat and continue itself as an actual Revelation and an individual experience in your own consciousness".¹²⁹ "Instead of reasoning we have here to live, to experience, and to test".¹³⁰

¹²²) *Esquisse d'une philosophie de la religion*. Paris. 1897. We quote from the English translation *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*. (N. Y. Geo. H. Doran Co.; 2nd ed.), pp. 13-27.

¹²³) *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹²⁴) *Ibid.*, p. 30.

¹²⁵) *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹²⁶) *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹²⁷) *Ibid.*, pp. 48 sq.

¹²⁸) *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹²⁹) *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹³⁰) Sabatier *The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*. Transl. by Louise S. Houghton, N. Y., 1904, p. 240.

Sabatier teaches that we must distinguish between the Christian Revelation and the Sacred Scriptures, which are its documents; "the word of God is in the Bible, but all the Bible is not the word of God". This sharp distinction is an inalienable achievement of modern theology.¹³¹ All religious knowledge of the truths of Divine Revelation is inadequate, symbolic. Under all things lies hidden mystery. "Who says symbol says at the same time occultation and Revelation". This is the symbolism of philosophy and theology,¹³² and in this respect Sabatier approximates the doctrine of Lipsius.¹³³

For Sabatier, therefore, Faith is an act of liberation from inner division and oppression, a bold *salto vitale*, not only dependence; as regards content, it is a practical feeling, an act of confidence, not a proof.¹³⁴

12. *Wm. Ralph Inge*, Dean of St. Paul's in London, ^{Inge.} England, believes that "the Gospel of Christ is the *religion of the Spirit* in its purest form". "It is not modern, but older than Catholicism and much older than Protestantism. It goes back to the New Testament, and we may even say to Christ Himself, Whose 'secret and method', as Matthew Arnold said, were the necessity of 'dying to live', and inwardness".¹³⁵ It is "distinguished by its friendly attitude towards secular culture, by its insistence on divine immanence, by its resolute determination to find the seat of authority, not in tradition, or in the arbitrary commands of God, or in an external and supernatural Revelation, but in the *heart and mind of man, illuminated by the Spirit of Christ*. This illumination must be earned, or rather prepared for, by a strenuous course of discipline. The religious life begins with *faith*, which has been defined by Frederick Myers as *the resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis. This venture of the will and conscience progressively verifies itself as we progress on the upward path. That which began as an experiment ends as an experience*".¹³⁶ In this religion of the Spirit "the infallibilities are gone, the infallible Church as well as the infallible book. Nor can we trust to the Inner Light as the old Quakers did . . . As for the old proof from *Miracle and Prophecy*, we now see that, even if the fact could be established, they

¹³¹) *Outlines etc.*, pp. 51-53.

¹³²) *The Religions of Authority etc.*, pp. 322, 326.

¹³³) Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 222, 223.

¹³⁴) Mausbach, *Die Religion etc.*, I, p. 82.

¹³⁵) *The Future of Christianity*, in *Twelve Modern Apostles and Their Creeds*. N. Y. 1926, pp. 14, 12, 13.

¹³⁶) *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13.

would not carry the weight which the old apologetics placed on them. . . We are in fact driven back upon the *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti, the witness of the spiritual life to itself*. And it is enough".¹³⁷

Söderblom.

13. Finally, in modern times there is a marked tendency to substitute for Schleiermacher's "feeling of absolute dependence", a feeling of power, of trust, of moral freedom, of peace. In this interpretation of "feeling" it is not difficult for theologians to approximate more closely to Luther's doctrine of fiducial faith.¹³⁸ Thus, Nathan Söderblom, late Archbishop of Upsala, Sweden, claims in the first place that he is a Lutheran because he owes to his section of the Church "an overwhelming sense of the greatness of God's free grace as granting forgiveness and peace to the troubled human heart and saving men from perdition, not through their own perishable endeavors and observances and works, but through faith in Jesus Christ."¹³⁹

SUMMARY.

1. Let us now summarize the various viewpoints elaborated in the preceding pages. The advocates of modern emotional religion, like the voluntarists, separate faith from science and seek to construct the certitude of Faith upon non-rational grounds. They appeal to the subjective criterion of *Christian experience*, which may be described in general as "the state or condition produced in the mental, moral and spiritual nature of man, when he conforms to the conditions which Christianity declares to be necessary to union and fellowship with God. To experience is to learn by 'practical trial or proof'; 'to try or prove by use, by suffering, or enjoyment' ".¹⁴⁰ But the precise manner in which this Christian experience takes place is *variously interpreted*. For instance, it is said to consist in "the feeling of the need of redemption, and the feeling of redemption through Christ" (*Schleiermacher*); "the spiritual experience of regener-

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 18.

¹³⁸ Mausbach, *Die Religion und das moderne Seelenleben*, in RCK, I, p. 82.

¹³⁹ *Why I am a Lutheran*, in *Twelve Modern Apostles and Their Creeds*, pp. 78, 79.

¹⁴⁰ E. Y. Mullins, *Why is Christianity True?* Philadelphia, Pa. 1905, p. 266; cf. Stearns *The Evidence of Christian Experience*, which according to some is the standard work along this line.

ation together with conversion" (*Frank*); "the experience of regeneration as a mere forgiveness of sin" (*Dorner*); "the inner witness vouchsafed to the penitent and inquiring sinner by the Holy Ghost, through the teaching of the Scriptures, assuring him of truth, pardon and salvation through Jesus Christ" (*Keyser*);¹⁴¹ "a spiritual process in which the *whole* religious life of man is active, and in which the self-authentication of the Bible is felt" (*Mullins*); "a feeling of value, which faith in God's saving grace in Christ brings to the soul" (*Ritschl, Garvie*); "an experience of our subjective need of justification and reconciliation, and the subjective laying hold of salvific Revelation by Faith" (*Kaftan*); "an experience by which we feel that Revelation nourishes and sustains the soul" (*Sabatier*); "an experience of our own spiritual life witnessing to itself" (*Inge*). Or this experience is interpreted not so much as a practical feeling of value, as rather "an experience of being immediately touched and stirred by the Divine" (*Köstlin*); and a "unio mystica with the Divine" (*Lipsius*); "a direct intercourse and immediate union, in mystical experience, in a first-hand discovery" (*Quakers*); in other words, as a kind of mystical knowledge.

2. Some seek to come to Christ and *through Christ* to the Church on the basis of this sentimental faith; others, however, wish to arrive at faith in Christ *through the Church*, and the historical elements of Christianity; others finally, *through the laboratory of man's own soul*, and the experiences of his own life (*Quakers*), entirely apart from commentaries or the authority of priests.

3. As regards the *verification* of Christian experience there is a variety of interpretation; for instance, appeal is made "to the self-authentication of the Sacred Scriptures as subjectively felt by the believer", or to "the witness of the spiritual life itself", or to the "experience of countless other people", or to "the witness of the Holy Spirit", or to "the workableness of Christian

¹⁴¹ Leander S. Keyser, *A System of Christian Evidence*. Burlington, Iowa. 1924 (3rd ed.), p. 130.

experience in practical life" etc., in other words, generally to *further experiences*.

However, it must be noted that the appeal to Christian experience is *not* regarded as the *exclusive* criterion of modern Protestantism. Many have recourse also to the Person of Jesus Christ, to His supernatural character, His moral grandeur, His Miracles and Prophecies, especially His Resurrection, and to the evidence from the history of Christianity. Generally speaking, however, modern Protestants either wholly discard the external tokens, particularly Miracles, or insist that "Miracles are not the chief evidence of Christianity and the proof of Revelation";¹⁴² the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit "impinging directly on the believer's consciousness, is more convincing than outward Miracles would be; it is, indeed, the final proof for the individual who receives it".¹⁴³ Thus, external criteria are either entirely ignored, or at least relegated to a secondary place as evidences of Christian certitude. The *primacy of value* is accorded to "inner Christian experience" as the test of credibility.

Protestants give primacy of value to this feeling. We give a place to it but not first place.

CRITICISM

It doesn't begit certitude; not a rational basis.

Subjective Experience no Substitute for Objective Grounds of Faith.

1. In every system of religious thought there are kernels of *truth intermingled with patent errors*. So, too, in the subject under consideration. The Catholic apologist freely admits that Faith, as a moral and supernatural act, includes the elevating and gracious impressions, which the advocates of modern emotional religion stress so emphatically. But he dissents from the erroneous evaluation placed by modern Protestantism upon these subjective experiences. These latter are *not substitutes* for the objective grounds of Faith. They *prepare* the way for the act of Faith by *opening* the mind and the heart to attend to the *objective grounds* of belief,

¹⁴²) Mullins, *ibid.*, p. 182.

¹⁴³) Keyser, *ibid.*, p. 132.

as Catholic theologians have often indicated.¹⁴⁴ Then too, at times these subjective impressions may be so strong, that they may function as reflexive motives of certitude. However, they are *not the real ground and support of faith*,¹⁴⁵ as will appear from the following considerations.

2. We note among the advocates of a religion of the heart and feelings an intermingling of two lines of thought; for clarity's sake we shall treat them separately.

a) Some regard the *religious feeling* as an expression of the *soul's need*, an acknowledgment of creatural misery, emptiness, dependence, yearning for higher light and assistance. In its whole tone and tendency it reminds one of Kant's postulates of practical reason, as well as of the standards which Pragmatism applies to religious truth. But it avoids the conceptual element, the abstract side of Kant's postulates; a simple act of the soul, indescribable and mysterious in character, a feeling, a sigh, a surrender of the heart, takes the place of all the reflections of reason and of all the considerations of the will; in fact, it suffices to make the receptive soul regard that need as actually satisfied, and to believe in the Infinite, in a harmony of the cosmic forces, in a blessed consummation and a good God.—However, precisely because of this obscure and purely subjective character, the feelings just described are even less capable than Kant's postulates of communicating with certitude the highest and most luminous thought content, namely, the existence of God. No one will deny, of course, that the vision of human misery, the feeling of painful abandonment and the fervent desire for happiness, prepare the way for Faith, and accompany the initial manifestations of religious certitude. But they do not generate *certitude itself*. Indeed the struggle of the inquirer and doubter is rather an evident sign that real religion is not yet pres-

¹⁴⁴) cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Quodlib.* q. 2. a. 6, where he speaks of an "inner vocation" of God as a help to faith; cf. also Origen, *Contra Celsum*, I, 46; Suarez, *De Fide* disp. 4, s. 6, n. 4.

¹⁴⁵) J. Mausbach, *Grundzüge der katholischen Apologetik*. Münster i. W. 1921 (3rd-4th ed.), p. 23.

ent within the soul; it comes actually only when truth, the certitude of the Divine, enters into the mind in some way that is capable of communicating reality. The strongest need of the soul does not, of itself, bring a comforter and helper; the most consuming hunger does not supply nourishment. How vain, then, to imagine that in the religious sphere the heart "can create its own God" in accordance with its deepest wishes and yearnings! And when the feelings take on a religious character (e. g., the feeling of dependence on God and the wish to be near Him), obviously the real concept of God is already present in the soul; therefore, religion is already theoretically grounded. But the very general feelings, which these philosophers regard as the source of the knowledge of God, the yearning for a unified purpose and consummation of being, for a moral, blissful perfection of the Ego, are quite incapable of functioning as proofs of religious facts; they are also too empty and indefinite to be able to overcome, in times of difficult struggle, the sensual impulses of life and to supply the comfort, which the soul needs in those trying times.¹⁴⁶

b) Other advocates of emotional religion interpret the religious sentiments rather as *feelings of freedom and joy*, of power and certitude, of "espousal".¹⁴⁷ As Wm. James puts it: "The time of tension in our soul is over, that of happy relaxation, of calm deep breathing, of an eternal present, with no discordant future to be anxious about, has arrived. Fear is not held in abeyance as it is by mere morality, it is positively expunged and washed away".¹⁴⁸—Such moods of the soul are indeed a

¹⁴⁶) J. Mausbach, *Die Religion und das moderne Seelenleben*, in RCK. I, pp. 82, 83.

¹⁴⁷) Wm. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 47, 48: "Like love, like wrath, like hope, ambition, jealousy, like every other instinctive eagerness and impulse, it (religion) adds to life an enchantment which is not rationally or logically deducible from anything else . . . Religious feeling is thus an absolute addition to the Subject's range of life. It gives him a new sphere of power . . . If religion is to mean anything definite for us, it seems to me that we ought to take it as meaning this added dimension of emotion, this enthusiastic temper of espousal, in religions where morality strictly so called can at best but bow its head and acquiesce".

¹⁴⁸) *Ibid.*, p. 47.

If man
hunger for
God, for
religion, only
extinction from
his appetite.

Accompanying
religion
Most common
merely fruits
of religion

frequent and precious accompanying phenomenon of religious certitude; but *they do not constitute its essence*. They play about our thinking and willing like "sacred music", but so long as the text of the hymn, the thoughts and hopes, announce nothing of the true, living God, this music is not "sacred"; this "enthusiastic temper of espousal" might just as truly be termed secular as religious. These sentiments of happy power and peace presuppose the possession of the genuine faith, the inner fullness of divine powers; they are tokens and fruits of a life in God rather than its grounds and essence.

Perhaps the depth and energy of such feelings cannot be exhausted on rational and logical grounds; perhaps their fervor and cordiality oftentimes far outstrip our powers of description; still, that does not mean that they hang in the air "without an object", or that their underlying thought may be false as well as true. The blissful and peace-bringing element of religion is grounded upon the conviction, that we are dealing with no mere figment of the imagination, but with the highest realities, which, in content and value, far surpass the narrow circle of our experience. Only such an earnest and decisive faith, not a timid and broken faith, is able to pour the balm of consolation into man's heart. But whence can faith obtain this certitude, if the feelings, which are really the effects of faith, are also supposed to constitute its essential groundwork and support?¹⁴⁹ Obviously, therefore, unless one wishes arbitrarily to pass off purely secular feelings for religious feelings, one must unquestionably concede to religion a certain, characteristic *thought content*.¹⁵⁰

Thus, a *faulty theory of religion* lies at the basis of modern emotional religion.

3. Let us now consider this same concept of religion in its relation to the *Christian Faith*.

The *older* Theology of the orthodox Lutheran and Reformed confessions grounded the *fides divina* in God's sav-

¹⁴⁹) J. Mausbach, *ibid.*, I, p. 84.

¹⁵⁰) *Ibid.*, p. 85.

How do you
know it is
a religious
feeling?
If thought
of God is
behind this
feeling then
rationality
entire!

Theory of Christian Experience
Leads to Various
Difficulties and
Contradictions.

ing Revelation, and in the divine inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, as the documents of Revelation, upon an inner experience of the heart or feelings; but it left unsolved the problem as to whether and how that experience might serve as the ground of Christian certitude. On the other hand, modern Theology of the positive believing type, such as is reflected especially in Frank's "System of Christian Certitude", has come to realize that the inner experience consists of certain subjective movements or impressions, which have been awakened by the external preaching of the word of faith. Consequently, it insists that the fides divina relative to the objects of faith must assume those experimental facts as its starting point, if it is to arrive at certitude. It begins, therefore, with *creatural, experiential* facts.

a) The proximate experiential fact stressed by many advocates of the theory of "emotional religion" is the soul's *need of salvation*. A desiderium innatum, an innate desire of salvation, is said to have resided already in the hearts of our first parents. But we ask: Does *fallen, spoiled human nature* still possess such a desire? Or is the contradiction of fallen nature to all the higher or so-called spiritual things so strong, that we are compelled to ascribe the desire for these blessings *exclusively* to the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, Who makes man's heart receptive of the external preaching of salvific Revelation, and bears witness to it in the soul? Orthodox Protestant Theology either did not raise this question at all, or answered it in various ways according to the diverse conceptions of sinful human nature.

b) Others emphasize rather the emotional impressions of freedom and bliss, of peace and assurance, which *satisfy the soul's need of salvation*, as the bridge leading to the fides divina. Again we ask: How does the Holy Spirit manifest Himself to the individual, as the Witness of the truth of God's saving word, by means of these subjective impressions? Is it perhaps in virtue of an immediate vision of the Spirit in the sense of Theosophy, or even of Ontologism? This type of theology would be the first to disclaim any such allegation. The only way in which the Holy Spirit can reveal Himself to the individual, as the Witness of Revelation, according to these

How about
Indifference?

Intellect as sought-in principle of causality.

theologians is by virtue of the *principle of causality*. Solely by reason of this *rational principle* is it possible either to *deny* that these impressions are natural, or to *affirm* that they are supernatural and divine, and thus to arrive at salvific Faith through those experiences.¹⁵¹ Therefore, in the end this type of theology must appeal to other than purely emotional grounds of belief.

c) Moreover, there are other difficulties to be solved by this *orthodox* type of modern Protestant Theology. In the first place, there is the question as to whether and how a *Divine* faith can arise from such facts of *creatural* experience. Then, too, this Divine faith, as understood by these Protestants, implies that God graciously *declares* every one *just and righteous*, who trustingly accepts the message of Revelation, even though *such a one is not really just and righteous*, even though such a one *remains* in his inner self *the same sinner as before*.¹⁵² But how can God's word be trusted, if He is not faithful to His word; if through grace He *pronounces* a person *just and righteous*, but *does not really* by His grace *make him just and righteous*? Finally, this Divine Faith is said to arise solely on the basis of an experience of the *heart or feelings*; but the facts or impressions of such an experience, even though they be divine and supernatural in origin, cannot constitute an *objective ground* of the certitude of Divine faith.¹⁵³

4: Experiential facts of moral reinforcement and intellectual peace, the workableness of Christian experience, the *moral power* of religious faith, can be verified only after a *long and faithful testing*. How, then, can they be reckoned among the motives, which influence a person in his *first* decision to embrace the faith?¹⁵⁴

5. The mystic experience of modern Protestantism may also take the form of *feelings of value*, as appears in the Ritschlian school of theology. We have already

Christian Experience Not First Step to Faith.

Unfaithful to Faith!

Judgments of Value Alone Powerless to Guarantee Basic Facts of Christianity.

How is value in itself?

¹⁵¹) A. v. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 239, 240.

¹⁵²) cf. J. Möhler, *Symbolism*, English transl. by Robertson, p.110.

¹⁵³) A. v. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 240, 241.

¹⁵⁴) Mausbach, *Grundzüge etc.*, p. 23.

touched upon this viewpoint in a general way above;¹⁵⁵ let us now consider it more in detail. Judgments of feeling are *judgments of value*,—which only tell us what the object is “for us”, not what it is “in itself” (*judgments of existence*). Such judgments can indeed accompany the latter, without being themselves judgments of existence; emotional value is not *eo ipso* entitative value. M. Scheibe rightly remarks: “The ground for judging the value of objects can lie only within ourselves; the norms must have their seat and origin within ourselves”. “The norms and values of approval and disapproval, of preference and rejection, we can become conscious of only in feelings of pleasure and pain. Hence, judgments of value do not express what the object is *in itself*, but what it is *for us*”.¹⁵⁶ We realize, of course, that Ritschlians insist that judgments of value “do not even implicitly deny the existence of the object but assume it; and so there is *no opposition of judgments of value and judgments of existence*”. They assume “the historical value of the Revelation in Christ”; the purpose of the value-judgment is “to show how the reality is apprehended”. Hence, they maintain that the value-judgment is not “a substitute for the necessary historical inquiry regarding the reality of the object of Christian faith—Jesus Christ—as fact”; and neither is it “an escape from the obligation to strive for a metaphysic which will give to Christian faith its appropriate intellectual content”.¹⁵⁷ However, thanks to their neo-Kantian theory of knowledge, Ritschlians must deny to speculative reason the power of acquiring certain knowledge. “Spiritual things”, so they insist, “are spiritually discernible”, and “scientific knowledge, and logical understanding, and speculative reason, do not of themselves give moral insight or spiritual vision. A man must be living the religious life to be able to test what is, or what is not

¹⁵⁵ cf. above, 126 sq.

