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ARTICLE II.

THE THEOLOGIAN OF THE FUTURE.¹

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THE religious community in America has recently been thrown into a sort of hysterical outbreak of anger, vituperation, and grief by the address of the former president of Harvard College on the Religion of the Future. As being among the valedictory utterances of an old man who has been permitted for many years to say what he pleased, about whatsoever he pleased, protected by the prestige of the great office which he held, it was neither novel nor striking; and, to say the truth, there is nothing specially in the address itself that warranted the outcry which it caused. Certainly here in eastern Massachusetts we have become used to these ideas, and the only thing which gave them significance was the source from which they came. President Eliot's prominence in the educational world as the head of the oldest university in the land gave a certain significance to what he said, as it would to anything he might say. And perhaps the only thing worth remembering in connection with it is that the professor of chemistry who in 1869 became the president of Harvard has had almost nothing to say about his own department while administering the university. While advocating strictest specialization in every other department of knowledge, he has invaded with a recklessness matched by no other man of his standing in America the field of theological thought as though theological thought

¹A paper read before the Suffolk West Association of Congregational Ministers at the Old South Church, Boston.

required no particular preparation or disciplinary drudgery for the attainment of enlightened or lasting opinions. In this he has steadily discredited theology and theologians, and has furnished one of the most curious contrasts between principles and practice which the learned world of this country has seen in the last forty years. The last demonstration is thoroughly characteristic and consistently concludes the history of a generation of this kind of thing.

And to accentuate the particular point which I am about to make in this connection it is rather curious that the man who thus fearlessly ventures to delineate the religion of the future should have had no special thought about the theologian of the future. Now of course it is possible here to quibble as to the difference between religion and theology. This has been pointed out so often, and so much has been made of it, that it has become rather tiresome, especially as for practical purposes there is substantially no difference between a man's theology and his religion. Ask the first hundred men you meet about their religion, and they will give you what they think, their theological conceptions. And the puerile attempt to separate these things is as childish as it is in effect dishonest. When a man thinks of his religion he thinks of the body of his ideas about God, Nature, Providence, prayer, and personal character, with a large place for religious association and activity in some sort of a church. This theology of the future thus projected does not seem to have caused a great deal of anxiety about the theologian of the future. Happily we have from a gifted and poetic pen a description of the theologian of the future, also. Here it is: "He must know the method of physical science and be in sympathy with its great generalizations; he must be at home in the kingdom of thought, familiar with the noble and fruitful ideas in philosophy, a companion of the imperial think-

ers of the race; he must have at his tongue's end the salient facts of Christian history and the fundamental conceptions and distinctions of historic theology; he must be master of the new biblical learning, widely and deeply versed in the classical literatures of the world and able to work in the consciousness of the true interpretation of the religions of the world; and in addition to all this, he must have original power." That is the conception of the author of "The Christ of To-day" of what the theologian of the future has got to be "to give expression to the new consciousness of Christ." I submit this is a large contract. And whoever has any aspiration to formulate the religion of the future hereafter might with profit examine the list of requirements for his task as here set forth. The distinguished advocate of high and deep specialization who has just retired from the presidency of Harvard might perhaps feel that he lacked some of this equipment himself.

To be sure, this demand for the equipment of the theologian of the future is not so complete even as it looks, for the author tells us, later on, "that the historical problem is for the scholar, and a thousand generations of experts cannot hope to give the final solution." So much for the history, even with expert equipment. The mastery of the new biblical learning will not absolutely settle things, for we are informed "that where the higher criticism ends true theological thinking begins." If the higher critics had only remembered that, what agonies we should have been saved! But the fact which we are trying to bring into the foreground at this juncture has only to do with the enormous equipment which is supposed to be the *sine qua non* of an adequate expression of the consciousness of Christ. It is no impertinence to say that no such person will ever arise. None such has arisen, and the whole mighty line of the teachers and epoch-making seers and prophets of the religious life of

the world contains absolutely nobody who could even remotely approximate to these conditions.