¹⁵⁶ *Die Bedeutung der Werturteile für das religiöse Erkennen*. Halle, 1893, pp. 26-27.

¹⁵⁷ A. E. Garvie, *A Handbook of Christian Apologetics*. N. Y. 1923, pp. 48, 49. Italics inserted.

If Christ did not live and die all these
 things are hallucinations. Reason must show
 His objective validity.
 Criticism

religious truth”. However, approach to Christianity along the path of historical inquiry alone can beget at most only “a judgment of probability”. “Whether there is recorded and interpreted in the Holy Scriptures the Revelation of unique significance, supreme value, absolute authority, and final sufficiency, is a question which neither historical learning nor philosophical insight can answer, but only the personal experience of Christ’s coming into contact and communion with the soul in Christ”.¹⁵⁸ What is this except the confession that the ultimate test of faith is a personal experience resting, *not on rational grounds*, but on the emotional side of man’s nature? But to surrender the theoretical knowledge of things, and to try to build the edifice of faith on the foundations of practical feelings, is, apart from the viewpoint of epistemology, a very dubious method. Judgments of value, which do not rest upon previous *theoretical judgments* of knowledge, having *objective and universal validity*, do not suffice to authenticate with certainty the content of the Christian Revelation, inasmuch as it comprehends eternal truths; far less even, in so far as it implicates truths of the temporal and historical order. How can value-judgments guarantee the great basic facts of that Revelation, unless they be strengthened by reasons grounded in *facts*? How can such judgments demonstrate that in Christ, God’s power of forgiving sin and His gracious loving will, have revealed themselves; that, therefore, the consciousness of the Christian community and the testimony of the Scriptures in regard to the work and the person of Christ, are not mere pious sentiments, to which there corresponds no reality? How can all this be authenticated with certitude by merely emotional experiences and judgments of feeling? These difficulties Protestant theology has not been able to overcome in a thorough and satisfying manner.

Ethical, esthetic and religious feelings of value are indeed also “judgments of existence”; but they are

¹⁵⁸ Garvie, *ibid.*, p. 49.

based upon *subjective* grounds of feeling; consequently, they have value only for the *individual*; they are not of *universal* value. In consequence, they can all too easily become the prey of *illusions*,¹⁵⁹ as the *history* of the mystical theories of faith among Protestants shows from the Reformation period to our own days. All religious enthusiasts appeal to the experience of extraordinary joy and peace; and yet, they may be rejoicing in vain images of their phantasy; *vice versa*, very many genuine believers do not experience such impressions, while reflecting upon the "good news" of Christ's message. Obviously, therefore, there are also *false* feelings or experiences. Hence, there must be a criterion at hand, which will enable one to discern the genuine from the false in religious experience. Surely, it argues a great disregard for the position of the ἡγεμονικόν within us, to allow the feelings, nay more, even the sensible feelings, to act as the guide of reason, when it is the function of reason to judge of the value of the feelings.¹⁶⁰ Consequently, to guard against illusions the judgments of feeling, value-judgments, must have as their groundwork *judgments of knowledge*, which can truly lay claim to a certainty that excludes every reasonable doubt. On the basis of the feelings and emotional experience alone, it is impossible ever to rear a certain religious knowledge and a certain religious science (philosophy of religion, apologetics, dogmatics).¹⁶¹

Subjective Experience Leads to Disintegration of Revealed Religion.

6. In point of fact, apologetic *subjectivism* has led to the progressive *disintegration* of historical Christianity.¹⁶² This is apparent especially in the *Liberal* type of modern Protestant Theology, which has, to a large extent, adulterated and abandoned the distinction between natural and supernatural Divine Revelation, between natural and supernatural Faith. It no longer regards faith in salvific Revelation as a *fides divina*, a super-

159) Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 238.

160) Gutberlet, *ibid.*, II, pp. 100, 101.

161) Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 238.

162) Mausbach, *Grundzüge etc.*, p. 23.

natural Divine Faith, but rather as a *human* belief in *Divine* Revelation. It has more or less attenuated the content of the Christian Revelation, surrendered the divine inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, and based faith upon a *theological* emotional *experience*, and partly also upon a *philosophical-practical* foundation in the neo-Kantian sense. Like orthodoxy it conceives justifying faith as a trust in the Saviour God, Who in Christ places grace at our disposal and applies it to us despite our sins; but, contrary to orthodox theology, it refuses to regard the *intellectual* acts of knowing and assenting, as included in the essence of faith, or as the necessary preliminary steps to it.

However, Liberal Theology like orthodoxy must face the question: How does the individual arrive at objective certitude as regards the feelings of sin and guilt, and the need of salvation? How can the individual, independently of *theoretical* knowledge and proofs, of all *historical* and *metaphysical* science, acquire the saving certitude of a supermundane God, of His veracity and gracious will, of the person of Christ forever living in the consciousness of the community, as the Revealer and Mediator of this gracious will, and of the divine pardon, despite sin, and of eternal beatitude? *Nolens volens*, Liberal Theology must grant that the certitude of salvation, as a *trust (fiducia)* in the grace that has been made ours by justification, implies or presupposes a *knowledge* and a *holding as true* of the aforesaid facts and doctrines of salvation (*notitia et assensus*), even though it does not acknowledge, in the orthodox sense, the Trinity of God and the divinity of Christ, Miracles and the vicarious atonement, the divine inspiration of the Bible, etc. As orthodox theology rests its assent as regards the facts and doctrines of salvation, *not* indeed upon *intellectual* grounds, but rather upon the basis of their *satisfying* power and efficacy, so, too, Liberal Theology must base its assent upon the same grounds, despite the abbreviated content of its faith. Like orthodox theology it must answer the question: Whether a *certitude* of salvation,

grounded only upon an experience of the *heart* or *feelings*, is not an insufficiently motivated certitude, hence, a mere semblance of certitude.¹⁶³

Christian Experience as an Immediate Consciousness of God.

7. A final interpretation of modern emotional religion remains to be considered, namely, the viewpoint of those Protestants who speak of arriving at religious certitude by means of an *immediate consciousness*, an *experience*, of the Deity. In so far as it posits an immediate, mysterious contact of the soul with God as the *only* source of religion, it may be termed "*Mysticism*". Modernists call it "*Immanentism*". It is an *assurance* of God and His will. We shall deal with the Modernistic criterion in detail in a later chapter.

Heart
saints

This viewpoint is exemplified in Jacobi and Schleiermacher. *Jacobi's* religion of the heart is not merely a perception of value; it is also a kind of conviction by which God manifests Himself interiorly to the heart. *Schleiermacher* explains the religious feeling as a perception of the primitive causality of finite things, an experience of the Infinite in the finite. It is neither knowing nor willing, neither is it a third co-ordinate power; rather it lies deeper than all the powers of the soul. Hence, its content does not consist of rational concepts and religious dogmas; for these latter originate only afterwards, namely, through reflection on religious experience. This viewpoint became the connecting link by which the Protestant doctrine of the private inspiration of the believing Christian was more fully elaborated into the present day theory of religious experience, as the primitive fact of personal Christianity. Thus, *W. Hermann* of the school of *Ritschl* describes Revelation as the process by which one becomes conscious of God, and which the individual experiences at the moment when he becomes aware of a "power of good over all things". This satisfying and transforming experience must be joined with the person of Christ manifested to us in the Gospel. *Tröltzsch* likewise teaches that we obtain certitude regarding "the totality of the world and God" only through the religious feelings; the presence of this totality within us reveals itself through the feelings. The language of religion calls this manifestation of God Divine Revelation; it differs only in degree in the ordinary pious man and in the divine

¹⁶³) A. v. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 241, 242.

legate of Sacred Scripture.¹⁶⁴ A similar conception appears also in Kaftan, the Quakers, etc.

There is, of course, no doubt that emotional religion can appeal to certain facts and phenomena of the Christian life. Thus, a feeling, a painful consciousness of one's own limitations, oftentimes precede thought's initial searchings for God. Moreover, the knowledge of God itself frequently comes about so easily and naturally, that it approximates to feeling, an immediate perception; *Cardinal Newman*, for instance, speaks of such an experience in the fifteenth year of his life. As the soul is God's image and likeness, so, too, God operates naturally by promptings and enlightenment in the depths of the soul. He also grants to the soul supernatural graces, whose operations upon the emotions frequently reveal themselves in touching and exalting experience. Even the philosophical knowledge of God, by reason of the sublimity of its content and the mysterious obscurity that envelopes it, bears a certain likeness to the enigmatical and ineffable element of the emotional life.

Nevertheless, we must emphatically reject the viewpoint that religion has its origin in the feelings and that, not reason, but the feelings must decide as to the essence and certitude of religion. For such a theory involves itself in *intrinsic contradictions*, and comes into conflict with the objective power of Christianity and with the essence of historical religion.

a) A primary and inescapable characteristic of a one-sided emotional religion is its *intrinsic obscurity*, its impotency to avoid insoluble contradictions the moment it emerges into the world of reality. This fact can be made clear only by considering the theory in particular examples.

For instance, *Schleiermacher* maintains that religion is not grounded upon philosophical concepts and knowledge, but upon the immediate "feeling of the Absolute in the finite". But are not finite and absolute also philosophical

¹⁶⁴) J. Mausbach, *Die Religion und das moderne Seelenleben*, in RCK, I, pp. 86, 87.

Intrinsic Contradictions.

concepts, which surely cannot be felt, but can only be acquired by abstract thinking? Moreover, according to Schleiermacher the religious feeling expresses man's absolute dependence upon an absolute causality; but has he not thereby assumed the law of causality, hence, a basic law of metaphysics? And again, are not "absolute" and "causality" abstract, metaphysical concepts? Moreover, what a sharp contradiction between his conception of universal Natural Religion, and of Christian Revelation and piety!—Harnack once wrote: "Despite all doubts religion remains immovable in the hearts of Christians, who have an interior feeling of its truth!"¹⁶⁵ But a religion which can be seriously "doubted", does not stand "immovable" in the heart. If the interior feeling is really to give to religion steadfastness, it must also overcome the doubts as to its truth; if the heart is really to find peace and quiet in God, the spirit of man may no longer struggle and contradict religion.—In like manner the learned book of R. Otto (*Das Heilige*), which elaborates Schleiermacher, shows its lack of psychological and noetic clarity by its many foreign words (das Numinose, Faszinose, das augustum, das tremendum mysterium), and by the assumption of corresponding innate "emotional ideas".¹⁶⁶

b) Moreover, the emotional experience under consideration lacks the *actual universality* and *diffusion*, which it must possess, if it were the essential and decisive form of religious conviction. For, in the latter case, we should have to assume that God would grant this feeling to all men, irrespective of time and environment. The very contrary, however, is the case, as Modernists admit. Then, too, many modern Protestants tell us that individual revelation never takes place without intervention, "but always through the mediation of all sorts of impulses", especially through "religious tradition in the garb of community feelings" (*Tröltzsch*). Since religion is the most intimate and necessary relation with God; since, moreover, according to Modernists it is essentially purely individualistic, how can God, Who vitally permeates all souls, make such a mighty distinction between

¹⁶⁵) Harnack, *Reden und Aufsätze*, 1904, II, p. 376.

¹⁶⁶) J. Mausbach, *Die Religion und das moderne Seelenleben*, in RCK. I, pp. 91, 92.

Christians and heathens; how can He thus bind the natural and personal to external accidents? One would rather be inclined to think that, if interior instruction by God were the rule in the economy of salvation, God would grant it precisely and most of all to men, who were exteriorly the most abandoned and the poorest. The explanation, namely, that there are men, who "have no organ for religious things", or the other explanation, that the lack of holiness hinders the gracious experience, cannot be regarded as offering a satisfactory escape from the difficulty. Such an explanation, on the contrary, is rather a humiliation and an insult, not merely to those who stand outside the pale of Revelation, but also to the many thousands within Christianity, who cannot boast of such an overwhelming inner experience as the groundwork of their faith. In fact, this whole matter of Mysticism does not seem to be taken very earnestly, save in very limited circles; just as there are many Protestant laymen, who cannot specify exactly the day of their inner enlightenment and rebirth, which surely must be possible and easy, if Divine Revelation were such an overwhelming experience!

A distinguished Protestant theologian acknowledges this fact. He writes: "I can *believe* that it is possible for us men to come in contact with God through Him (Jesus). But I do not rely at all upon my 'feelings'. I do not find anything 'original' in them, that is, like a Revelation".¹⁶⁷ If, on the other hand, the *rule* according to which Faith originates is the testing of objective rational grounds, as well as the believing attachment to historical tradition and authority, it is not difficult to explain this actual *inequality* in the twofold process by which religious Faith is brought about. For in both processes the variety of external methods by which peoples are instructed, and the diversity of the mental powers of those who investigate the rational objective basis of Faith, are, from the very nature of the case, concomitant factors in that process.¹⁶⁸

c) Whoever looks upon the feelings as the decisive

Danger of
Indifferentism.

¹⁶⁷) Kattenbusch, *Christliche Welt*, 1917, p. 699; cf. Bonwetsch, *Das religiöse Erlebnis führender Persönlichkeiten* (in "Das 19. Jahrhundert"), 1917; Mundle, *Die religiösen Erlebnisse*, 1921.

¹⁶⁸) J. Mausbach, *ibid.*, I, p. 93.

factor in religion, opens the door wide to all sorts of fantastic vaporings, and exposes himself to the danger of regarding *all religions as of equal value*.

Accordingly, the inspiration of an Isaias, the divine enlightenment of a Paul, would no longer be essentially distinct from, and absolutely superior to, the mantic ravings of a Pythia, the ecstasy of an Indian Yoga, the visionary experience of Swedenborg. Thereby the unique position of Christianity, its power and right to evangelize the world, would be nullified. Some Modernists seek to parry this conclusion by remarking that scientific knowledge constitutes "the permanent corrective", the bright light of the twilight depths of the feelings; that reason may compare the religious and moral content of the cult-religions, and thus establish the value and the distinction as regards the truth of religions. But how can reason be the corrective of the feelings, if it contains within itself no certain rule of truth? How can it assume a critical attitude as regards the content of Revelation, if it has absolutely no viewpoint in metaphysical things; if it is not an organ for the knowledge of the Divine? A science that knows only the phenomena, does not possess a "bright light"; on the contrary, it is wholly blind in the matter of testing the realities, that lie behind the manifestations of the religious consciousness. When the religious feelings have assumed the scepter, they no longer tolerate the interference of "old step-mother wisdom", or they attribute to her criticism and wishes at most a platonic significance. Modernism and kindred tendencies face a fatal dilemma. For it is impossible to escape the fact, that even the most pious feelings lose their true meaning and nobility, if the essential distinction between Theism and Pantheism, between optimism and pessimism, must cease to exist. To cite only one example: What becomes of the oft admired cry of the meditating Augustine: "God and the soul!", if we remove from these words their deep metaphysical value; if we degrade them to obscure symbols? And yet, Modernism and kindred theories cannot cease to prate about the originality and inviolability of the religious feelings; they cannot admit reason's criticism of the content of those feelings, without surrendering their most fundamental presuppositions!¹⁶⁹

d) A religion, in which the feelings of the individual hold the primacy, will never be able to develop into a

¹ Weak as an
Historical
Social Power.

¹⁶⁹) J. Mausbach, *ibid.*, I, pp. 93, 94.

power of historical and social significance capable of dominating human life. At the very outset Christianity appealed to historical facts; it stressed most emphatically religious and moral ideas, as truths having eternal and universal validity. Only in that way did it succeed in overcoming the sensual, earthly culture of paganism; only in that way did it give to mankind, to the guiding spirits as well as to the masses, a higher theoretical and practical philosophy, from which then noble and ardent religious feelings could be developed. Of themselves alone, the feelings can bear witness obviously to the present only; they can only express their own yearnings for God and His presence; they cannot, therefore, be the means of producing a belief in the great saving facts of history. Emotional religion also lacks historical greatness because the unsteady, fluctuating character of the feelings prevents religion from striking its roots firmly into the life of the spirit. And how can the religious feelings, which men laud as the most individual and immediate flowers of the soul's life, be transplanted by a religious genius into a whole people, without surrendering their unique essence? Whence can the feelings acquire that all embracing reality, and that deeply social power of union, such as a religion of the spirit and of moral ideas actually possesses and exercises?

In this respect we must even concede to ancient Platonism and Stoicism, and the religion of Illuminism, the preference over modern emotional Christianity. For those systems have brought about a unified uplifting of great masses of men above the meshes of sensual Nature. But ever since metaphysics and dogma have been dethroned, and the religion of the feelings has become dominant among the learned, the development of modern times shows us, in point of fact, a growing disintegration of all religious life. But the hoped for advantage, namely, that modern science would allow greater freedom to, and look with greater reverence upon a faith, which no longer makes doctrinal claims, but professes to be merely a personal vital act, has been only modestly realized.

There are comparatively few investigators, who like the English scholar *Romanes* so honestly carry out the principles of Agnosticism, as to forego a criticism of the content of Faith. Most of them ply a negative metaphysics to their heart's content; they attack the possibility of creation, of Miracles, of the Incarnation, as though they had never radically condemned every kind of metaphysics as an "arrogance of reason". And men like Haeckel and other monists find it all the easier to place the unquenchable impulse for a philosophy of life in the service of Materialism, the more openly theologians acknowledge that there are no proofs for the existence of God, that only an inner experience can bear witness to Him.

The most recent development of the soul's life offers another *psychological source of danger* in regard to emotional and experiential religion. In consequence of strong over-excitement coming from the enjoyments and deceptions of an over-refined culture, no less than because of the mighty turmoil and upheaval in all the circumstances of life during recent years, the emotional life of the modern man has assumed an especially irritable and decadent tendency; it hovers in unsteady equilibrium between optimism and pessimism, between presumption and despair, or has lapsed into a condition of indolent resignation. Hence, his "experiences" lean far more in the direction of atheism, religious indifferentism, and despair, than towards a living faith and hope in God. We must forcibly *snatch away* modern men from their feelings; we must lift them up and educate them by means of authority, spiritual discipline, and tradition, in order to win them back again to religion and faith. This condition of society is all the more difficult, since with the lassitude and depression of the feelings, there go hand in hand great moral weariness and corruption. Moreover, the moral ladder, which Kant offered to broken-winged thought, as a means of rising above the sensible world, has lost its sustaining power more today than ever before.¹⁷⁰

8. This predilection of Protestants for the internal subjective criteria of religion and faith is a consequence of their peculiar conception of *justifying faith*. By trans-

¹⁷⁰) Mausbach, *ibid.*, I, pp. 95, 96.

ferring the seat of justifying faith from the intellect to the *will* and the *emotions*, they have completely subverted the Catholic notion of faith, as an intellectual assent to revealed truth on God's authority.¹⁷¹ That this concept is erroneous is shown *ex professo*, in the tractate of Divine Faith to which the student is referred.¹⁷² Rightly understood, faith has reference to truth and supernatural Revelation; but truth and Revelation appeal primarily to the *intellect*, and not to the will and the feelings, although, of course, the latter also have a share in the Act of Faith. Thus, a false notion of Divine Faith leads necessarily to a false notion of the criteria of Revealed Religion.

9. We shall now consider in detail some of the more common interpretations of this "inner experience", which we have not dealt with in the preceding criticism.

a) Some Protestants explain inner experience as signifying that the believer *instinctively* recognizes God's word, just as a child recognizes its mother's breast.¹⁷³—But instincts intervene only as helpful means, when rational knowledge is wanting. Whatever happens by instinct, happens with all certainty in all individuals of the species. Now, very many men experience rather an instinctive disinclination as regards Revelation; at any rate, in many individuals no vestiges of an inclination to Revelation can be discerned. Then too, how uncertain a guide is instinct, even for believers? This appears most clearly from the host of divergent opinions among the adherents of this subjective criterion.

b) In rebuttal certain Protestants argue: This *instinct* is not natural; it is inspired by the Holy Spirit; therefore, the appeal to the universality and necessity of natural instinct is beside the point.—We may very properly ask the question: Whence do you know that this testimony is really the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and not the testimony of

¹⁷¹) cf. *Confessio Augustana*, art. iv, fol. 13; Möhler, *Symbolism*, English transl., pp. 127 sq.; G. Esser, art. "Glaube" in *Buchberger's Kirchliches Handlexikon*, Freiburg, i. B., 1907, vol. I, col. 1709 sq.; Nitzsch-Stephan, *Lehrbuch der evangelischen Dogmatik*, Tübingen, 1912 (3rd ed.), pp. 675 sq.; J. Pohle, art. "Justification", in CE. VIII, pp. 573 sq.

¹⁷²) cf. P. P. M'Kenna, O. P.; *The Theology of Faith*, N. Y. 1913; Hugh Pope, O. P., art. "Faith" in CE. V, pp. 752 sq. with bibliography.

¹⁷³) A. Twisten, *Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik der ev. luth. Kirche nach dem Kompendium des Wettes*, vol. I, p. 393.

your own spirit, or of an evil spirit? If Protestants have recourse to certain passages of Holy Writ, for example: "It is the Spirit which testifieth" (I John v, 6), they fall into the fallacy of a *vicious circle*; for the question is precisely as to whether Holy Scripture is the Word of God. Consequently, in order to know that it is the Spirit Who testifieth to Revelation, they must fall back again upon "the unction of the Spirit", that is to say, upon these deceptive feelings.

c) Such is by no means the case, so Protestants rejoin. For the Holy Spirit assures us *immediately* of the truth of Revelation. "The ultimate proof of truth is self-demonstration" (*Luthard*).—But surely Protestants do not wish to maintain that the propositions of faith and their Revelation are self-evident as, for example, is the proposition: "A contingent being needs another to explain its existence". A fact like Revelation cannot be an immediately evident truth; for this would mean that from an analysis of the concept of Revelation follows immediately the predicate "divine". Facts are immediately evident, inasmuch as they are perceived by the senses; and in this sense, we say that the best proof that man can give as regards himself is that based on the testimony that his senses offer him. But Divine Revelation does not present itself immediately to our senses; it is not perceived immediately even by those who, as eye witnesses, saw its authentication. For the question at issue is the knowability of the divinity of Revelation; and that cannot appear immediately to the senses any more than to reason itself.

But it is the *Holy Spirit*, so Protestants insist, Who assures reason *immediately* of the truth of the message that has been presented to us. He it is Who "impinges directly on the believer's consciousness".¹⁷⁴ Why is not this *more direct* and intimate way "just as valid and certain, as when an experience comes in the roundabout way of the senses?" "When God speaks to man's soul, He lets him know *who* is speaking. This may be illustrated: A little child has been put to bed at night. The room being dark, he becomes frightened. He calls to his father in the next room, 'Father, are you there?' Will not the father answer in his own voice to assure the child that it is he? Will he disguise his tones and assume the voice of a stranger? Likewise our heavenly Father speaks to us in *His own assuring tones* and so quiets our fears and resolves our doubts".¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴) L. Keyser, *A System of Christian Evidence*. Burlington, Iowa. 1924 (3rd revised ed.), p. 123.

¹⁷⁵) *Ibid.*, pp. 137, 140.

It must be remembered, in the first place, that reason cannot become certain without *objective grounds*. Hence, most probably not even God can give reason certitude without such grounds. The influence of divine grace does not do away with the essence of reason, rather it perfects it, raising it to a higher plane of capability and action: but to accept anything without objective grounds is not a higher perfection, it is credulity, even if such a thing were possible. Secondly, and this is the chief point, it would have to be demonstrated that the Holy Spirit assures man of the divinity of Revelation in the way described, particularly since experience seriously contradicts that claim. It will not do to assume that it is the Holy Spirit, Who subjectively assures us of His presence. That must be proved on objective, rational grounds.¹⁷⁶

d) Obviously the evidence of Christian experience suffices only for such as actually feel that experience. Hence, we may rightly ask: What is the evidence for *those who stand outside of that experience*? Many Protestants reply that that will depend upon a man's moral attitude as regards the Christian view of life. There is abundant evidence to satisfy all who possess the right attitude. There is, for example, the "common experience of other Christian believers", "the cloud of living witnesses", "reinforced by Christian history", "creeds are the monumental expression of religious conviction", "Jesus Christ has been the center of the progressive moral and spiritual movement of the world two thousand years", "Christian art and architecture bear the same witness", "Baptism and the Lord's Supper have no meaning apart from Him", "the evangelistic apparatus of Christianity has worked successfully", "the strength of the Christian type of experience, as compared with others is the strength of intellectual confidence as compared with the weakness of doubt", etc.¹⁷⁷—What is all this except the appeal to *external* criteria? Hence, in the end, Protestants must admit that inner experience is not the only criterion. Indeed Protestant theology is beginning to realize more and more the necessity of objective tokens of faith.

e) Finally, some Protestants interpret inner experience in the following way: One may conclude as to the divine origin of Revelation from its *purifying, redemptive, ennobling power experienced within the soul*. Thus, Christ Himself challenged His adversaries to translate His teach-

¹⁷⁶) Gutberlet, *ibid.*, II, pp. 101, 102.

¹⁷⁷) Mullins, *Why is Christianity True?*, pp. 308-321.

ing into practise and they will know that it proceeds from God.—We have not much to object against this criterion, provided, of course, that the inner experience of justification and regeneration, that is to say, a deceptive feeling, be not proposed as the real ground of Christianity, as orthodox Lutheranism would have it. We can indeed conclude as to the divinity of the Christian Faith from its morally purifying power and efficacy; only we must not put the emphasis too much on the *individual moral life* of a particular person; for here again very many deceptions and illusions are liable to vitiate our judgment. Rather we must envisage the mighty reactions, which the Gospel has called forth in the *moral life of the nations*, which cannot be reduced to purely natural influences. Thus, this criterion falls into line with the *external criteria*, which embrace not only physical, but also moral Miracles, such as the great number of martyrs, the marvelous spread of Christianity, the ethical and religious transformation of the world, etc.¹⁷⁸

Chapter IV.

THE CRITERIA OF PRAGMATISM AND MODERNISM

The Catholic apologist may not allow the two latest theories of the criteria of Divine Revelation to pass unchallenged. Like Protestantism, *Pragmatism* and *Modernism* champion the primacy of the internal subjective tokens of God's supernatural message to mankind.

I. PRAGMATISM

Pragmatism may designate a) a tendency in philosophy, an attitude of mind towards philosophy, which insists on usefulness, or practical consequences, as a test of truth; b) a theory of the nature of ideas and truth, a theory of knowledge; c) a theory about reality, a metaphysics.¹ Here we are directly concerned with Pragmatism only in its relation to the natural knowability of Divine Revelation.

¹⁷⁸) Gutberlet, *ibid.*, II, p. 104; cf. J. Kleutgen, *Theologie der Vorzeit*, 2^{ed.}, pp. 391 sq.

¹) Wm. James, in *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology etc.*, V, p. 85; cf. Wm. Turner, art. "Pragmatism", in CE. XII, p. 33 sq; Leslie J. Walker, S. J., *Theories of Knowledge*. N. Y. & London, 1911 (2^{ed.}), for a scholarly study of Pragmatism in its various forms on the basis of original sources.

The attitude of the Pragmatist is "the attitude of looking away from first things, principles, categories, supposed necessities; and of looking towards last things, fruits, consequence, facts".² Knowledge is said to be "true", only in so far as it helps mankind to advance in a *practical* way. Truth is usefulness; it resolves itself into "error" just as soon as it has lost its usefulness, or workableness, or just as soon as it has proved its hurtfulness for practical life. Thus, "truth" is something *relative* and *mutable*. In the evolution of life, and still more in the development of human experience and human modes of thought, Pragmatists insist that the supreme idea, which governs the whole, is not that of the "ideal" or of the "true", but rather of the "good". Theory is subordinate to practise, the "true" is subordinate to the "good". The "true" is not the source of the "good". Action is primary; knowledge is always derivative, secondary, subservient, useful.³ "Truth is a form of the good". Utility is the essence of the truth-relation. Truth is not transcendent, but changeable, "ambulatory", as Wm. James puts it. In other words, no truth is made and set aside, or outside of experience; experience is a stream out of which we can never step; no item of experience can ever be verified definitely and irrevocably; it is verified provisionally now, but may be verified again tomorrow, when I acquire a new experience. All truths are empirical; they are "man-made"; hence Humanism is only another name for Pragmatism. The mutability and relativity of truth manifest themselves spontaneously in the advancement, or hindrance of practical interests. Thought-systems or ideas, which today have outgrown their usefulness, formerly contained within themselves their own justification and "relative truth"; now they are "antiquated" and, therefore, false. The truth which today we have laboriously acquired will be repudiated in a later stage of inquiry, if it has lost its vital power. Thus, "truth" is a fluent concept, entirely submerged in the stream of time and carried along by its current.

The application of Pragmatism to Religion and Revelation is perfectly obvious; the one and only element which can come up for consideration in this respect, is "the judgment of value". The truth of a religion is measured negatively, by the *lack of value* which theoretical truths possess in respect of the interests of religion; positively, by the

²) Wm. James, *Pragmatism*. N. Y. 1908, p. 55.

³) Walker, *ibid.*, p. 545 sq.

value which a religion enjoys in regard to its practical usefulness for life and culture.⁴

Scientific Proof
of God Impos-
sible and
Useless.

The apostle of the pragmatic method of grounding Religion is pre-eminently *William James* of Harvard, whom a numerous following acclaims with enthusiasm. Through the repudiation of causality and finality by Hume, Kant and Darwin, so James argues, every metaphysic and, therefore, also the scientific proof of God have been done away with once and for all: "The bare fact that all idealists since Kant have felt entitled either to scout or to neglect them (*i. e.*, the argument for God's existence) shows that they are not solid enough to serve as religion's all sufficient foundation . . . Causation is indeed too obscure a principle to bear the weight of the whole structure of theology. As for the argument from design, see how Darwinian ideas have revolutionized it". These arguments "prove nothing rigourously. They only corroborate our pre-existent partialities".⁵ Even though God's existence were proven, religious life could derive no useful motive from the "scholastic attributes" of God. Of what use are the so-called metaphysical attributes, *e. g.*, God's aseity or His necessariness, His immateriality; His simplicity, etc.? "I cannot conceive of its being of the smallest consequence to us religiously that any one of them should be true".⁶ James admits that the moral attributes do indeed "positively determine fear and hope and expectation, and are the foundations for the saintly life". Still, "it stands with them as ill as with the arguments for His (*i. e.*, God's) existence. Not only do post-Kantian idealists reject them root and branch, but it is a plain historic fact that they never have converted any one who has found in the moral complexion of the world, as he experienced it, reasons for

⁴) J. Pohle, *Natur und Uebernatur*, in RCK, I, p. 476.

⁵) *The Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study of Human Nature*, Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-1902. N. Y. & London. 1925 (35th ed.), pp. 437-439.

⁶) *Ibid.*, p. 446.

doubting that a good God can have framed it".⁷ They are practically useless.

James, therefore, concludes that the value of religious opinions "can only be ascertained by spiritual judgments directly passed upon them; judgments based on our own immediate feeling primarily; and secondarily on what we can ascertain of their experiential relations to our moral needs and to the rest of what we hold as true. *Immediate luminousness*, in short, *philosophical reasonableness*, and *moral helpfulness* are the only available criteria". "In other words, not its origin, but the way in which it works on the whole", is the final test. "Our practise is the only sure evidence, even to ourselves, that we are genuinely Christians".⁸ Repudiating the scholastic and embracing the empirical method, James decides that "on the whole one type of religion is approved by its fruits, and another type condemned".⁹ In the words of Professor Leuba¹⁰ "God is not known, he is not understood; he is used—sometimes as meat-purveyor, sometimes as moral support, sometimes as a friend, sometimes as an object of love. If he proves Himself useful, the religious consciousness asks for no more than that. Does God really exist? How does He exist? What is He? are so many irrelevant questions. Not God, but life, more life, a larger, richer, more satisfying life, is, in the last analysis, the end of religion. The love of life, at any and every level of development, is the religious impulse". James unreservedly acknowledges the value of personal holiness for the social welfare: "The great saints are immediate successes; the smaller ones are at least heralds and harbingers, and they may be leavens-also, of a better mundane order".¹¹ To the objection of modern psychologists of religion (*Starbuck* etc.), who point out that the founders of religion, and

Philosophical
Reasonableness,
Moral Helpfulness
are the Criteria.

⁷) *Ibid.*, pp. 447, 448.

⁸) *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20.

⁹) *Ibid.*, p. 327.

¹⁰) *The Contents of Religious Consciousness*, in the *Monist*, xi, p. 586, (July, 1901), cited by James, *ibid.*, pp. 506, 507.

¹¹) James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 377.

religious geniuses give evidence of a *pathological* character, James answers that this does not prejudice the practical value of their doctrine and example. For it is necessary to make a sharp distinction between the *origin* and *value* of a religion, and the *person* and *thing*. Saints are to be judged according to their fruits, not according to their psychopathic disposition. "By their fruits ye shall know them, not by their roots". On the basis of this distinction, Pragmatism is supposed to free our piety from "the bugaboo of morbid origin" of religion,¹² towards which radical psychology of religion is definitely tending.

CRITICISM

We are concerned here only with the criticism of the pragmatic proof in respect of the criteria of Religion and Revelation. For a more detailed appreciation of the value of pragmatic truth, and of the pragmatic criteria of truth, the student is referred to special treatises.¹³

1. In general we note an intermingling of truth and error. We freely admit that truth and life, idea and practise, can never be sharply and clearly separated from each other. However, it seems to us that Pragmatism has confused their respective roles; it has turned things upside down. It has transmuted *effect* into *cause* and *vice versa*. A religion, or a revelation, is not true because it is useful; rather it is useful precisely because it is true. Usefulness is a consequence, not the principle of religious truth. Truth cannot be mere utility, for utility is the consequence of truth. Far from being only a "form of the good", the true precedes the good as its *prius*; for the desirability of things, in which transcendental goodness consists, presupposes knowability or truth. In like manner the idea of God is of *value* for the human race, only if there is a corresponding objective reality, namely, the existence of God. Or is religion

¹²) *Ibid.*, pp. 13-25; cf. J. Pohle, *Natur und Uebernatur*, in RCK. I, pp. 476, 477.

¹³) cf. Leslie Walker, S. J., *ibid.*, pp. 550-620.

to nourish itself on phantoms and imaginary entities?

2. The proposition of "the tree and its fruits" is a genuine Christian principle, and in its logical setting is nothing else except the scholastic *argumentum ex consequentiis*, inasmuch as not infrequently the truth, or falsity, of a principle can be rightly judged from its practical consequences. But "the criterion of the fruits" is, of itself alone, insufficient; for at times, *per accidens*, a true conclusion can follow from a false antecedent. Thus, even though Islamism has produced a high degree of secular culture, as in Spain and elsewhere, this "fruit" alone is not sufficient to warrant the conclusion as to its "truth". On the other hand, as a *negative* criterion the appeal to the fruits of a religion is valid according to the logical axiom: *Ex falso consequente sequitur falsum antecedens*. If a principle as such leads to consequences, which are either contrary to reason or immoral, *eo ipso*, the tree stands self-condemned by its fruits.¹⁴

Unwarranted
Conclusions.

3. Whoever applies the norm of *value alone* to a religion, places himself at once in a very precarious position, nay more, involves himself in *contradictions*. What is the norm according to which we ought to evaluate a religion? Is it the *ideal* of Christianity? If the pragmatist appeals to this standard of value, he surrenders the very essence of Pragmatism, for he acknowledges an absolute truth, which transcends all empiricism and psychology. Or is this norm, perhaps, the changing judgments and moods of the changing *spirit of the age*? If so, the pragmatist would also have to grant the liceity of polyandry, polygamy, prostitution, suicide, duelling, abortion, etc., at least in so far as a community or age regards these immoral practices as "useful" for culture and, hence, as moral and true. In his polemic against a radical psychology of religion, Wm. James has recourse to the infelicitous distinction between the *origin* and the *value* of a religion. But in the matter of a Divine Revelation it is erroneous to separate absolutely the person from the cause. For, if Christ as a *Person* was a paranoic, and St. Paul an epileptic, we must reject as nonsense the *cause* which they championed. Revelations proceeding from an "unhealthy brain" cannot possibly be

Contradictions.

¹⁴) J. Pohle, *ibid.*, I, pp. 477, 478; cf. above, pp. 64, 66-67.

Confusion of
Cause and
Effect.

of divine origin; in fact, we repudiate them instinctively. We gratefully accept the happy solution of a mathematical problem, or the technical invention of an airplane, even though they are the fruits of a deranged mind, because at times we have at our disposal the means for investigating the value, or lack of value, of these achievements. But we exercise no such forbearance as regards the revelation of things divine, for in this respect, when there is question of the credibility of an alleged revelation, we demand also the proper authentication of the *Person*.¹⁵

II. MODERNISM

Theology is an interpretation of experience.

Internal Subjective Criteria.

Modernism suffers apologetically from the same fundamental weakness as religious Pragmatism with which it is spiritually allied. Like the Pragmatist the Modernist denies that truth is absolute, eternal and unchangeable; for him truth is always relative and fluent; thus, from the very outset it is impossible to speak of "only one true" Religion, Revelation, Church. Our religious life, so the Modernist contends, is the spontaneous product and expression of the feeling, or sense, which emerges from the depths of our subconsciousness in which the Divine is immanent. This attitude effectively closes the door against the proof of truth on the basis of Miracles and Prophecies. At most, one might speak of an *internal* criterion; but this test is, and remains, thoroughly *subjective*, even when Modernists speak of an "objective" method of proof.