Yet it is not difficult to understand how and under what pressure this outline of the theologian of the future was formulated. The author stood in an environment where his profession was constantly discredited as to its habits and methods of thought; where the theologian was held to be a vagrant in the intellectual world, wearing the cast-off clothing of another era and either unwilling or unable to gain for himself adequate clothing for his own time. He was constantly subjected to formulas of knowledge and a series of demands of scientific thought which made the one supreme desideratum in his mind such a formulation of theological thought as would command scientific assent; and under this constant pressure and its implied derision of his professional intellectual standards and ideals of logic, judgment, and intellectual scrutiny, he was lured into saying that, "as the case stands, theology is as vast and as lurid a denial of the objective worth of the mind of the Master as the extremest form of scientific speculation." Such an impeachment of the worst existent theology is, in my judgment, unfair and not exact. The worst sin of the crudest theology of which I have any knowledge, namely, the fearful and mechanical anthropomorphism which disfigures so much religious thinking, at least is duplicated in the scientific and philosophical world in forms as bad or worse, whether, as Helmholtz says, "it is the psychological anthropomorphism found in the ideas of Plato, the immanent dialectic of the cosmical process of Hegel, or the unconscious will of Schopenhauer." And it is Mr. Balfour, in his "Defence of Philosophic Doubt," who says that "the world represented to us by science can no more be perceived or imagined than the Deity represented to us by Theology," holding that if the idea of the

Deity is anthropomorphic, that of the external world is likewise.

But this was not the point. The point was that a great preacher and poet felt himself under pressure to reconcile his theology to the demands of scientific men, and felt himself discredited so long as they withheld approval; and in his delineation of the theologian of the future, even in the work of interpreting the consciousness of Christ, he puts as first, among the long list of qualifications, that he must know the method of the physical sciences and have sympathy with its great generalizations. It is this question which we wish briefly to discuss. Is any such knowledge or sympathy needful? Just what kind of friendship of intellectual method is possible between the generalizations of physical and biological science and those of theology? And in this sense and with this in mind, what would a scientific theology be like, and is such a thing possible at all? These are some of the things this paper seeks to discuss — not settle of course.

It is worth while, therefore, first of all, to ask what some of the great generalizations of science, especially physical science, are. Perhaps, as we contrast the demands of science and the demands of theology, we shall get some light on the possibilities of a scientific theology, supposing such a thing possible. Perhaps, too, in contrasting the purposes of science and the purpose of theology, more light will arise on the question. And having already suggested that the consciousness of Christ and its interpretation is the supreme factor in theology, we may find how this stands in relation to the supreme factor or factors in the aim and method of physical science.

Five propositions may be laid down as among the fundamental conceptions of modern science. We are speaking now in a broad, general way. Here and there a man of first rank is found who dissents in some detail with one or the other of these

propositions; but, in general, physical science would stand squarely, for the greater part, on the following propositions:—

1. *Knowledge can have no personal quality.* By this proposition I mean that knowledge is not knowledge in any accepted scientific sense while for its existence or definition any personal elements are necessary. This is to say that knowledge must be knowledge to everybody, anywhere, under any circumstances. The moment it is qualified by being, in any sense, nearly or remotely allied with any individual or personality, it ceases to be knowledge in the scientific sense. It may still be true to the individual, as a man conceivably may have reached the North Pole without being able to tell anything which could give light or information concerning it. But such a private experience could not be set down as knowledge in a scientific sense. Personal religious experience, however true as a private matter, is not knowledge in the scientific sense; and if a thousand persons were to claim an identical experience, unless such experience could be depersonalized, it would not be scientific knowledge under the accepted formulas of to-day. The glory of the physical sciences is that they represent the search and expression of truth which is truth, pure and simple, without the intervention or necessary connection with any human interest whatsoever. This is what has given science its great hold on the imagination and respect of mankind, namely, that it represents unprejudiced, yes, unconditioned, truth; and when it is not unconditioned in this sense, and needs the presence of any individual or individuals to give it its form or message, it ceases to become knowledge, and becomes merely a private experience. It may be true, but it is not scientific, knowledge. This is the doctrine taught in every medical school in the world. It is the doctrine that prevails in every chemical laboratory in the world. It is the general form of statement which governs every investi-

gator in every department of human inquiry which is called scientific to-day. To challenge it would be to risk discredit.