This subjective proof from immanence may be stated thus: Even though all religions, which give evidence of life, are "true" because of that life, still Catholicism is the most perfect religion, because it corresponds closest with the immanent needs of the human heart. Such is the viewpoint of *moderate Modernism*. "As for the others, who might be called *Integralists*", so Pius the Tenth says, "they would show to the non-believer, as hidden in his being, the very germ which Christ Himself had in His consciousness, and which He transmitted to

¹⁵ J. Pohle, *ibid.*, I, pp. 478, 479; cf. G. Michelet, *Dieu et l'Agnosticisme contemporain*, Paris. 1909, p. 86 sq.

mankind".¹⁶ Since, therefore, the immediate "feeling of the Divine" is at the same time *its own proof* of Divine Revelation in man's consciousness, in the final analysis there is no further need of any other criterion; *inner experience is its own criterion*.¹⁷

This radicalism, which destroys all objective religion, far outstrips the *moderate* subjectivism which has dominated Protestant orthodoxy since Luther's time. It betrays a close affinity with that tendency in Protestant theology, which champions a "sentimental faith" (Jacobi, Schleiermacher), a "religious instinct" (Twisten), the "private testimony of the Holy Spirit" (Pietism), of which we have spoken in detail in the preceding chapter. But its true birthplace is Liberal Protestantism, such as has been incorporated in *Ritschlianism*. French Modernism finds its echo in the writings of A. Sabatier, the mouth-piece of German Illuminism.¹⁸

CRITICISM

1. In the preceding chapter we have shown that, as Christians, we cannot get along with a religion of the feelings only. For us, "religious experience" is not the *primary fact*, which is followed by the intellectual interpretation of those experiences; but rather, *vice versa*, objective Revelation must precede, in order to be *translated* into subjective experience. Only by arbitrarily assuming that every Christian has the right to feel that he is an inspired organ of Revelation, and to act accordingly, is it possible to regard religious "experience" as the original and primary fact, upon which then follows the preaching of that message to the believer.

On this latter hypothesis we should also have to take into the bargain the absurdity, that all these so-called divinely inspired prophets and apostles may rightly pawn off as divine wisdom all kinds of opinions and convictions, no matter how contradictory they may be, as

Religious Experience not the Primary Fact.

False Consequences.

¹⁶ Encyclical "*Pascendi dominici gregis*", in DB. n. 2103.

¹⁷ J. Pohle, *ibid.*, I, pp. 479, 480.

¹⁸ J. Pohle, *ibid.*, I, 480; cf. our volume "*The Theory of Revelation*", I, 1, pp. 55-61.

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the history of Pietism abundantly testifies. Whoever relies solely upon the testimony of the Spirit unto Himself, builds upon sand; he also becomes guilty of the logical fallacy of assuming, as the basis of his proof, the very thing that needs proof, namely, that it is the Holy Spirit that speaks, and not his own private spirit.¹⁹

Modernistic
Criterion too
Individualistic.

2. The appeal made by Modernists to the moral power, which Christian experience creates within the human heart, has only *individualistic* value; it lacks the mighty *recruiting power* of that propaganda, which slumbers within the essence of Christianity.²⁰ It is unnatural for man to appropriate a *Religion based on Revelation and Facts*, solely by means of an inner personal experience.²¹

Inconsistencies.

3. Finally, whoever appeals to the religious and moral transformations, which primitive Christianity has effected in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, as a proof of its divine origin, has really abandoned the *internal* criteria, and taken refuge in a "historical Miracle", which, in a previous chapter, we have classed among the external criteria.

It is beyond question, therefore, that a strict proof for the divinity of Revelation cannot be had without the added assistance of the *external* criteria, particularly Miracles and Prophecies.²²

CHAPTER V.

THE CRITERIA OF THE "NEW APOLOGETICS"

General Characterization.

During the latter half of the past century, a method of apologetic demonstration came into vogue, especially in France, which became known as the "New Apologetics". It sought to ground the proof of the divine origin

19) J. Pohle, *ibid.*, I, p. 480.

20) J. Pohle, *ibid.*, I, p. 480; cf. above, pp. 148, 149.

21) J. Mausbach, *Grundzüge der katholischen Apologetik*. Münster i. W., 1921 (3^d-4th ed.), p. 23.

22) J. Pohle, *ibid.*, I, p. 481.

of the Christian Religion upon the native aspirations of the soul, hence upon a *mystic* or, as some of its chief advocates prefer to express it, upon the *psychological* basis of the exigencies of the feelings and the will, and upon the corresponding fitness of Christianity, and Christianity alone, to satisfy them.¹ It has a negative and a positive side.

Its negative side consists in the *rejection*, or at least in the *depreciation*, either in principle or for tactical reasons, of metaphysics, as the instrument for proving God's existence and for laying the groundwork of Faith; hence, in the separation of Science and Faith.

Its positive side appears, on the one hand, in the *Apologetics of Immanence, or Need*, under the leadership of Blondel; and, on the other hand, in the *Psychologico-Moral Apologetics*, or *Social Apologetics*, or the *Apologetics of Value*, or the *Method of Accommodation*, as it is variously called, with Ollé-Laprune, Fonsegrive and Brunetière as its most distinguished exponents.²

The negative attitude of the "New Apologetics" towards metaphysics is evinced by the fact, that many Frenchmen rallied under the banner of *Agnosticism*, as understood either by Kant, or by Comte and Spencer, or by Hegel and Renan. Faith and Science were completely divorced from each other or, at least traditional apologetics, in so far as it rests upon Aristotelian-scholastic metaphysics, was declared to be *unsuited to our times*, since it was supposed to have lost its influence over the "modern mind". The Protestant attitude is reflected particularly in the writings of Auguste Sabatier.³

Attitude towards
Philosophy.

Misguided, in part, by Pascal and de Lamennais, confused by the Positivism, which Littré proclaimed in the words: "Quelque recherche qu'on ait fait, jamais un miracle ne s'est produit là où il pouvait être observé et constaté", and finally blinded by neo-Kantianism, these Catholics shared more or less the viewpoint of Aulard, who in his

1) Al. v. Schmid, *Apologetik als spekulative Grundlegung der Theologie*. Freiburg i. B. 1900, p. 200.

2) Anton Gislser, *Der Modernismus*. Einsiedeln. 1913 (4th ed.), pp. 251, 252.

3) *Esquisse d'une philosophie de la religion*. Paris. (8th ed.), p. 353 sq. English transl. "Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion. Based on Psychology and History". (Geo. H. Doran Co.). N. Y.

controversy with Buisson declared, that we must lead the old God of metaphysics to the frontier, and dismiss Him with thanks for the passing services which He had rendered.⁴

Historical
Retrospect.

Let us briefly recount the historical factors which led up to this attitude towards metaphysics. There was, in the first place, *Descartes*, whose philosophy was strongly subjectivistic, and who sought to discredit the traditional proofs for the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. Secondly, *Pascal's* reasoning offered a wide berth to Mysticism. *Malebranche* and the *Traditionalists* misunderstood the innate powers of human reason. The *Deists* had struck mighty blows against the Fact of the Christian Revelation. Finally, we must not pass over *Rousseau*, the father of Romanticism, the enthusiast of the beautiful in Nature, the panegyrist of the unsullied goodness of Nature; neither may we forget to mention *Chateaubriand*, in whose Apology of Christianity, Romanticism unfolds its glittering pinions. But above all others, the *Romanticists* were the most eloquent advocates of passion, of enthusiasm, of the impulses of the heart; they raised Mysticism high above the cold assent of reason. Even Kant himself felt the influence of Rousseau.

Now, when the spirit of *Voltaire*, of the *Encyclopedists* and *Positivists* in France, sought to drown the spiritual in the floods of Materialism, and the school of *Cousin* offered neither a defense nor a haven of refuge, the philosophers, especially *Renouvier*, *Lachelier*, *Boutroux* and others, invoked the spirit of *Kant* to preserve for the youth of France at least the idea of duty, and hence also the idea of God, of free will, and of immortality. Then too, certain Protestants (*Buisson*, *Steeg*, *Pécaut*), who had emigrated from Switzerland and become leaders in the French system of education, labored in a similar spirit. Indeed, in the opinion of some Frenchmen the fact, that these ideas were preserved in the French schools, is largely due to Criticism.⁵

Others, however, refuse to pay such a high tribute of gratitude to Kantianism. Thus, Maurice Barrès, in his romance "Les Déracinés",⁶ wields a sharp sword against the Kantian theory of knowledge, against his categorical imperative, against his exotic philosophy, which permits

⁴) *Thamiry, Les deux aspects de l'immanence*. Paris. 1908, p. 259; cf. *Fonsegrive, in La Quinzaine*, Jan. 1, 1897, p. 108; later in *Le Catholicisme et la vie de l'esprit*. 1906 (2^{ed.}), pp. 1-4.

⁵) For instance, *Leclère, Le mouvement catholique kantien en France. Kantstudien VII* (1902), p. 348.

⁶) Paris. 1897.

several pupils of the Lycée of Nancy to lapse step by step into unbelief, and one of them even to end as a robber and a murderer: first *déraciné* and then *décapité*.⁷

On the other hand, the Catholic pulpit and Catholic apologetics did not perhaps realize sufficiently their duty of defending the Faith with the weapons of genuine philosophy. Without robbing *Lacordaire* and *Gratry* of any of their glory, it may be truthfully said that their method of defense aimed in a one-sided fashion at showing the harmony between the spiritual and social needs of men and of Faith. In consequence, other thinkers were led to "laicize" *Lacordaire's* sermons, that is, to create an apologetics, which was constructed upon the basis of feeling, morality and sociology, rather than upon metaphysics. The temptation to do this was all the greater, since, despite the Church's condemnation of *Lamennais*, *Bautain* and *Bonnetty*, *Kant's* postulate of the practical reason shone like a star of hope and refuge amidst the positivistic darkness. Moreover, in the heads of many there buzzed the very ambiguous catch-word, that Faith contains "une part d'irrationnel", and must be wholly divorced from science. Finally, the tendency of our own age, which has turned away from speculation and aims predominantly at energetic action, also had a share in clamoring for a philosophy, which proceeds from action as its most certain and dearest principle. Thus, men hoped to be able to give to apologetics a new principle, which, by virtue of its power of appeal and attractiveness, would far surpass the intellectual apologetics of the past.⁸

I. APOLOGETICS OF IMMANENCE OR NEED.

The father of this "New Philosophy" is Bergson. Maurice Blondel,⁹ Abbé Denis, Leroy, Laberthonnière,¹⁰ elaborated and reconstructed it, and sought to place it in the service of apologetics. Its chief characteristics are the following.

⁷) *Gisler, ibid.*, pp. 253-256.

⁸) *Ibid.*, pp. 256, 257.

⁹) *Lettre sur les exigences de la pensée contemporaine en matière d'apologétique. — Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, Jan.—July, 1896.—*L'Action*. 1893.

¹⁰) Laberthonnière often attacked the old method of the theologians and scholastic philosophy in the *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*. The Sacred Congregation of the Index condemned the *Annales* that appeared between 1905 and 1913.

Moderate
Agnosticism.

A. 1. The advocates of this philosophy look upon intellectualism as plainly erroneous; they champion a *moderate agnosticism*.

Speculative reason alone, so they insist, cannot arrive at metaphysical truth; to be able to do so, the understanding must be grounded upon, and supported by, moral ideas and feelings, by aesthetic sentiments, and by impulses of the will. In other words, speculative reason can defend its ontological validity only according to the practical exigencies of human action. Aside from the exigencies of action, our speculative knowledge remains *notional* and *subjective*; it merely posits the problem of action and directs its solution; we arrive at objective reality by means of action.¹¹ Only that is true, which I embrace and experience with the totality of the soul's powers, not merely with my intellect, but with my whole soul; truth is the work of the *whole* spirit.¹² Accordingly, the proofs for God's existence, when considered only speculatively, are merely notional and do not prove the divine reality. The only correct dogmatism, is *moral* dogmatism, which makes *action*, not evident knowledge, the corner stone of philosophy, inasmuch as action imposes itself irresistibly as the condition of our

11) Blondel, *L'Action*, Paris, 1893, p. 463, writes: "Pour la science, entre ce qui paraît être à jamais et ce qui est, quelle différence saurait-on découvrir? et comment distinguer la réalité même d'avec invincible et permanente illusion, ou, pour ainsi parler, d'avec une apparence éternelle? Pour la pratique, il en est autrement: en faisant COMME SI c'est, seule elle possède ce qui est, si c'est vraiment". *Ibid.*, pp. 426-427: "Montrer que nous sommes forcément amenés à affirmer (quelle que soit d'ailleurs la valeur de cette assertion) la réalité des objets de la connaissance et des fins de l'action . . . ce n'est point, malgré le renouvellement de la perspective, sortir du déterminisme des phénomènes, c'est manifester comment, par cela seul que nous pensons et que nous agissons, il nous est nécessaire de faire comme si cet ordre universel était réel et ces obligations fondées". *Ibid.*, p. 297: "La Métaphysique a sa substance dans la volonté agissante. Elle n'a de vérité que sous cet aspect expérimental et dynamique: elle est moins une science de ce qui est que de ce qui fait être et devenir: l'idéal d'aujourd'hui peut être le réel de demain". *Ibid.*, p. 437: "La connaissance qui avant l'option était simplement subjective et propulsive, devient, après, privative et constitutive de l'être . . . La seconde de ces connaissances, celle qui succède à la détermination librement prise en face de cette réalité nécessairement conçue, n'est plus seulement une disposition subjective; au lieu de poser le problème pratique, elle en traduit la solution dans notre pensée; au lieu de nous mettre en présence de ce qui est à faire, elle recueille, dans ce qui est fait, ce qui est. C'est donc vraiment une connaissance objective, même alors qu'elle est réduite à constater le déficit de l'action".

12) A. Leclère, *Kantstudien*, VII (1902), p. 309 sq.

self-assertion and happiness. Action of this kind, or the longing for and the need of it, is the most certain groundwork for further intellectual operations; it is also the deepest and the primal ground, earlier even than thought, which is itself also action.¹³ Hence, the old definition of truth, as *adaequatio rei et intellectus*, must be rejected¹⁴ in favor of another definition, namely, *veritas est adaequatio realis mentis et vitae*. That is to say, we possess truth, when our mind knows and affirms the exigencies of our life and action.

The first operation of the spirit, therefore, is said to be a kind of surrender (by faith) to God and the Church. An immediate consequence of this viewpoint is the new and questionable teaching, that the knowledge of *Miracles* does not lead to Faith; on the contrary, we accept Miracles because we believe; a Miracle is really Faith's dearest child.

For, there are no natural rational proofs for Miracles; they are excluded for the very reason, that the constant

Attitude towards
External Criteria.

13) *L'Action*, p. XXI: "Abordant la science de l'action, il n'y a donc rien que je puisse tenir pour accordé, rien ni des faits, ni des principes, ni des devoirs; c'est à me retirer tout appui précaire que je viens de travailler. Qu'on ne prétende point, comme Descartes, par un artifice qui sent l'école tout sérieux qu'il est, extraire du doute et de l'illusion la réalité même de l'être; car je ne sens point de consistance dans cette réalité du rêve, elle est vide et reste hors de moi. Qu'on ne me parle point, avec Pascal, de jouer croix ou pile sur le néant de l'éternité; car parler ce serait déjà ratifier l'alternative. Qu'on ne me fasse pas, après Kant, surgir je ne sais de quelle nuit je ne sais quel Impératif catégorique; car je le traiterais en suspect et en intrus. Il faut, au contraire, accueillir toutes les négations qui s'entre-détruisent, comme s'il était possible de les admettre ensemble; il faut entrer dans tous les préjugés, comme s'ils étaient légitimes; dans toutes les erreurs, comme si elles étaient sincères", etc. *Ibid.*, pp. VII, VIII: "A consulter l'évidence immédiate, l'action dans ma vie est un fait, le plus général et le plus constant de tous . . . Toute règle de vie qui serait uniquement fondée sur une théorie philosophique et des principes abstraits serait téméraire: je ne puis différer d'agir jusqu'à ce que l'évidence ait paru, et toute évidence qui brille à l'esprit est partielle. Une pure connaissance ne suffit jamais à nous mouvoir parce qu'elle ne nous saisit pas tout entiers: en toute acte, il y a un acte de foi". *Ibid.*, p. XIII: "Il s'agit du tout de l'homme; ce n'est donc pas dans la pensée seule qu'on doit le chercher. C'est dans l'action qu'il va falloir transporter le centre de la philosophie, parce que là se trouve le centre de la vie".

14) Blondel, *Point de départ de la recherche philosophique*, in *Annales de Philosophie chrétienne*, 1906, art. 1, p. 235: "A l'abstraite et chimérique *adaequatio rei et intellectus* se substitue . . . l'*adaequatio realis mentis et vitae*".

regularity of nature's operations is not something grounded in the world of reality itself; rather this regularity is fictitiously ascribed to it and thrown over it, like an artificial net, by our understanding. The world of external reality is wholly indeterministic, everything (hence, laws too) is changeable and fluent. Thoroughly convinced of the changeableness of all natural laws, modern science does not venture, save only provisionally, to formulate a single law as irrefragable.¹⁵ In other words, apart from the exigencies of human action, speculative reason cannot know with certainty ontological reality, nor any separate extramental fact. The separation of phenomena, like the fixity of nature's laws, is due solely to our subjective conception, not to reality itself which is ever changing. Hence, a Miracle is not a derogation from the laws of nature as they are in themselves, but as they appear to us, *dérogations "aux apparences anthropomorphiques"*, as Blondel writes: or *dérogations "à un ordre illusoire"* according to P. Laberthonnière.¹⁶

Accordingly, the advocates of the "New Philosophy" refuse to acknowledge the philosophical knowability of the proving force of a Miracle. That is to say, the *ontological value of a Miracle*, as a token of the special divine intervention for the purpose of confirming and proving the Fact of Revelation, which is admitted by common sense, cannot be defended philosophically and scientifically. For them, a Miracle possesses only *symbolic value*, that is, it manifests to us the presence of God in the world and in our life, thereby directing our minds to examine the religion, which it symbolically confirms. Nay more, this symbolic value of a Miracle can be perceived only by minds, which are already conscious of the exigencies of moral human action, and rightly disposed to admit God's activity in ordinary facts.

Hence, according to Blondel,¹⁷ if a Miracle be examined metaphysically, no more will be discovered in it than in ordinary facts; even the most ordinary fact embodies the

¹⁵) Gisler, *ibid.*, pp. 258, 259.

¹⁶) cf. *Bulletin de la Société française de Philosophie*, June 1911, p. 144 . . . March 1912, p. 143; also P. DeTonquédec, *Immanence*, pp. 200-227.

¹⁷) *L'Action*, p. 396: "L'idée de lois fixes dans la nature n'est qu'une idole; chaque phénomène est un cas singulier et une solution unique. A aller au fond des choses, il n'y a rien de plus sans doute dans le miracle que dans la moindre des fait ordinaires: mais aussi il n'y a rien de moins dans le plus ordinaire des faits que dans le miracle: et voilà le sens de ces brusqueries exceptionnelles qui provoquent la réflexion à des conclusions plus générales. Ce qu'elles révèlent c'est que le divin n'est pas seulement dans ce qui semble dépasser la puissance accoutumée de l'homme et de la nature, mais

same content as a Miracle, for, in all facts the presence of God's activity is apparent to a mind rightly disposed; only a *Miracle compels our attention, and symbolically incites us to examine into religion*. Thus, the proving force of Miracles is made subordinate to the exigencies of our action, that is, to the method of immanence.

The same is true as regards "moral" Miracles, for instance, the marvelous life of the Church.^{17a}

2. Bergson and Blondel also agree as regards the principle of *Immanence* (from the Latin, *in manère*, i. e., the quality of any action which begins and ends within the agent) and its transcendental consequences. Their philosophy starts with the *Ego*; they refuse to admit anything as a fact, especially in a religious respect, unless the grounds of that fact are found within the *Ego*. Nothing can enter into man, so they insist, which does not proceed from him and manifest itself in some way as a postulate, or a need, of his soul. Every truth, every duty, every command, must be in a sense autonomous and autochthonous; it may not be presented to me simply and solely from without as a historical fact, a traditional doctrine, or duty. Hence, the apologist ought to show that of ourselves alone we are, in point of fact, not self-sufficient; that our thought and action *need* certain desiderata and requisita; grace, Revelation, an infallible teaching authority, etc. In order to live and to act in accordance with reason and conscience, we seek for powers higher than our own, we need a supplement

Philosophy of Immanence.

partout là même où nous estimons volontiers que l'homme et la nature se suffisent. Les miracles ne sont donc miraculeux qu'au regard de ceux qui sont déjà prêts à reconnaître l'action divine dans les événements et les actes les plus habituels. Ces coups brusques n'agissent qu'autant qu'on en saisit, *non pas les merveilleux sensibles, qu'est-ce que cela, mais le sens symbolique*".

^{17a}) *Ibid.*, p. 395: "Qu'ils soient ou non surnaturels en leur principe, ce n'est point dans les signes sensibles eux-mêmes, qu'il faut voir l'origine de notre idée de révélation. C'est par le développement de l'activité pratique et grâce à l'effort de la volonté pour s'élever à son propre élan, qu'est né, on a vu comment, le besoin d'une correspondance extérieure et d'un complément nécessaire à notre action intime". *Ibid.*, p. 397: "Ce n'est donc pas de la révélation même (dans l'hypothèse où elle n'est pas), ni des phénomènes naturels (dans l'hypothèse où elle n'est pas) que peut venir à l'homme l'idée de préceptes ou de dogmes révélés. C'est d'une initiative interne que jaillit cette notion".

from the supernatural order. The apologist ought to make it plain that our inmost soul calls out: The supernatural is necessary for us to enable us to live as we ought.^{17b}

Apologetics of Immanence.

B. Armed with the philosophy of Immanence, Blondel next proceeds to construct the *Apologetics of Immanence*.

He discards the traditional, doctrinal, objective and rational apologetics¹⁸, which, he says, aimed at emphasizing only objective Faith, and wholly neglected its subjective side, the Act of Faith, the preparation for Faith.¹⁹ In Blondel's opinion the apologetic method of Fonsegrive, Brunetière and others, is also inefficacious. They believed that the chief task of apologetics was the subjective preparation of the believer, but it was to be effected by psychological means, namely, by disclosing the beauty, the moral and social usefulness, the universal harmony between Faith and the aspirations of the human spirit. However, Blondel is convinced that to impress the modern mentality, which has been brought up in the school of Criticism, we must employ arguments of a totally different kind. It has often been said that metaphysics is gone, never to return. Blondel offers to show how this metaphysics can return after all under a *new and totally different form*. Without such a metaphysics one cannot even touch the problem, to say nothing of solving it.²⁰

Therefore, the Apologetics of Immanence claims to be strictly philosophical. It takes as its starting point "Action"; from this point of vantage it seeks to develop

^{17b}) Gisler, *ibid.*, p. 259; cf. E. Thimary, art. "Immanence", in CE. VII, p. 682 sq; also Aug. and Alb. Valensin, art. "Immanence (Doctrines et Méthode d')", in DAFC, fasc. VIII, colls. 569 sq; with appended bibliography.

¹⁸) Blondel, *Lettre sur les exigences de la pensée contemporaine en matière d'apologétique et sur la méthode de la philosophie dans l'étude du problème religieux. Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, Jan.-July, 1896, p. 83: "S'opiniâtrer à restaurer ce qui dans l'ancienne école est mort, au moyen d'un rationalisme mort, c'est d'avance retomber sous les coups de la double critique qui a tué la pseudo-philosophie chrétienne par la métaphysique de la transcendance, et qui a tué la pseudo-philosophie rationaliste par la doctrine de l'immanence, elle-même dépassée".

¹⁹) *Lettre*, p. 22.

²⁰) Blondel, *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, Nov. 1895, p. 189.

all truth.²¹ What does Blondel understand by "Action"? He means the concrete act of vital thought, which reflects for us our own-selves and all things else.²² Now, *Action postulates the supernatural*: "The progress of our will compels us to admit our insufficiency, leads us to the desire of some help (au besoin d' un surcroît), enables us, not, indeed, to create or to define it, but to recognize and to accept it".²³

If the will has not found *full* satisfaction in individual and social activity, it seeks it beyond the world of phenomena, in the Infinite, in order to pay worship to it, but in a superstitious manner, by materializing it as a fetish, or by anthropomorphizing it, drawing near to it by petitions and sacrifices, or by deifying ethical ideals after the manner of Kant, or by deifying metaphysical phantoms, constructions, the ideals of science and of art, and thus is a believer—a negative believer—despite the rejection of all dogmas; or the will espouses a new mysticism, which assumes an unbounded critical attitude, and pays homage to a progressive action for action's sake, without an object, without faith, without rites, without priests.²⁴ It is impossible to mistake the impotency and insufficiency of the whole order of nature. Accordingly, an inventory of our immanent resources "brings to light, on the one hand, our irrepressible aspirations towards the infinitely True, Good, and Beautiful, and, on the other hand, the insufficiency of our means to attain these ends. This comparison shows that our nature, left to itself, is not in a state of equilibrium".²⁵

But whither are we to go? Where can we find salvation? We wish to be self-sufficient, and we cannot be. If we are to find the *One Thing Necessary (l'unique nécessaire)*; if our

²¹) Blondel, *L'Action*, p. 465: "A la vérité du primat de l'action, 'au commencement était l'Action', répond la grande affirmation de l'égalité primauté de la vérité: 'Principio erat Verbum'. Ce règne de la vérité est tout entier hors de nous, elle ne sera jamais désarmée de son sceptre de fer; mais aussi ce règne de la vérité est tout entier en nous, puisque nous en produisons en nous-mêmes toutes les despotiques exigences . . . Du moindre de nos actes, du moindre des faits, il suffit de tirer ce qui s'y trouve, pour rencontrer l'inévitable présence, non pas seulement d'une abstraite cause première, mais du seul auteur et du vrai consommateur de toute réalité concrète. Jusqu'au dernier détail du dernier des phénomènes imperceptibles, l'action médiatrice fait la vérité et l'être de tout ce qui est".

²²) *Lettre*, p. 57.

²³) *Lettre*, p. 38.

²⁴) *L'Action*, pp. 306-318.

²⁵) Thimary, art. "Immanence", in CE VII, p. 686.

nature is to achieve its destiny, "it needs a help which is essentially beyond it—a transcendent help"²⁶; we must ascend from the sphere of the immanent to the sphere of the *transcendent*. This *l'unique nécessaire* cannot be proved by demonstration and deduction. Metaphysical conceptions and definitions ought not, indeed, to be rejected; but they are, of themselves, sterile phantoms of reason. The concept of a First Cause, or of an Ethical Ideal, or the ideas of a metaphysical perfection, of an actus purus, are vain, false and idolatrous, when looked at in themselves, as abstract thoughts; but they are true, vitally efficacious, when they are taken as *practical certitudes*, which satisfy the will: "C'est donc dans la pratique même que la certitude de l'unique nécessaire a son fondement"²⁷.

In like manner supernatural Revelation, with its dogmas and precepts, can acquire certainty for us only in this way. It is certain for us, only if we offer to it a *receptivity* (disposition d'obéissance) free from all selfish strivings; if we accept that Revelation as a gift coming from God, which makes possible for us a higher life in Faith and action, and which atones for, and redeems, us from the defects and failings, which attach to our nature. However, in order to be believed, as it ought to be believed, revealed doctrine must itself offer the grounds of Faith and prove its certainty. In this respect, the only proof that can be of service is an *efficacious experimental proof* (une expérimentation effective). Faith does not enter into the heart by means of thought; rather it is practical action, which draws down from above a divine light for the spirit. God is operative in this action; hence, the thought, which follows upon action, is richer as regards the Infinite than the thought which precedes it.²⁸

Summary.

To sum up: According to Blondel present day philosophers are thoroughly wedded to the principle of *immanence*; they regard human reason as autonomous and autochthonous, and refuse to accept anything *from without*, that is not required for the perfect and connatural

²⁶) *Ibid.*, p. 686.

²⁷) *L'Action*, pp. 319-320.

²⁸) *Ibid.*, pp. 397-403, summarized in Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 206-207.

evolution of our faculties.²⁹ Hence, when the apologist proposes the Christian Religion as supernatural, that is, as something, imposed from without, which must be accepted under the pain of eternal damnation, he meets at once with the bitterest opposition. To cope with this modern mentality, he must start with the principle of immanence. He ought to show that the supernatural, although not due to human nature, is, nevertheless, in some way demanded *from within*, as a help for the perfect evolution of our action; hence, we must embrace it. This method consists "in equating within our own consciousness, what we seem to think, to wish and to do, with what we really do, wish, and think, in such a way that in the fictitious negations, or the ends artificially desired, those profound affirmations and irresistible needs, which they imply, shall still be found". This internal analysis, this psychologic examination of conscience, brings the human soul to recognize itself as relative to a transcendent Being, thereby setting before us the problem of God. It arouses in man a more vivid consciousness of his weakness and his need of help, thereby impelling him to acts of humility, which inspire prayer and attract grace.³⁰ Thus, Blondel advocates a *relative*, not an absolute, *immanence* as understood by Modernists. The latter assert that the Catholic Religion proceeds from our vital immanence, in accordance with the evolution of the natural religious sense; whereas the former only affirms that the Catholic Religion, although supernatural and revealed by God, is *postulated by our*

²⁹) Blondel, *Lettre sur les exigences de la Pensée contemporaine en matière d'Apologetique*, in *Annales de Philosophie chrétienne*, Jan.-July, 1896, p. 600: "La pensée moderne avec une susceptibilité jalouse considère la notion d'immanence comme la condition même de la philosophie; c'est à dire que, si parmi les idées régnantes, il y a un résultat auquel elle s'attache comme à un progrès certain, c'est l'idée très juste en son fond que rien ne peut entrer en l'homme qui ne sorte de lui et ne corresponde en quelque façon à un besoin d'expansion, et que ni comme fait historique, ni comme enseignement traditionnel, ni comme obligation surajoutée du dehors, il n'y a pour lui vérité qui compte et précepte admissible sans être, de quelque manière, autonome et autochtone".

³⁰) Thamiy, *ibid.*, p. 686.

nature from within; it does indeed transcend the powers of our nature, but not the *exigencies* of our nature. Within us, there are aspirations for something higher, for the Infinite and the Divine, which we desire as our ultimate end, from within, by the necessity of our nature. But we cannot attain to this Infinite Being without His help; hence, our nature intrinsically demands a supernatural help from God, that is, Divine Revelation. It also demands a Mediator and Saviour, in order that through His assistance we may be able to approach God. Thus, "a method of immanence developed in its integrity becomes exclusive of a doctrine of immanence." Blondel next endeavors to show by history, that these Divine helps, which our nature demands, are found solely in Christianity and in the Catholic Church. Thereupon the divine origin of Catholicism, which is manifested symbolically by Miracles and the marvelous life of the Church, becomes *practically certain* through our *experience* of the Christian Religion under grace.³¹ Consequently, by the *credibility* of the mysteries of Faith the advocates of relative immanence understand their *aptitude for belief, inasmuch as they appear conformable to the aspirations and exigencies of our nature.*³²

CRITICISM

False Principles
Closely akin
to Kantianism.

1. The philosopher of Königsberg might object here and there to an important point in the "Nouvelle Philosophie" of Bergson, Blondel, and their pupils; but, on the whole, he would discern much of his own spirit reflected therein. He would find there the subjectivistic conception of the world and of certitude—both in part the product of the mind itself, and dependent upon emotional and volitional factors; he would recognize there especially the concept of immanence. Just as Kant

³¹) cf. *L'Action*, p. 402.

³²) P. Fr. Reg. Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *Theologia fundamentalis secundum S. Thomae doctrinam*. Romae et Parisiis. 1918, vol. I, p. 125 sq., vol. II, p. 3 sq., (3rd ed., 1925), pp. 44 sq., 317 sq.

makes the ideas of God, of free will, of immortality, proceed from the idea of duty, so, too, these philosophers look upon all religious dogmas as flowing from the totality of the soul's needs. Finally, Kant, the energetic opponent of the so-called "statutory" in Religion, could point to the idea of religious evolution in the "New Philosophy", as well as to the mystic, emotional element in Faith. Hence, he might rejoice that his "*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*", his "*Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*", and his "*Streit der Fakultäten*", had not been written in vain, at least as far as these Frenchmen are concerned. He might even show that the French Immanentists had outstripped him, inasmuch as they have made theoretical reason dependent upon practical reason to a far greater degree than he himself had done, since they ascribe to the emotional, volitional and moral element, to Action, the primary role in the *whole* process of knowledge.³³

a) The Apologetics of Immanence, or Need, rests, in the first place, upon the erroneous doctrine of *semi-agnosticism*.

These philosophers champion the agnosticism of speculative reason, as is evident from their definition of truth. For them, truth is not the "*adaequatio seu conformitas rei et intellectus*"; they conceive truth in a merely subjective manner as "*adaequatio seu conformitas mentis et vitae*". That is to say, only that judgment is true, which is in conformity with the exigencies of our life. Hence, extramental reality can be known only according to the exigencies of human action; *only practical certitude is obtainable*. But according to St. Thomas, only the truth of the practical intellect, or the truth of prudence, depends "*on the conformity with a right appetite*".³⁴ And the rectitude of the appetite depends on the first principles of reason, which are true accordingly as they are *in conformity with the thing itself*.³⁵ Hence, it is difficult to see how these philosophers can escape the condemnation which the Church placed upon the kindred

Semi-agnosticism.

³³) A. Leclère, *Kantstudien* VII (1892), p. 360 sq; Gisler, *ibid.*; p. 263.

³⁴) *ST.* I, II, q. 57, a. 5, ad 3.

³⁵) Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, II, p. 3, foot-note; (3rd ed.), p. 297, foot-note.

viewpoint of the Modernists: "Veritas non est immutabilis plus quam ipse homo, quippe quae cum ipso, in ipso et per ipsum evolvitur"³⁶

An immediate consequence of this agnosticism is the denial of the philosophical knowability of Miracles, and also of the existence of God. Likewise, if the concepts in which dogmatic formulae are expressed, lack ontological and transcendental validity, the dogmas also lose their absolute truth and immutability. Thus, again these philosophers seem to approximate to the teaching of the twenty-sixth condemned proposition of the Modernists: "Dogmata fidei retinenda sunt tantummodo juxta sensum practicum, id est tamquam norma praeceptiva agendi, non vero tamquam norma credendi"³⁷

Therefore, the semi-agnosticism of these philosophers leads to strict agnosticism.³⁸

Semi-immanen-
tism.

The second foundation of the "New Philosophy" is the principle of *semi-immanentism*, which exaggerates our natural desire for the supernatural, and thus leads to the error of Baianism.³⁹

For, if the Catholic Religion is demanded by our nature, it is *due* to us, and thus is not supernatural. For, the supernatural is not merely above the powers, but also above the *exigencies* of nature. What our nature demands is only natural beatitude, which consists in an abstractive knowledge of God, and in a natural love proportionate to that knowledge. Compare this viewpoint with the condemned proposition of Baius: "Humanae naturae sublimatio et exaltatio in consortium divinae naturae debita fuit integritati primae condicionis, et proinde naturalis dicenda est, et non supernaturalis"⁴⁰

Rejoinder of the
New Philosophy.

The advocates of the "New Philosophy", for example, P. Laberthonnière⁴¹, reply that *Blondel can and ought to be*

³⁶) DB. n. 2058.

³⁷) DB. n. 2026.

³⁸) Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 129, (3rd ed.), p. 48.

³⁹) *Ibid.*, I, pp. 129, 130; (3rd ed.), pp. 48, 49.

⁴⁰) DB. n. 1021. Thus, also Pius X teaches in his Encyclical "*Pascendi dominici gregis*": "We have grave reason to complain that there are Catholics who, while rejecting *immanence* as a doctrine, employ it as a method of apologetics, and who do this so impudently that they seem to admit, not merely a capacity and a suitability for the supernatural as such, as has at all times been emphasized within due limits by Catholic apologists, but that there is in human nature a true and rigorous need for the supernatural order". (DB. n. 2103).

⁴¹) Cf. *Annales de Philosophie chrétienne*, March-April, 1897; IDEM, *Essais de philosophie religieuse*, p. 168 sq.

If supernatural demanded by our nature it is due to our nature.

interpreted more benignly, and that his doctrine, far from deserving the strictures mentioned above, really merits our commendation. For, Blondel, so they explain, is *not* speaking of human nature *in the abstract*; he has in mind man, not as he might have been created according to the exigencies of nature; rather he is speaking of human nature *in the concrete*, as it exists here and now; he is discoursing on man, destined as he is to the supernatural order. Now, man does not find himself in a purely natural state or condition; he is really under the influence of actual grace, which impels him to turn to God, the Author of the supernatural order, even though he does not actually possess habitual grace and supernatural Faith. Even in the state of fallen nature, the human soul experiences within itself a certain vague consciousness, almost wholly obliterated indeed, of its original elevation to the supernatural order and of its Divine dignity, as St. Augustine teaches.⁴² Moreover, in the present order every Divine dispensation is fraught with God's grace; hence, it is not temerity to assert that in man certain pious desires and aspirations well up, under the impulse of grace to be sure, which argue an exigency of the supernatural order. Therefore, so these philosophers maintain, we may hold that even before he has a perfect knowledge of Revelation, man may experience a certain need of the supernatural order. However, this experience is not due to human nature left to itself, but inasmuch as it is subject to the influence of Divine grace, which is continually moving man to Faith.⁴³

It is not necessary that this aspiration towards Christianity be perceived in our consciousness, since it is, strictly speaking, supernatural in its end or purpose; it suffices that we be conscious of our *incapacity* to fulfil the highest tendencies of our soul, and that we recognize that these aspirations may find their satisfaction in Christianity. We are able to experience our own restlessness of soul, even as St. Augustine did when he wrote: "Irrequietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in Te".⁴⁴ Hence, even though this postulate of our nature is *not immediately evident*, still, anyone who knows how to interpret the immediate and

⁴²) *De spiritu et littera*, c. 28: "non usque adeo imago Dei terrenorum affectuum labe detrita est, ut nulla in ea velut lineamenta extrema remanserint; unde merito dici possit etiam in ipsa impietate vitae suae aliqua legis divinae sapere".

⁴³) Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 130; (3rd ed.), p. 49; cf. Aemil. Dorch, S. J., *Institutiones theologiae fundamentalis*. Oeniponte, 1916, I, p. 487.