2. *Nature has and can have no moral interests.* This proposition has been set forth with such explicitness so often and so variously that it is almost superfluous to discuss it at all. The contention, however, is, that in the external world called nature it is both foolish and wasteful to look for moral interest or moral purpose. The destructiveness of nature and the indiscriminate slaughters of nature by volcano and earthquake, however the poet or the seer may imagine in them something that has something to do with the moral life of mankind, have no such relation. If a moral relation between nature and mankind is alleged, there is only one way out, and that is that nature is hostile to man; that she has only hatred for him, since he has to subjugate her every step in his progress and has to keep on fighting her throughout his existence. But, as a matter of fact, the thing is absurd. There is no moral interest or purpose in nature. The evolutionary process seems to be simply the effort to maintain and develop the species, to keep the proper relation between environment and the necessities for livelihood. Here again we have a proposition which is substantially without dissent in the scientific world of to-day. The man who would venture on any investigation holding among his fundamental or even subsidiary principles a moral order in nature would be discredited at the outset.

3. *The individual has practically no worth in the program of evolution.* I am aware that at this moment there is some discussion going on in the domain of organic chemistry the conclusions of which may possibly modify this proposition in the bare form in which I have stated it. But, for the present, it stands as among the all but finalities of science that in the program of evolution the individual is of no particular conse-

quence, and in its implications and practical effects this doctrine is among the most far-reaching of any of the dicta of science. The main fact for us now is that science, as such, regards the individual merely as a part of a disappearing species. He has neither worth nor content in himself which warrants his continuance or even any considerable inquiry concerning his future. Indeed, for individuals there is, generally speaking, no future. Even immortality, in this view, comes to be represented by post-mortem influence in the life of others. The struggle for the life of others, which Professor Drummond used to love to dwell upon, is simply a survival in the form of modification of type, and this, in the case of the individual, so small a fraction as to be simply for mathematical purposes, present. This, also, is the teaching of every scientific laboratory in the world. Whatever modification of the doctrine there may be as held by individual scientists here and there for the most part, this is the doctrine that is taught.

4. *Spiritual interpretations of natural phenomena have no scientific value.* This applies with somewhat lessened force to the psychological interpretation of natural phenomena. It is often said, and I believe said truly, that the poet sees the reality often, where the man of science does not see it at all. Indeed all nature is one great storehouse of symbolism whereof the real understanding is spiritual. The natural first, afterward the spiritual, that is the saying of Paul. But dominant and accepted science has neither place nor use for these ideas. Many scientists of course have no quarrel with many beautiful and suggestive comparisons which are more vital to the life and thought of the world than the mere scientific data. But while acknowledging the worth of the poet and the beauty of his picture, they must deny it intellectual validity or permit, for one instant, confusion as to the decree that one is poetry and the

other is science. Many illustrations will at once occur to every one of cases where the poet has stated the fact even better than the scientist. But it still remains that there is, for the scientific man, nothing spiritual in nature; and hence to attempt interpretation of what is not there, is an intellectual absurdity. In fact, there is no department of theological and religious literature which excites greater mirth in the ultra-scientific circles than this. The attempt to link even ethics with political economy, until very recently was and perhaps still is made the subject of biting satire in the department of political science in Harvard College. The attempt to find anything spiritual in the natural phenomena excites exactly the same feeling among scientists. Where it does not, it is simply received with good-natured indulgence.

5. *The theistic conception of the universe has no scientific standing.* There are undoubtedly many scientists who are theists, many who are devout men. But it is beyond successful contradiction that the scientific world of to-day holds that a theistic conception of the universe is a matter of private caprice or feeling. Even where it does not specifically deny the theistic conception, it ignores it to the extent that denial of it would be far more rational and intelligible. A not inconsiderable number of scientific men use the term God, for various reasons, to indicate the First Cause; but they have no theistic ideal in connection with the use of the term, and simply yield in its use as the path of least resistance. It is doing no violence to the science of the world, the most reverent and the most devout, to say that it regards even the barest theism as a private matter, and not within the realm of scientific thought. The use of the term "God" in philosophy is so varied and with such varied content that for theistic uses it may also be said to be nil. So that, reduced to lowest terms, we are well within the limit of

the facts to say that science to-day, meaning by that the normal and generally accepted habit of thought among scientists, has no place in its scheme for theism, and that any theistic conception of the world stands to them as without any basis which can in their sense be styled scientific.

Now these are the great generalizations of science with which the theologian of the future must be familiar and with which he is asked to be in sympathy. Can a theology be framed, can a religious life be lived, which can in the least recognize the validity of these propositions or most of them? Is it worth while even to try to win the approval of any form of human thought which announces such a set of generalizations? And is it not a vain search to find any *via media* which will lead to peace with them; any tabernacle which can hold them and even the elementary conceptions which are necessary to a theology of any sort whatever? Perhaps, before this question can be answered, it may be worth while to place over against the propositions just enumerated some equally fundamental propositions of theology. In the contrast between these we may see perhaps the futility of trying to be scientific, and simply leave some things where they are and go on to higher things. For theology, therefore, let us see what things must be assumed as absolute before we can go on to anything like a theological system in any form.

1. Theology must assume that knowledge and personality are inseparable. There are forms of knowledge which seem to be independent of personality, but when the whole case is in, it will be found that knowledge cannot be separated from personality, and that personality is a part and an inevitable part of every form of knowledge. Knowledge which does not reflect and interpret the thinker and which is not allied to forms of

thought which are themselves corollaries of personality is, for theological purposes, impossible. Theological thinking has, as its background, a personality ; and with that background everything in the form of knowledge is allied, even though mankind may not yet have discovered how the alliance is perfected. But in this matter accepted science and theology have absolutely no middle ground. Talk of reconciliation is the merest nonsense. And to try to make a scientific theology, meaning by this to attempt to make a theology which scientific men holding their present attitude and fundamental propositions can and will approve, is like whistling down the wind. They cannot approve without denying one of their fundamental propositions. Such a scientific theology would be neither science nor theology ; and if it were valid as science, as theology it would be simply foolishness. There is here a great gulf fixed. It is both foolish and useless to minimize it. But why try to minimize it? What has the science of the world ever done for the religious life at any time or anywhere to make it worth while even to try to find a *via media*? The scientific man of to-day knows as well as he knows anything that he risks his standing if he becomes conspicuously religious even though he be moved to do so. He knows this because he knows that the fundamental propositions of science and theology are mutually exclusive on the doctrine of the nature of knowledge, and that very likely his colleagues will attribute any religious beliefs of his which run counter to the accepted doctrine as a mild hallucination or an ungoverned emotion. " Faith is what we believe, science is what we know," is in general the statement ; and any form of knowledge which comes into the realm where personality has anything to do with it, and religious knowledge is almost exclusively of this character, is scientifically taboo. Nothing has shown the futility, and by the way the foolishness, of the at-

tempt at reconciliation, than most of the talk about the psychology of religion. And to give a religious education which shall be scientific also has awakened the laughter of learned men the world over. There is only one communion in the world at this moment that has a consistent position on this matter. It is the Church of Rome. Protestantism, battered from pillar to post in the endeavor to fit a theology which involves personality into a science that excludes it, has simply found that it had no theology at all. The present scientific doctrine of knowledge logically excludes the existence of personality. To theology personality is the ultimate reality.