⁴⁴) Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 130; (3rd ed.), p. 49.

spontaneous tendency of the soul, which, as Tertullian says, is "naturally Christian", will recognize that postulate under the things which are systematically offered to the soul, and impinge upon the consciousness. We cannot, indeed, know the supernatural as such; but there is doubtless much more in reality than in our power of apprehension; hence, from what we know of reality or of action, we deduce some knowledge of that reality as existing outside ourselves, and as postulated by our immanent appetite, even though it does not exist within our apprehension.⁴⁵

Thus, according to this interpretation of Blondel's doctrine, *grace* or the operation of the Holy Spirit moves a certain exigency within our souls, and by virtue of that movement leads us to Revealed Religion, in fact, to the Christian Religion. For the aspirations, which we experience within, and which are excited by the exigency already latent in our souls, are far more sublime than our immanent powers, which of themselves alone are incapable of satisfying these tendencies. Looking about, we discover in a certain concrete religion, that is, in Christianity, the way that makes it possible for us to satisfy these aspirations. Hence, we are led to embrace that religion as the right way, and thus the motions and illuminations of Divine grace are for us indications and proofs of supernatural truth.⁴⁶

This Rejoinder leaves the Problem unsolved.

This rejoinder of the "New Philosophy" does not really solve the question at issue; it merely *defers* it. The problem in regard to the original and primal destiny of the human race to a supernatural end, still clamors for solution. Is this destiny to a supernatural end altogether gratuitous, or is it postulated from within, as these apologists would prove by the principle of immanence?—For, this principle of immanence is either securely rooted in the original ordering or destiny of the human race to a supernatural end, or it is not. If it is not, then the "New Apologetics" does not prove its contention, and the objections of Naturalism remain unsolved. If, on the contrary, it is safely lodged in that divine decree by which God destines mankind to a supernatural end, how is it possible to avoid the error of Baius?—There is no escape from this dilemma, save perhaps by a worse error, namely, by the denial of the ontological value of our reason: thus, the exigency of the

⁴⁵ J. V. Bainvel, *De vera religione et apologetica*. Paris, 1914, pp. 139, 140.

⁴⁶ Dorsch, S. J., *ibid.*, I, p. 489.

supernatural order would be merely subjectively, not objectively, necessary.⁴⁷

c) *The Apologetics of Immanence, or Need, does not prove the credibility or the divine origin of Christianity, rather it approximates to Fideism.* Fideism.

It does, indeed, to a certain extent show that Christianity is a beautiful and attractive religion, and deserving of religious experience; nay more, that it is morally necessary to enable the modern man to live in accordance with the dignity of human nature. But this does not prove that the Catholic Religion, with all its dogmas and precepts, must be believed most firmly and irrevocably by Divine Faith, and that there never will be a more perfect religion than the Christian. Agnostic prejudices and the almost exclusive use of internal subjective motives render such a proof ineffectual.⁴⁸

This method presents a *false notion of credibility*, for, it identifies Divine Faith, more or less, with *religious experience*, which is common to all religions.⁴⁹ Divine Faith is grounded on the authority of God revealing, and not on religious experience. According to Blondel, the divine origin of Catholicism becomes certain only in a *practical* way, that is, through the experience of the Christian Religion, under the assistance of grace. The Catholic Church, on the contrary, teaches that our rational certitude as regards the Fact of Revelation ought to be much stronger, in order that we may be able to believe most firmly on the authority of God revealing.⁵⁰

Moreover, a man who does not yet believe, but is conscious of the need of faith, is counselled by these new apologists to act as though he already believed, in order that he may arrive at certitude as regards Revelation, by means of this action or experience of Catholicism. But how is it possible to have this experience of Catholicism without receiving the Sacraments, and how can one receive the Sacraments who does not as yet believe? This attitude of mind closely approximates to the conception of the Modernists condemned by Pius X: "The aim he (the Modernist) sets

⁴⁷ Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 130; (3rd ed.), p. 49. For a deeper critical examination of this part of Blondel's doctrine the student might consult P. De Tonquédec, *Immanence*. Paris, 1913, p. 155 sq; also Alb. Valensin, art. "Immanence (*Methode d'*)", in DAFC, fasc. VIII, col. 600 sq.

⁴⁸ Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, II, p. 4; (3rd ed.), p. 298.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, II, p. 4; (3rd ed.), p. 298.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, I, p. 130; (3rd ed.), pp. 49, 50.

before himself is to make one, who is still without faith, attain that *experience* of the Catholic religion, which, according to the system, is the sole basis of faith".⁵¹ And "if you ask", so the Encyclical adds, "on what foundation this assertion of the believer rests, he answers: In the personal *experience* of the individual. On this head, the Modernists differ from the Rationalists, only to fall into the views of the Protestants and pseudo-Mystics".⁵²

2. In the light of this critical appreciation of the method of relative immanence, the chief *limitations* and *excellencies* of the method may be summarized under the following heads.

Limitations of Method.

a) In the first place, the scope of *this method is limited by the very same exigencies which it formulates*, that is, by the exigencies of the "philosophers", the élite, at least under the rigorous form which the scientific application of the theory implies. Hence, Blondel's "L'Action" is not a popular apologetics.⁵³

b) The psychologic analysis of man's present misery and needs on the one hand, and of his legitimate aspirations on the other, manifests the fact, that man is not self-sufficient and that he *needs some divine help*, in order to arrive at his natural end, namely, the fulfillment of all the precepts of the natural law. But this does not prove that this help must necessarily be *supernatural*. For, strictly speaking, God might also offer to man sufficient natural assistance to enable him to reach his final end, as we have shown in the chapter on the Necessity of Revelation.⁵⁴ Hence, if we experience certain vague aspirations for this *superadditum*, we may not conclude with certainty that it is supernatural in the strict theological connotation of that term. In the present order of the human race, a supernatural help is, indeed, necessary, but only because, as Revelation informs us, mankind has been destined to a supernatural end. This fact, however, can be known with certainty only through history, not by purely philosophical reasoning.⁵⁵

Therefore, *this method of itself alone is impotent to prove the fact of the supernatural*. As Thamiry says, it

51) DB. n. 2101.

52) DB. n. 2081.

53) Alb. Valensin, *ibid.*, col. 609.

54) Baierl, *The Theory of Revelation*, I, sec. 1, p. 123 sq.

55) Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis theologiae dogmaticae*. Romae, Tornaci, Parisiis. 1922. (19^{ed.}), I, pp. 56, 58.

is doubtful whether this method, by its immanent analysis of human action, can bring the believer to hear and heed "the appeal of preventive or sanctifying grace", which would then express itself in psychologic facts discernible by observation and philosophical analysis (Cardinal Dechamps); whether it would enable us to experience God, or at least "to find in our action the supernatural element which is said to enter into His Constitution" (P. Laberthonnière); whether, finally, it would justify us in affirming with certitude, that the object of our "irrepressible aspirations" is a "supernatural Unnamed" (Blondel), an object which is "beyond and above the natural order" (Ligeard). All such attempts, "when they lead to anything, seem to do so only at the price of confounding the notion of the transcendent with that of the preternatural, or even of the supernatural—or, again, at the price of confounding the divine co-operation and divine grace. In a word, if the psychologic analysis of the tendencies of human nature ends in 'showing, without recourse to what Revelation gives us, that man desires infinitely more than the natural order can give him' (Ligeard), it does not follow that we can say with any certainty that this 'desired increase' is a supernatural Unnamed. As a matter of fact, (1) the natural order far exceeds in vastness the object of my analysis; (2) between my nature and the supernatural there is the preternatural; (3) the aids to which my nature aspires, and which God gives me, are not necessarily of the supernatural order. Besides, even if a supernatural action does in fact manifest itself under these religious aspirations, immanent analysis, apprehending only psychological phenomena, cannot detect it".⁵⁶

The method of relative immanence manifests certain excellencies of a legitimate scope.

Excellencies of the Method.

a) *It can help man to arrive at Faith*. For, normally it is necessary to have the *desire to believe* (*pius credulitatis affectus*) as a preliminary step to faith. St. Thomas says: "Cum alicui proponuntur aeterna bona, primo vult ea, secundo vult eis inhaerere per amorem, et tertio vult sperare ea, et quarto vult credere ea ut credens possit jam sperare et amare et habere".⁵⁷ Since the method of relative immanence stimulates the desire, not, indeed, of the supernatural as such, but of some help, it disposes, at least

56) Art. "Immanence" in CE. VII, pp. 686, 687.

57) *III Sent.* dist. 23, q. 2, a. 5 ad 4; cf. St. Augustine, *De quantitate animae*, c. xix, n. 24; *De vera religione*, c. x, n. 20; *De utilitate credendi*, c. xvi, n. 34; *De ordine*, 1. II, c. xix, n. 51.

negatively, a person of good will to embrace whatever offers to satisfy all his exigencies and aspirations.

b) *It also offers to philosophical thought the justification for man's adherence by faith to the supernatural.* For, it shows that the supernatural, the gift of God to man, is neither tyranny nor something foreign to reason. Hence, it cannot be said that the problem of the supernatural is inconceivable and inadmissible.⁵⁸

c) Finally, it is an excellent means to *prepare the way for the historical demonstration of Divine Revelation.* For, it enables the modern mind, which proclaims the autonomy of reason, to recognize man's insufficiency and his need of some superadded assistance, thereby disposing it to consider the external criteria of Catholicism. Therefore, we concede to this method a certain *priority of time, but not of value*, that is to say, a priority as regards preparing the inquirer, not in itself and from the objective viewpoint.⁵⁹

Cardinal
Dechamps.

The Redemptorist, and afterwards Archbishop of Malines, Belgium, *Cardinal Dechamps*, has worked out an apologetic demonstration, which embraces the method of relative immanence and the traditional, historical demonstration. The manifold arguments, so he maintains, internal and external, ought to be combined into a homogeneous and formal unity, thus forming a complete apologetics (*apologétique integrale*). He states the program in these words: "Ecoute et regarde, dit-il: Il n'y a que deux faits à vérifier, l'un en vous, l'autre hors de vous; ils se recherchent pour s'embrasser, de tous les deux, le témoin c'est vous-même".⁶⁰ Thus, he grounds the apologetic demonstration upon a twofold fact, the one *interior*, the other *exterior*.

The former is the starting-point, and consists in the consciousness of our needs, especially in relation to religion and morality. "Who is satisfied with his natural condition? Who does not yearn for a more perfect condition? Who does not perceive in his soul a true echo of those words of St. Paul: 'Every creature groaneth, and travaileth in pain until now' . . . Therefore, it is true that nature longs for the supernatural, which ought to heal and perfect it, and that Deism, which denies the positive, supernatural and living order of the relation existing between God and man, is a

⁵⁸) Alb. Valensin, *ibid.*, col. 608.

⁵⁹) Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 131; (3^{ed.}), p. 298.

⁶⁰) *De la Demonstration de la Foi ou Entretiens sur la demonstration catholique de la révélation chrétienne.* Premier Entretien, p. 1 (H. Dessain, Malines).

doctrine contrary to nature. The supernatural is not contrary to nature, but rather the healing, exaltation, perfection of nature". We feel the need of some authority, in which we can have full confidence as regards the things necessary for our final end. In consequence, we are prepared to offer an attentive and docile ear to this authority, provided, of course, that it can show that it is worthy of credence.

The external fact is the *Church*, which lays claim to infallible *authority* in religious matters, and which by virtue of the great number of her members, her qualities and the splendid benefits, which she unceasingly confers in the religious and moral sphere, gains the friendship of souls and appears truly worthy of our credence and allegiance. The apologist realizes, of course, that he must search the records of the past for the credentials of the Church. Therefore, he opens up the Gospels and studies them according to the historical method, and establishes the transcendence of Christianity, and the right of the Church to her title of "catholic". The force of this demonstration is in the sources. But its practical efficacy, its aptitude to take hold of men, will not appear independently of actual conditions. Hence, the external fact must be joined with the internal fact.⁶¹

These two different methods of demonstration do not place before the apologist paths theoretically equivalent, and separately capable of leading to a decisive conclusion; rather both of them are indispensable, but in different ways, for a full and complete demonstration. And their synthesis is in the living man. For the act by which man adheres to Faith, is not the simple resultant of an historical inquiry in accordance with positive methods. This act is preceded by the gift of God, namely, grace. The beginning of this process is within the soul. It ends by facing the external fact. Hence, the "*apologétique integrale*" is both internal and external.⁶²

Some authors, it is true, are unsympathetic towards this method of Cardinal Dechamps and, for various reasons, accuse it of subjectivism and traditionalism. However, it is practically the method advanced by the Vatican Council.⁶³ For instance, P. A. Matignon, S. J., objects that the proof resting on the innate needs of the human heart, is not a real demonstration and does not beget full certi-

⁶¹) Dechamps, *Oeuvres*, (H. Dessain), Malines, t. I, III, IV, XVI; cf. Alb. Valensin, *ibid.*, colls. 610, 611; Tanquerey, *ibid.*, I, pp. 44, 45.

⁶²) Alb. Valensin, *ibid.*, col. 611.

⁶³) DB. n. 1785-1794; cf. J. V. Bainvel, S. J., *ibid.*, p. 136.

tude.⁶⁴ To this the Cardinal replied, that the psychological need and its disclosure are, to be sure, no argument for the necessity of supernatural Revelation, but only for its credibility, and that the apologetic proof that proceeds from this argument does not render superfluous the demonstration drawn from external facts, but rather presupposes it, and from this viewpoint is really a demonstrative proof on intrinsic grounds.⁶⁵

II. PSYCHOLOGICO-MORAL APOLOGETICS.

General Characterisation.

Akin to Blondel's method of Immanence, and yet differing from it, is the method espoused by Ollé-Laprune, Fonsegrive, Denis, Brunetière and others. Their aim is to deduce a proof for the truth of the Christian Religion from the harmony of Christianity with the inmost aspirations of the soul, with the laws of reason and morality, with the postulates of life. Nature and the Christian Religion are in perfect accord. This form of apologetic demonstration may be termed the Psychologico-Moral Apologetics, or the Apologetics of Value, or Social Apologetics.

Ollé-Laprune, Denis and Fonsegrive reject Kantianism; they do not question the ability of theoretical reason to prove the existence of God.⁶⁶ But speculative proofs, so they insist, no longer exert much influence over the modern mentality; *moral* and *psychological* arguments, on the other hand, appeal to minds educated in Kantianism and modern philosophy. If we are to gain access to the modern mind, it is necessary to take man as we find him, and to speak the language which he understands.⁶⁷ Brunetière advocates a similar method. Let us examine these aspects of the "New Apologetics" more in detail.

⁶⁴) *Le Question du Surnaturel*. Paris. 1861, pp. 10-12.

⁶⁵) Dechamps, *Pie IX et les erreurs contemporains*. 1864, pp. 291-305; cf. Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 201.

⁶⁶) Ollé-Laprune, *De la certitude morale*. Paris. 1880, p. 105. For Fonsegrive cf. *Quinzaine*, March 16, 1907: *Novissima verba*.

⁶⁷) Fonsegrive, *Le catholicisme et la vie de l'esprit*. Paris. 1906, pp. 9, 58, 70. Ollé-Laprune, *Le prix de la vie*. Paris. 1909, (3^eed.), p. 105 sq., *Les sources de la paix intellectuelles*. Paris. (5^eed.), p. 73.

Ollé-Laprune

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Leon Ollé-Laprune (1839-1898) was instrumental in establishing a new school of apologetics in France. His doctrine, which finds expression in various works,⁶⁸ is written with an enthusiastic conviction and a deep and splendid eloquence. He distinguishes, in the first place, between *religion* and *philosophy*, for, religion is not merely an operation of the intellect, but also a practical operation. In agreement with Hurter's *Compendium*, he differentiates between man's natural end, natural happiness, and the means that correspond to that end, and man's supernatural end, supernatural beatitude, which consists in the beatific vision, and the proportionate means to that end; hence, between natural and supernatural religion, that is, the Christian Religion, which is grounded on positive authority and transcends the powers of human nature.⁶⁹

Religion and Philosophy.

The basic thought of his important work on "Moral Certitude" deals with the question: Is there really such a thing as *metaphysical, natural-religious* and *apologetic* certitude? He answers in the affirmative, but he contends that this certitude is *only moral*. In the Preface to this work, he acknowledges his indebtedness most of all to the influence of Gratry's publication concerning the knowledge of God, and to a philosophical inquiry concerning moral certitude written by C. Caro. *Moral* truths, in the stricter sense, are such as constitute the subject matter of morality and moral science. In the broader sense, moral truths are also such *metaphysical* and *natural religious* truths, as are closely associated with moral truths in the stricter sense. They are especially the following four: the moral law, freedom, God and immortality. They are partly inner experiential facts, partly rational postulates; they are, moreover, objec-

Moral Certitude.

⁶⁸) Besides the works already cited above in notes 66 and 67, cf. *La philosophie et le temps present*. 1890; *La Vitalité chrétienne*, 1901; *Raison et Rationalisme*.

⁶⁹) *La prix de la vie*. Paris. 1897, pp. 341-365.

tively certain and universally valid truths, which we are in duty bound to acknowledge. But in view of the fact, that in many respects they do not possess evidence, which excludes every unreasonable and sophisticated doubt, they are only truths of natural faith; still, they are actual or demonstrable rational truths which are objectively certain. Understood in this sense, they are truths of natural rational faith, and, hence, they must be carefully differentiated from the truths of positive, supernatural Faith, which have for their formal ground of certitude, or motive, the authority of God revealing, and for their end, or purpose, supernatural beatitude, and transcend the sphere of human reason. Thereby, so Ollé-Laprune believes, every kind of false mysticism and scepticism is eradicated.⁷⁰ Thus, two extreme tendencies are eliminated: on the one hand, the tendency of certain writers, who exaggerate moral faith, for instance, Pascal, Maine de Biran, Kant, Fichte in his writing on the destiny of man, Jacobi, Hamilton and Mansel; and, on the other hand, the tendency of such writers as Cournot, Spencer, John Stuart Mill, who undervalue moral faith, credit it with mere probability, or even regard it as an illusion. Both tendencies lead to false mysticism and scepticism.⁷¹ According to Kant, a belief in rational creatures outside of ourselves, and historical faith, ought to appeal to science; but a belief in transcendental things, on the contrary, ought not to have recourse to science. Ollé-Laprune, however, maintains that, for both classes of objects, rational knowledge and rational faith are really possible, since their objects are partly evident to us, and partly also inevident or obscure; moreover, moral faith as regards supersensible things is an objectively certain faith that binds in conscience, and not merely a subjectively certain faith "of need or necessity".⁷² Therefore, the question as to whether faith

⁷⁰) *De la Certitude Morale*, Paris, 1898 (3rd ed.), pp. 10-12. 98-125. 168-169.

⁷¹) *Ibid.*, pp. 126-312.

⁷²) *Ibid.*, pp. 113. 146-163.

(croyance) is the ground of intellectual knowledge must, in Ollé-Laprune's opinion, receive both a negative and an affirmative answer with qualifications. It must be answered negatively, inasmuch as faith cannot be the ground of all intellectual knowledge, if that faith be conceived as a mere *instinctive* or *sentimental faith*, or in the sense of Fideism, which ends in scepticism, and restricts all knowledge to the phenomena only. The question must be answered affirmatively, inasmuch as intellectual certitude concerning many things, especially supersensible things, is, from the viewpoint of their object, only partly evident, and partly inevident, being dependent upon trust or confidence, and is, therefore, also a mixed certitude, or only moral certitude.⁷³

According to Ollé-Laprune *metaphysics* is, indeed, a science; but it is not a science grounded upon *pure evidence*, and dependent upon free will only from the viewpoint of its *exercise*; rather it is a science that rests upon "*moral certitude*", and depends upon free will also from the viewpoint of its *assent*, so that not every unreasonable doubt becomes impossible, but only reasonable doubt. In this latter respect, it is rooted in pure faith; but this faith is not a traditionalistic or fideistic faith, neither is it a positive divine faith; rather it is a human moral faith, based on the authority and testimony of reason, and, therefore, in this wider sense it is a faith of authority and testimony.⁷⁴

As metaphysical science is not to be grounded fideistically upon a mere sentimental and volitional basis, but at the same time upon an objective rational foundation, so, too, *apologetic* science. Such is the basic theme of Ollé-Laprune's volume on "The Sources of Intellectual Peace". Man and human society yearn for peace. The so-called exact science cannot show how this peace may be acquired. Only a science that aims higher is able to accomplish this, inasmuch as it proceeds from certain

⁷³) *De la Certitude morale*, pp. 205-227.

⁷⁴) *La Philosophie et le temps présent*. Paris, 1894 (2nd ed.), pp. 257-290.

Metaphysics and Moral Certitude.

Apologetics.

generally acknowledged conceptions, needs and aspirations, and seeks for the *means* to bring about their fulfillment and satisfaction, and finally to insure the full enjoyment of intellectual peace. Indifference to truth cannot produce this peace; least of all, can it be the groundwork for a fruitful union of souls, whose end is to do away with misery. Only the knowledge of truth, not mere feeling and good will, liberates, and is able to be the basis of a firm association and a common action for the realization of this end. To be sure, a person can rest content with a minimum of truth in the beginning, but not permanently.⁷⁵

But where is the *whole* truth to be found? Ollé-Laprune replies: Only in Christianity and the Catholic Church. The exact sciences, despite their marvelous progress, have not the words of eternal life, just as little as philosophy, or the science of history, or art. Christianity alone possesses the words of eternal life, and the Church with her dogmas; il faut que l'Eglise refasse une chrétienté; il faut qu'elle recommence sans se répéter. By Christianizing thought in this way, there will come into being a *new philosophy*, which will absorb the precious achievements of the exact sciences and through them enrich and rejuvenate metaphysics, without sacrificing anything of its possessions. To this end, it will make use of the philosophy of St. Thomas, but not simply by a process of reproduction. Ollé-Laprune thinks that such a philosophy has already been inaugurated by Gratry and Caro, although it is still far from perfection, and perhaps never will be fully realized. To arrive at such a philosophy, we must seek after the things that unite rather than separate the minds of men.⁷⁶

CRITICISM

1. a) Ollé-Laprune distinguishes between rational knowledge resting on pure evidence, which make every doubt, even an unreasonable and sophistical doubt, im-

⁷⁵) *Les sources de la paix intellectuelle.* Paris. 1893 (2^{ed.}), pp. 3-31.

⁷⁶) *Ibid;* pp. 39-47. 107-120.

possible, and rational faith based on moral evidence, which excludes every reasonable doubt, but, in view of the partial obscurity of its object, does not preclude every unreasonable doubt; he conceives the latter, however, as an *objectively grounded*, rational faith. In so far he has not abandoned traditional metaphysics—general and special—; for an objectively grounded, rational faith is really nothing else except *rational knowledge of a morally compelling kind*, as contradistinguished from a purely evident, *rational knowledge* that possesses *absolutely compelling* force. Still, because of the ambiguity of the term “rational faith”, and the danger of misinterpretation inherent in that expression, it seems preferable to avoid it and, furthermore, to use the words “faith of authority and faith of testimony” only in relation to positive historical faith.⁷⁷

b) Ollé-Laprune also departs from the traditional terminology adopted by Catholic theologians in regard to “*moral certitude*”. He defines this as a firm adhesion of the mind to historical and metaphysical truths bearing on the moral life, which is given under the influence of moral dispositions, and with the concurrence of the will, even though *per se* an objective proof might suffice.⁷⁸ But this definition is really the cause of an equivocation; for, it is derived, not from that which is *per se* the motive of this certitude, but rather from dispositions, which *per se* do not concur in the formation of such a certitude. On the basis of this definition, we should have to admit that the existence of God, as proven by valid metaphysical arguments, would be only morally certain and, that a philosopher, who was very clear visioned but perverse, could not, without the proper moral dispositions, arrive at a certain knowledge of God's existence,—surely an erroneous conception. Such a definition, however, might, indeed, be useful as an *argumentum ad hominem* in controversy with agnostics.⁷⁹

“Moral Certitude.”

⁷⁷) Schmid, *ibid.*, p. 204.

⁷⁸) *De la Certitude Morale*, pp. 413-414.

⁷⁹) Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 530, foot-note.

Moderate
Ontologism.

2. There is another point in Ollé-Laprune's system which goes deeper than mere terminology. He is of the opinion, that *traditional* metaphysics ought to be further developed; in union with Gratry,⁸⁰ he conceived rational faith as a natural belief in God after the manner of a *moderate Ontologism*. Reason (*raison*), so he teaches, starts from the phenomena of the exterior and interior world of experience, and harks back to their efficient causes and substances, to their essences and essential laws, which reason expresses in concepts, ideas, and judgments. Reason is able to exercise this activity, only in so far as it has received the impetus thereto from God, and *perceives* this divine activity by means of a *divine sense* latent within itself, without, however, having an *immediate*, although imperfect, intuition of the same, such as Malebranche assumed according to Ontologism in its strict form.⁸¹ Thus, God is the internal Teacher, Who speaks within our souls, the sun of every intelligence, the light, that enlightens us. Every thought, in some way or other, includes God ("toute pensée implique Dieu en quelque sorte"). The divine sense, which is proper to us, is an instinctive, natural faith, which by reflection can be transformed into concepts, into the idea of God, as the necessary and all perfect primal Being. God is ever present to our reason ("Dieu est sans cesse présent à la raison"); but the idea of God is not an innate idea resting upon an immediate intuition; rather it is a product of our reason, and of the activity of God that awakens it. We merely strive to obtain a clearer vision thereof; if it were merely an illusion, the human spirit would be caught in the meshes of an incurable error.⁸²

⁸⁰) cf. Schmid, *Erkenntnislehre*, Freiburg i. B., 1890; II, 348-354; IDEM, art. "Ontologismus", in Buchberger *Kirchliches Handlexikon*, Freiburg i. B. 1912, II, col. 1216.

⁸¹) cf. Geo. M. Sauvage, art. "Ontologism", in CE. XI, p. 257 sq.

⁸²) Ollé-Laprune, *La Philosophie de Malebranche*, Paris. 1870, II, pp. 291-344, where among other things he writes: "Nous ne voyons pas la substance de Dieu par intuition, mais nous sentons Dieu" (p. 326). "Naturellement avant toute réflexion nous croyons au nécessaire et au parfait réellement subsistant et nous y croyons parce qu'il est en nous agissant sur nous et se révélant à nous par son action que

Thus, for Ollé-Laprune the Divine Primal Being is, not merely the active ground of our rational knowledge, but also an objective ground of its certitude, which really imparts to our knowledge of the causality operating in the world its *full* centrifugal force. He rejects an immediate vision of God as something due to us by nature, since it is supernatural in character; but from this it follows, that the human spirit would *not* be involved in an incurable error, if such an intuition were denied it.⁸³

It is not Ollé-Laprune's intention to break with the principles of *traditional apologetics*, nor would he wish others to question them. He merely wishes to add to it a new, youthful vigour, by unfolding the germ which it embodies. He only desires to see it assume a development in a way, that accords more fully with the demands of the present age, by showing that the immanent needs of the human intellect, heart, and will, attain their full satisfaction only in so far, as the transcendent truths of the supersensible and supernatural order, which never grow old, but which have largely disappeared from the mind and heart of the modern world, again permeate, dominate, and deify the life of the individual, and of society. His aim is to offer to those who have gone astray in metaphysics, and in the apology of Christianity reared upon it, a helping hand, so that on the basis of the psychological facts, which they admit in common with us, they may again become aware of the saving truths and benedictions of Christianity, or at least that they may lay hold of them in a more intimate and vital manner, and finally concede to the intellectual powers of human reason the full confidence, which they deserve.⁸⁴

New Presenta-
tion of
Traditional
Apologetics.

3. Doubtless the good intentions and efforts of this Philosopher-Apologist are praiseworthy and well suited to remove prejudices, thereby *preparing* modern unbelievers for the acceptance of Divine Revelation. But this method, which relegates the *external* criteria to a secondary position, does not present an adequate proof of

Inadequate to
prove Divine
Origin of
Revelation.

nous atteste le sens divin" (p. 330). "Nous aspirons à la claire vue c'est un fait incontestable . . . si elle n'était qu'une chimère, l'esprit humain serait par nature dans un irrémédiable erreur" (pp. 339, 341).

⁸³) Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 204, 205.

⁸⁴) *Ibid.*, pp. 205, 206; cf. Jacques Zeiller, *Leon Ollé-Laprune*, Paris (Gabalda), 1932.

the *credibility* of Catholic Christianity. By showing that Christianity is in perfect accord with the aspirations of our nature, and that the remedy for our miseries is to be found only in Christianity and the Catholic Church, the *practical obligation* of embracing the teachings of the Catholic Church becomes manifest. However, in order to demonstrate the credibility of Catholic Christianity, it is not enough to show that there is a moral necessity of embracing it for the right ordering of our whole moral life; it is, above all else, necessary to demonstrate the *divine origin* of the doctrine of Christ and of the Church. For, the mysteries of faith must be believed because of the authority of God Who reveals them, and not simply on account of their necessity for right conduct. Thus, this method involves an *erroneous concept of credibility*.⁸⁵ The same criticism applies also to the apologetic method of Fonsegrive, Denis, and Brunetière, which we shall now consider briefly.

Fonsegrive.

Georges Fonsegrive (*Yves le Querdec*), in his volume entitled "*Le Catholicisme et la vie de l'esprit*",⁸⁶ opposes Blondel's rejection of traditional apologetics, but he concurs with him in the claim, that there is an urgent need of a modern apologetics, which will take cognizance of men as they are. With the Oratorian *Laberthonnière*, and the Jesuit *Bachelet*, he tries to defend Blondel against the accusations of Idealism, Scepticism, neo-Kantianism, etc., which his scholastic adversaries have raised against him; for, Fonsegrive believes that the needs of human nature, which lie at the basis of Blondel's apologetics, do *not necessarily* lead to these consequences.⁸⁷ On the basis of an Apologetics of Need, strict rational knowledge is, of course, not obtainable, but only a knowledge that is mixed with a *natural faith (croyance)* as regards the truth of the Christian Religion; but Fonsegrive does not think that this viewpoint involves *Scepticism* as its consequence. Human knowledge

⁸⁵) Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., *ibid.*, I, p. 125.

⁸⁶) Paris. 1899.

⁸⁷) *Ibid.*, pp. 58-67.

and human science, for the most part, include something obscure and mysterious, which can, indeed, become the object of doubt, but which, nevertheless, can be assented to by virtue of an act of the will. Hence, they also include *faith* as a partial element: "il y a une part de croyance dans la science même". If modern apologetics demands a natural faith in this sense, and is opposed to a strict demonstration, it does not understand these terms in the same sense as its scholastic adversaries; consequently, it acknowledges the definitions of the Vatican Council no less than its scholastic opponents and, *so far as the principles are concerned*, it is not necessarily constrained to reject science in the Aristotelian-scholastic sense.⁸⁸ Furthermore, when modern apologetics shows that true life can be achieved only in Catholic Christianity, it simply aims at establishing the appropriateness, not, in a *rationalistic* sense, the strict necessity of positive Christianity and of Catholicism. To that extent, therefore, traditional apologetics must remain unimpaired: "la démonstration logique ne perd pour cela aucune de ses qualités; elle demeure excellente et vraie".⁸⁹

Fonsegrive argues thus: For the right ordering of our life, it is necessary to reflect upon our inmost nature and its legitimate aspirations. Now, our consciousness bears witness to the fact that we perceive within ourselves many desires, which by our own powers alone we are unable to satisfy. We long to know and to understand whatever is true, but we know only a very few things, and these also quite imperfectly; we wish to embrace whatever is good, but we cannot by our own resources alone obtain the good; we aspire to a complete life, above the merely human, to a God-like life, but, after many and arduous efforts, we are compelled to admit that such a life is inaccessible to us. We note that the Christian Religion claims to be able to satisfy our aspirations. For, it teaches that man is destined to a higher, a God-like life; that the Word became flesh, in order that man might become God; that He instituted the means by which we might become the adopted sons of God, and, by sharing in the Divine nature, tend to life eternal. Thus, the Christian Religion, far from extinguishing the intellectual and spiritual life of man, really exalts it and lifts it to higher spheres. Therefore, if we wish to arrive at a complete and perfect life, we ought to embrace Christianity. On the other hand, this religion manifests some very certain signs, namely, Miracles, not merely in the

⁸⁸) *Ibid.*, pp. 67-83.

⁸⁹) *Ibid.*, p. 29; cf. Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 207-208.

physical, but also in the intellectual and moral order, which reveal its divinity. On the hypothesis of a supernatural life, these Miracles do not seem to be impossible to human reason; on the contrary, they appear to be in perfect accord with right reason. Thus, the method of Fonsegrive places the emphasis upon the internal, subjective criteria, although, at the same time, it admits and employs the external-signs of Divine Revelation; but it invokes the latter, only after the aprioristic prejudices against them have been removed.⁹⁰

Denis.

The editor of the *Annales de Philosophie chrétienne*, Ch. Denis, published a similar work under the title "*Esquisse d'une Apologie Philosophique du Christianisme*", which is a reprint of articles contributed by him to that Review in 1897-1898. The basic thought of these articles, apart from various inaccuracies and historical errors which they contain, may be summarized as follows. The *intellectualistic demonstration of the Apology of Christianity ought to be supplemented by the psychological method*, which rests upon the needs of the heart, the will, and the activities of the will, as well as upon the intellect. The traditional apologetic method ought to be perfected by means of a new method, which possesses evidential value not merely for the faithful, but also for unbelievers. It is true, the external motives of credibility suffice for the majority of minds, but not for all; many require motives of internal credibility. The supernatural, in consonance with its definition, must be above us and exalt us, *cannot proceed from ourselves, is not due to us, but is the free gift of God*. But true philosophy ought to beget the conviction, that the impotency and insufficiency of our nature *is able to find its support and perfection by means of the supernatural*, so that the latter, while not, indeed, a juridical postulate, is, nevertheless, a possible postulate, a presumption, a hypothesis. True philosophy is also capable of accrediting the *transcendent truths of Christianity with an immanent credibility*, inasmuch as these truths offer to the inner needs, aspirations, postulates of our nature, a satisfaction undreamt of, which fills the soul with new power and life. This satisfaction serves as a *criterion* directly indicative

⁹⁰) cf. Ives le Querdec, *Le Fils de l'esprit*, Paris, 1905; Tanquerey, *ibid.*, I, pp. 50, 51.

of their Divine origin, and makes possible an *experiential proof* of their credibility.⁹¹

The old traditional apologetic method of the truth of Christianity is, according to Denis, *dogmatic*, since in its argumentation it rests upon biblico-ecclesiastical testimonies; in the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas of Aquin it assumed a scientific, in the decrees De Fide of the Vatican Council a solemn ecclesiastical formulation. The new method, on the other hand, is by its nature *philosophical*, and, therefore, it has evidential value not merely for the faithful, but also for unbelievers. Accordingly, it is more in accord with the demands of the present age. It had already been utilized in the first four centuries—especially by Justin and Augustine—later, particularly by St. Bonaventure, by the author of the *Imitation of Christ*, and by St. Francis of Sales. But for the past three centuries, it has been well nigh forgotten, and did not receive due recognition in the current text-books. Only in recent times was it restored to its proper place in religious psychology, thanks to the efforts of Maine de Biran, V. Dechamps, Cardinal Newman, de Broglie, Ollé-Laprune, Blondel, and others. It is a method of immanence, in that it derives the proof for the truth of positive Christianity, and of the Catholic Church, from the inner needs of men and mankind, in opposition to the Rationalism that was represented in France, especially by A. Sabatier and his school; hence, it does not merit the anathemas which the representatives of the older apologetic method frequently heaped upon it.⁹² C. Mano advocated a similar viewpoint in his essay entitled "*Le Problème Apologétique*".⁹³

Brunetière.

With the death of *Ferdinand Brunetière*, Catholic France lost one of her noblest sons, a bold fighter, and the best religious lecturer, aside from Lacordaire, that she has ever possessed,—“un admirable et un vénérable et un imposant directeur d'esprit, un maître d'âmes”—as Gaguët wrote in the “*Gallois*” (Dec. 10, 1906). Brunetière travelled throughout France, Italy, Holland, and Switzerland, to defend the

⁹¹) *Esquisse d'une Apologie phil. du Christianisme*. Paris. 1898, pp. 182-245. 261-296: “la crédibilité du Christianisme n'est donc pas seulement une crédibilité de logique et de raison raisonnée, elle est une crédibilité d'expérience et de fait” (p. 286).

⁹²) Schmid, *ibid.*, pp. 208, 209.

⁹³) Paris. 1899.

Faith by his exalted, powerful and original eloquence, against the assaults of Liberalism. This pilgrim had journeyed from afar, from the frontiers of atheism, before he finally made his profession of Faith, and his hand lovingly clasped the crucifix, which he had sought for so long.⁹⁴

Neo-Kantianism.

In the light of this heroic enthusiasm, this marvelous apologetic ability, it is all the more to be regretted that Brunetière was caught in the meshes of *neo-Kantianism*, as is evident from his joy over Balfour's book, "*The Foundations of Belief*", which openly espouses Agnosticism, as well as from the long Preface, which he wrote for that volume.⁹⁵ Science, and by it Brunetière means also philosophy, guarantees for us neither the existence of an external world, nor the existence of anything external whatsoever, which corresponds to our sense perceptions, nothing conceptual, which is the counterpart of the sensible.⁹⁶ We do not owe religion, or religions, to an act of reason, so he writes. A rational religion ("une religion 'rationnelle'") is no religion.⁹⁷ Between science and religion, there is no place for philosophy as a system of knowledge.⁹⁸ Reason is not the ground of faith; rather faith is the ground of reason.⁹⁹ One must believe, in order to know; the basis of science is faith.¹⁰⁰ The time will come soon, when the feelings and the will will be given their natural place in the groundwork of faith.¹⁰¹

Grounds of Belief are Moral.

We do not believe without grounds, but these grounds of belief, so Brunetière continues, are *not* of an *intellectual* sort. We believe, because we wish to believe, namely, for reasons of the *moral* order, because we experience the need of some standard, and because neither nature nor man discover such a standard within themselves.¹⁰² The need of believing resides in the nature and the constitution of the spirit; it is a "category", which conditions action, science, and morality. It is grounded in the feelings and the will; partly, too, it depends upon authority and tradition.¹⁰³ His-

⁹⁴) Gisler, *ibid.*, pp. 264-278.