2. If personality is the ultimate reality, it goes without saying, as a logical necessity, that there is a moral order and purpose in the world. It is here that the cleavage between the outstanding science of the world and all the religion of any sort in the world is most manifest. It is the most perplexing of all the questions which face religious men, because it is the one always present, and the one which in its untoward forms, involving the whole question of pain, is the most insistent and poignant in its pressure upon the hearts of men. The practical religionist everywhere may ignore every other problem of theology, but he must face this. He must meet in some form, however weak, however illogical, however at variance with all the higher and best moods of thought, the steady cry of suffering humanity, and be able to insist that it is not beyond the purview of a good God, and, however obscured to the most enlightened vision or hidden from the profoundest faith and trust, must still be held to be allied to the moral purposes of God, which, when known, will be found to be good. The man who would undertake to minister religiously without this assurance in his own soul would be something short of a fool. Every mighty figure of the past who has left us a syllable worth reading on religion

has, in some form or other, faced this question. And, whatever his solution or lack of solution has been, he has insisted that God's purpose, when known, would be found good. But, as stated, science insists that there is no such moral order; and one of the most cowardly spectacles of modern theology has been that in this respect it has either quailed before the onslaughts of scientific men or sneaked in the shadow of vagueness, afraid to face the inevitable battle of ultimate realities which is involved in this matter. Why try to reconcile the irreconcilable? If God be God, worship him. If Baal, then worship him. It is one of the pitiful sights of the intellectual life of our time to see our religious leaders and thinkers afraid to battle for their ultimate ideas, and everlastingly seeking for reconciliations, and wasting both time and otherwise good brain power for what, when gained, is not worth the while of a respectable intellect. A theology which would command, or which starts out to command, the assent of the men holding the propositions which I have indicated, one of the fundamental of which is the denial of any moral order in the external world, is doomed to defeat before it begins, and is deserving of the contempt into which it usually falls. Nobody knows this better than the scientific men themselves; and, for this reason, it is safe to say that, whatever they think of the doctrine, the ultramontanes of theology to-day have vastly more respect among the mass of scientific men than any others. A detailed scrutiny of the evidence on this point would be most illuminating. Ultramontanism may be stupid, but it is not so stupid as to try to mix oil and water. It may be wooden-headed and intellectually futile. But it at least knows when a club strikes its head. Why then make any attempt at a "scientific" theology? What would the thing be good for if we had it? What religious man ever thinks of scientific conceptions in connection with his religion

anyway? The utter and stupid waste of time and strength in these matters is one of the most irritating things about our theological literature. And what makes it more contemptible, not to say ludicrous, is that, as a practical religious expedient, its results are so meager and so pitiful that one is ashamed to see the concessions made, even in the use of a terminology which shows deference for what is manifestly outside the sphere of a reconciliatory understanding. The effort to erect a scientific nomenclature in theological thought and literature has been disastrous on more accounts than most theologians imagine. It has denuded our literature of many of its noblest conceptions, and paganized ideas which once were fertile and suggestive for not only theology but for practical religious activity. It has destroyed what Austin Phelps used to call "the intellectual dignity of the work of the Holy Ghost," and made a sphere of influence for mountebanks with mouthfuls of real and pseudo-scientific verbiage, to the loss of both faith and serviceableness. It has portrayed Christianity going about for somebody to give it intellectual standing, and has abandoned, in failing to insist upon the moral government of the world and the moral order of nature, the primacy of the theistic idea in the minds of educated men. The interrogation which has been created in the minds of devout men in this regard is due to nothing more than to the failure to stand up frankly to the fixed contrast between dominant science and all theology in the matter of the moral order of the world.

3. It is one of the absolute necessities of theology that it shall hold that the spiritual message of nature is its ultimate and real message. You observe here the distinction between the moral order and the spiritual message of the external world. Spiritual truth, the fruit and the crystallization of religious knowledge based upon a fixed and moralized order of

nature, must, in any theistic conception of the world, be a fundamental necessity. This must mean that the message of nature is a spiritual message; especially if man as the spiritual crown of nature is to be coördinated on his highest side with the nature and life round about him. And yet who has heard anything worth while on such a coördination? We have heard *ad nauseam* the story, so that every child in the primary school knows it, the story of physical evolution and the correlation of the human frame to the higher orders of vertebrates. There is not a child in any nursery in Christendom that does not now at some time ask, "When was I a monkey?" And the youngest of us can look over his library and find tons of nonsense written on the subject of the implications of this fact, whether it is or is not a fact. But the higher coördination of the spiritual being called man, who has hope and fear, memory and imagination — who has done anything in this line that has impressed the thought of the world? And why has it not been done? Simply because the theologians were all engaged, especially the better equipped among them, in a crazy race to produce a theology which should be stripped of everything offensive to the scientific crew who, like a band of pirates, hoisted the black flag of negation in the intellectual world, and even boarded the theological ship itself, whose crew, instead of manfully seizing the armor of God and the sword of the Spirit to repel boarders, stood by and murmured, "What a wonderful performance!" I think this is not unfair as a description of what has happened in the last thirty years. The whole spiritual world, the primacy of the spiritual interest in man and hence in nature, the demand for intellectual recognition of this spiritual reality as the ultimate thing in nature, its real message, its final expression, and its real point of junction with the spirit of man, surrendered and passed over, only to be