⁹⁵) *Les Bases de la Croyance*, Paris, 1897.

⁹⁶) *Ibid.*, p. XIV; IDEM, *Sur les chemins de la croyance*, Paris, 1905, p. 154.

⁹⁷) *Les Bases de la Croyance*, pp. XX, XXXIV.

⁹⁸) *Ibid.*, p. XXXII.

⁹⁹) *Discours de Combat*, 1^{re} série, "Le besoin de croire", p. 302.

¹⁰⁰) *Ibid.*, p. 322. Lamennais also wrote: "Toute certitude repose sur la foi" (*Essay sur l'indifférence*, II, p. 41).

¹⁰¹) *Les Bases de la Croyance*, p. XXXVII.

¹⁰²) *La science et la religion*, 1895, p. 62.

¹⁰³) *Discours de Combat*, 1^{re} série, p. 339, and *passim*.

tory proves that reason can decide nothing as regards the immortality of the soul, faith enlightens us in this respect.¹⁰⁴

Like Kant in his "*Critique of Pure Reason*", Balfour and Brunetière question the value of metaphysics; the existence of God, the immortality and the freedom of the human soul, are said to be inaccessible by rational proof; practical reason, faith, must come to the rescue.¹⁰⁵ Renouvier taught approximately the same doctrine: Every proposition, to be affirmed as certain, demands an act of the will; science is the result of an act of faith, and all science rests accordingly on faith.¹⁰⁶

Realizing that his adherence to neo-Kantianism would be strenuously opposed by the theologians and philosophers of the old school, who looked upon this system as their worst enemy, Brunetière hastened to remind them in the words of Montesquieu, that he was only imitating the practise of the ancient Romans, who after having conquered all the nations in turn, always renounced their customary methods, just as soon as they had discovered better ones. So, too, the arms of defence must be altered to suit the new exigencies of our age.¹⁰⁷ But Brunetière forgot that, even though the old Romans did frequently change their weapons and plan of battle, they never surrendered their experienced arm, that wielded the new weapon. By surrendering metaphysics, Brunetière did not only throw away this or that apologetic weapon, but he abandoned the very basic condition, the arm of all apologetics, especially of all universally valid apologetics, which leads to the portals of the supernatural. What he offers us in his *Raisons actuelles de croire*, as positive apologetic weapons and values, are, indeed, valuable pearls, but they make us feel all the more vividly the loss of the diamond of metaphysics, which has been discarded.¹⁰⁸

Brunetière made use of many modern points of view in his apologetic method. There is in the first place the *positivistic* viewpoint. His volume entitled "*Sur les chemins de la croyance*" ends with the sentence: "The utilization of

Positivism.

¹⁰⁴) *Discours de Combat*, nouvelle série, p. 20; cf. Gisler, *ibid.*, pp. 280 sq.

¹⁰⁵) G. Fonsegrive, *Le catholicisme et la vie de l'esprit*, Paris, 1906, p. 52.

¹⁰⁶) *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁷) *Sur les chemins de la croyance*, p. XV.

¹⁰⁸) Gisler, *ibid.*, pp. 281, 282.

Postivism will be the first step of the twentieth century on the path to Faith".¹⁰⁹ He expressly claims to have followed the method of Comte faithfully, in so far as it starts with a fact (*à partir du fait*), regards a fact only as a fact, and never generalizes, save within the limits of fact.¹¹⁰ He champions this method as the fitting and proper apologetic method against heretics; but, at the same time, he insists that he wishes to extract from Kant and Comte, only what is apologetically good and useful.¹¹¹

Hence, Brunetière does not claim that Postivism can offer everything that is requisite for apologetics. It is only the "first step" in the process, and his intention is simply to play Postivism against itself, in order to compel it to make certain admissions. What he demanded of Postivism, or of August Comte, is the fact that, apart from religion and independently of it, morality can neither be developed nor justified nor preserved; secondly, that this religion, whatever it be, can neither be "natural", nor "individual", but only "social", and can be grounded only upon the assumption of the supernatural; thirdly, and that only incidently, that Catholicism in the course of history has satisfied these demands, which science posits and determines. Nothing more and nothing less! He does not, therefore, claim that this method demonstrates the transcendence or the divinity of Christianity. It is only a step, indeed, the first step, on the path to Faith. Thus, he anticipates the objection which insists that Positivism is utterly worthless apologetically, for the simple reason that no religion of the "Absolute" can be proved by means of a philosophy of the "Relative".¹¹²

Brunetière employs the positivistic method immediately and primarily, in order to make clear the *social excellencies* of Christianity and Catholicism. For him, the chief apologetic motive was the *harmony between the democratic and the Christian idea*. In his speech at Lille, Nov. 18, 1900, he asserted that for himself the most decisive grounds for believing were those of a moral and social character. His affection for the common people, for the democratic ideal, finds protection, and also limitation, in the Catholic Church alone; only there does he discover the basis for the republican watch-word, in which he still puts his faith: "Liberté, égalité, fraternité". And not the basis merely,

109) "L'utilisation du positivisme sera la première étape du vingtième siècle sur le chemin de la croyance"; cf. also *Discours de Combat*, nouvelle série, pp. 172-190.

110) *Sur les chemins etc.*, p. XI.

111) *Lettres de combat*, 1912, p. 234.

112) Gislér, *ibid.*, pp. 283, 284.

but also the *interpretation* of this watch-word can be found only in the Christian idea, nowhere else.¹¹³

In the same way he emphasizes how Christianity was first of all a *religion of the poor*.¹¹⁴ Catholicism is likewise a *government*, whereas Protestantism is simply the lack of government ("le protestantisme n'est que l'absence de gouvernement"); "to rule is it not very necessary to begin by being a government"? And because it is a government, Catholicism can absorb its heretics, destroy, or even, as occasion demands, employ them for its own benefit. And because it is a government, Catholicism has also a "doctrine" and a "tradition", the full force of which he recently experienced, while reading Tolstoy's latest writing in regard to war and the Christian spirit. How well advised was not Catholicism, so Brunetière reflected, nay more, how political, in that it persistently refused to surrender the Sacred Scriptures to the interpretations of individual minds!¹¹⁵

Finally, Brunetière shows how superior Catholicism is to Protestantism, since it is not merely a "theology", or a psychology, but a "*sociology*"; in the critical hour in which we now find ourselves, this is a great advantage.¹¹⁶ He developed the same idea in the conference at Geneva, Dec. 17, 1901, when he accused Calvin of having intellectualized, aristocratized, individualized, religion.¹¹⁷ "The power of Christianity", so we hear him say in another conference, "is today above all else a social power".¹¹⁸

CRITICISM

1. Brunetière undoubtedly went astray, when he cast aside metaphysics as an apologetic weapon; he probably also overestimated the import of his "*raisons actuelles de croire*", particularly in his earlier years.¹¹⁹

113) *Les raisons actuelles de croire*, in *Discours de Combat*, nouvelle série, pp. 25; 33 sq.

114) *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1895, Jan., p. 110.

115) *Ibid.*, p. 114.

116) *Ibid.*, p. 115.

117) *Discours de Combat*, nouvelle série, p. 123 sq.: "*L'oeuvre de Calvin*".

118) *Discours de Combat*, *ibid.*, p. 171.

119) However, Brunetière also admitted that his apologetic method of demonstration was not absolute and decisive. In his *raisons actuelles de croire* he says: "Ces raisons vous paraissent-elles, peut-être, entachées, ou suspectes au moins de *fidélisme*? et craignez-vous

Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of apologetics, it is highly significant that this distinguished scholar, and matchless literary critic, affirmed the bankruptcy of a purely natural philosophy of life; that he destroyed by Positivism Renan's dream of a scientific organization of humanity ("organiser scientifiquement l'humanité") and finally, that he showed in such a splendid manner that natural science is incapable of doing away with mystery (supprimer "le mystère").¹²⁰

Never were the social power and the social indispensability of the Church lauded in such a manly, diversified, and mighty language as issued from the lips and pen of Brunetière; that was the positive side of his apologetic activity, his instructive, valuable, and lasting contribution to the cause of truth.

His example, too, is an apology. When he saw that the political and moral order was imperilled by a false faith, he hastened as the "*miles Domini*" from city to city, awakening Catholic hope by his polemic speeches. To the first volume of these speeches he prefixed, as his motto, *Cicero's* words: "Omne officium quod ad conjunctionem hominum et ad societatem tuendam valet, est anteponendum illi officio, quod cognitione et scientia continetur". Ten years this oratorical campaign continued. "For ten years", says Barboix, "he defied ridicule, unpopularity, injustice, and scorn, thereby revealing in his activity and person the splendor of a mighty eloquence, espoused to the beauty of duty faithfully performed."¹²¹

Defects.

2. If we submit the "New Apologetics" to the test of criticism, we do so, not precisely because it is *new*, but rather because it rests upon *questionable grounds*.

peut-être qu'en dernière analyse, elles n'aboutissent qu'à fonder la foi sur l'impuissance de la raison? Je ne pense pas. Ce que l'on pourrait plutôt dire, c'est qu'elles ne sont pas encore assez déterminantes. Il semble qu'elles aient aussi quelque chose de trop 'utilitaire', et surtout qu'elles ne nous mènent pas au-delà d'un vague déisme. Ce sont des raisons de croire à sa véracité". (*Discours de Combat*, Nouvelle série, p. 23). Thus, Brunetière himself specifies the points, which give to his apologetics the character of mere relativity. Moreover, only too often he touches the fringes of Fideism.

¹²⁰) *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1895, Jan., p. 99. The citations from Renan are from his "*L'avenir de la science*", p. 37.

¹²¹) *Discours de réception*, Feb. 20, 1908.

The Church has always not only permitted, but even encouraged, her children to search for, and to walk upon, apologetic paths, which in a sense were new, as is evident from the fact, that not all of her converts have returned into her fold by the same paths. Brunetière says in this regard, that a beautiful book might be written under the caption, "The Psychology of Conversion". With Cardinal Newman he points to the eunuch of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, to the converts of the Areopagus, to the converted philosophers of the second and third centuries, and to the more recent converts, for example, Theodor de la Rive, Lady Herbert of Lea, the Baroness of Könnerriz, I. Hecker, and others.¹²²

And when the apologists Justin, Barnabas, Tertullian, battled against ancient Judaism; when Augustine entered the lists against the secular power of paganism, Thomas against Mohammedan Philosophy and Religion, and its pantheistically interpreted Aristotelianism; when Bellarmine took his stand against the so-called Reformers; Newton, Leibniz, Bergier, Haller, and Euler fought against Deism; Chateaubriand, Fraissinous, Lacordaire faced Rationalism and Materialism; when Goerres, Drey, Vosen, Weiss, Bougaud, de Broglie, Schanz, Pesch, Schell, Gutberlet, arose to ward off Criticism, Pantheism, and Darwinism,—apologetics assumed a different battle array, and changed its tactics and its weapons of defence.

And rightly, too. For, apologetics can, and must, contain a changing element; that is grounded in its very nature. The defence of the Faith must keep abreast of the times, and adapt itself to the changing conditions. The means for awakening and strengthening the will to believe, and the joy of believing, cannot always be the same. The attitude of mind and the receptivity of men, the value-judgments in regard to dogmas, the ideals of life, are mutable; like the stars, they ascend and descend on the firmament of one's philosophy of life; if the apologist is to be effective, he must studiously watch the signs of the times.

Hence, the Catholic apologist is wholly within his rights, if he puts such a strong emphasis not upon Miracles only, but also upon the psychological, artistic, social, and moral side of Christianity; for grace, understanding, and will co-operate in the genesis of Faith. He may not look upon a one-sided cultivation of the understanding, a mere demonstration, the formation of the judgment of credibility only, as the end towards which he is to direct his efforts, at least; not when there is question of *practical apologetics*.

¹²²) "*Les raisons actuelles de croire*", *Discours de Combat*, Nouvelle série, p. 11.

He must likewise aim at cultivating the *will*, in order that it might become enthusiastic through the motives of God and eternity, of the duty of believing, and the reasonableness of believing, of the beauty, usefulness and harmony of faith, thereby commanding the intellect to assent, to make a real act of faith. Precisely because the will has such an important rôle to play in the act of faith, apologetics may, and must, be not merely *didactic*, but also stimulating and inspirational. This is true in a special degree, as noted above, if the apologist is to be not only a speculator, but also a man of action; if he is to present not merely in an abstract manner the proofs, which show that one can and must believe, but likewise the motives and inspirations, which will move to the acceptance of, and the firm adherence to, faith. Indeed, nothing could be more erroneous than to assume, that the intellect is led to accept dogma in the same way as a mathematical tenet. For, the same didactic method does not hold for mathematics and religion; for, *mathematics directs itself only to the intellect*, whereas religion appeals also to the will. Hence, in matters of faith, the *affective* factor is very important, especially in the modern age, when men place such a high estimate upon moods and psychic dispositions, and emphasize so strongly the primacy of the will.¹²³

The method of stressing whatever is *socially useful*, beautiful, harmonious, and consolatory in Faith, is an error from the apologetic viewpoint, only if it is done in a one-sided fashion, and at the expense of rational knowledge; only if the will is to be moved to command the act of faith, without first having been enlightened by the torch of a certain judgment of credibility; in short, such an apologetic method becomes wrong, if apologetics is *merely voluntaristic*, while claiming at the same time to be the absolute, adequate, and exclusively valid apologetics.

Just as the apologist, especially when he, like the teacher of religion, aims at *practical* ends, may not pass over the motives of the will, so, also, and to the same extent, he must stress the intellectual grounds of faith; for, faith is not merely free, but also reasonable. The spirit cannot arrive at a reasonable faith, once the wings of metaphysics have been broken; the pinions of Kantian postulates are incapable of soaring so high.¹²⁴

¹²³) Long before the neo-apologetic school, Catholic apologists stressed and appreciated the motives which are derived from inner, subjective experience. We refer the student especially to P. Kleutgen, *Theologie der Vorzeit*, 4, p. 203 sq.

¹²⁴) Gislser, *ibid.*, pp. 288-292.

The *weak* side of the Psychologico-Moral or Social Apologetics is apparent. If with Brunetière I deduce the truth of Christianity from its social usefulness, I do not satisfy logic; perhaps I even become undignified and officious. For, it has already been said, with perfect truth, that religion is no panacea for all the infirmities and defects of human society. It is no social arcanum for the preservation and amelioration of all possible things. *Religion* is above all else *truth*.

If Fr. Coppée was led to Catholicism by the path of suffering, Huysmans by the path of art, Paul Bourget by the path of morality, we will not quarrel about individual cases. We only remark that thousands of others have desired a much more reliable Beatrice, to guide them into the kingdom of supernatural Revelation and grace.

On the other hand, we are far from wishing to deny to this apologetic method all value. The words of *Pascal*: "Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point", contain much that is true. Therefore, we are willing to admit moral proofs, as proofs of convenience, as auxiliary proofs, as motives, as an appeal to man's emotional life. Let the apologist show as insistently as possible the beauty of Catholicism, the consonance between social welfare and Catholicism, between suffering and Catholicism. Let him appeal to reverence for the faith of our fathers, who have stood firmly in that faith, battled, and died for it; let him appeal to love of country, to history, to father and mother! All these things are mighty levers for moving the will; they are not merely proofs but also motives, and that of the most glorious kind. By them the will is made mobile, is warmed, made enthusiastic, not only for the joyous perception, but also for the realization of the content of faith. We thank the new apologists for having so insistently stressed the emotional side of apologetics, the voluntaristic element, the *pious credulitatis affectus* (the pious wish to believe). Psychic dispositions and moods are a valuable means in the hand of the apologist; for, the emotions always have an influence on the intellect. Hence, it is not enough to bring forward, and to pile up before the spirit in a mechanical manner, the schemata of dogmas; it is also necessary, that they be experienced and loved interiorly, in the midst of the sun-rise of the world of Divine Revelation and grace. But we may not forget, that historical, social, and philosophical facts are often ambiguous, that they may possess evidential value for religion in general, but not for the supernatural Religion of the Catholic Church.¹²⁵

¹²⁵) Gislser, *ibid.*, pp. 292-294.

Thus, this apologetic method "has undoubted merits from that practical standpoint as an aid to, and complement of, the intellectual defense of objective and historical Christian evidence. Christianity effects a harmony between two great facts—the external fact of a positive, historical, Divine Revelation, and the internal fact of the moral and religious aspirations of the human soul. But the consciousness of these aspirations, and the experienced fact of their finding the fullest satisfaction in certain religious beliefs,—those namely, of Christianity,—must of necessity raise a problem for the individual intellect, the problem of investigating the objective credentials of doctrinal Christianity. And until the believer or seeker finds these to be rationally adequate, he cannot find intellectual repose, the repose of conviction or certitude, in the mere consciousness, that assent to these doctrines satisfies instincts and yearnings of his nature".¹²⁶

Hence, Brunetière's mode of grounding moral and religious beliefs according to the criterion of *what serves the higher interests of humanity* (which for him is Christianity, but for Balfour the vague mass of moral and religious influences felt in our social environment) is entirely unsatisfactory. "It is open to anyone to assail it on such lines as these: Granted that history shows the influence of Christianity to be wholly beneficent, am I, therefore, *bound* to accept its moral and religious teaching? It may be good; it may be the best: but show me that I am morally *bound* to accept the good, or the best. If I happen to be a utilitarian, or a hedonist, why should I abandon my utilitarian ethical system, or my hedonist programme of self-gratification, and espouse Christianity? If these are wrong, and if it is right, you must prove it: you must show your reasons. But this precisely is seeking a *rational basis for moral and religious belief*. You appeal to what Christianity has done for the progress of humanity. Progress towards what? What is

¹²⁶) P. Coffey, *Epistemology*, London. 1917, II, p. 352.

the end or aim of human life? You think that humanity really profits and is really served by accepting the religious teaching and submitting to the moral code of Christianity. But what if I disagree; if with Schopenhauer or Nietzsche I hold the Christian conception of human society and human nature and human destiny to be no better than an illusion; if, in fine, I hold it folly to sacrifice individual pleasure, present and attainable, to an ideal of some social good that is future and problematical? Who is to decide between us? *Reason* alone can decide; your reason and my reason. And whether we succeed in coming to an agreement or not, one thing at least is clear: that the ultimate decision of all such questions must be reached by reason, or else never reached. Between reasoned certitude and scepticism there may, indeed, be a battle-ground, but there can be no resting-place".¹²⁷

Let us, therefore, continue the old traditional apologetics, but let us join with it the new, to form what Cardinal Dechamps calls the "*apologétique integrale*".

Chapter VI.

CONCEPT AND KINDS OF MIRACLES

Retrospect and Prospect.

In chapters three, four, and five, we have discussed the opinions of those who extoll the *internal, subjective* criteria of Divine Revelation. Our study has led to the conclusion that these criteria do, indeed, possess a certain evidential value, but that it is erroneous to ascribe to them the primacy of value, for demonstrating the credibility of God's self-disclosure. This primacy belongs rather to the *external, objective* signs, the most prominent of which are *Miracles* and *Prophecies*, as we have indicated in outline in the first and second chapters of this treatise. We now proceed to present a more de-

¹²⁷) Coffey, *ibid.*, pp. 350, 351.