painfully gained back in pennyworths, through pseudo-psychological jugglery, half science, half buffoonery, with a laboratory on one side and a dark closet on the other! It may have been foolishness formerly to identify infidelity with depravity, but it never was as foolish a performance as to identify spiritual negation with intellectual veracity and power. Now the attitude which I have indicated is the attitude of science. Why try to get on with it? Why waste time with it? Why give over the masterful, penetrating descriptive realities of the Bible, for example, for the inanities of a half-baked pseudo-theological science which can win assent neither from those to whom it is addressed nor understanding by any others? It is said that theology has become through this process liberalized. But I cannot but feel in this connection very much as Mr. Balfour says that he feels about the Spencerian philosophy. Speaking of certain of Mr. Spencer's conclusions, he says: "From Mr. Spencer's premises these conclusions seem to follow naturally enough." He says that with man's increasing adaptation to his environment, man will become increasingly more competent and capable, so that finally it will be the broad and not the narrow path that leads to life. Whereupon he adds that the satisfactions of this happy consummation are somewhat dulled for him by the reflection, that with such increasing adaptation, the necessity for intellectual effort will steadily disappear, "so that by the time we are all perfectly good, we shall also all be perfectly idiotic." I confess to feeling exactly the same way about the eternal effort to become scientifically respectable. By the time science acknowledges our intellectual respectability, we shall have simply become suitable subjects for its museums or laboratories. On the other hand, the insistence (and the insistence whether the physical sciences have the tools for its comprehension or inclusion in their schemes or not) on the spiritual in-

terpretation of nature, and that the message of nature is a spiritual message designed to the highest uses of the spirit in the world, which is first the Holy Spirit and then the spirit of holy men and through them the spirit of all men, is confessedly the seat of spiritual and intellectual power for theology. For the theology that does not live in the practical religious life is not worth having. And the assent of laboratories and museums is hardly a valuable specific for the unceasing note of anguish in the spiritual life of our time.

4. Again, when we consider the question of the individual — his worth, his significance, his titular place in the organic and physical world — we have another of those deep, inevitable, and bridgeless chasms between the prevailing scientific conceptions and the necessary elements of theological thought which forces again either abject surrender or bold, strong, and biblical theological emphasis. There is hardly a single thing in the entire Scriptures which has such far-reaching force as the estimate which the gospel places upon the value of the individual life. It is there portrayed as worthy, and suitably worthy, of the Divine concern in every stage of its development. "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth" is the symbolic, poetic, and spiritual portrayal of the interest of the Eternal in the embryonic life of man. How this has been wrought out in the ministry and message of Jesus Christ needs not to be stated. The parables of Christ, the personal ministry of Christ, the conversations of Jesus with individuals, and the hanging of the doctrines of the Kingdom upon the message to the individual heart, form the unchallenged method of Christ in the utterance of his own consciousness. This reaches the supreme fulfilment when he finally prays, "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in

us" which marks the supreme spiritualization of the individual heart in its knowledge and fellowship with God. Compare that idea with the present scientific conception of the individual, whether of man or of the lower orders of human life. If one were to call this thing by its right name, many would rise up and raise the customary blatant cry of obscurantism or mediævalism and what not! We should be treated to the same insufferable arrogant assumption that whoever did not swallow at first gulp whatever some man chose to offer as a scientific finality must therefore be set down as a hopeless conservative incapable of understanding the "scientific attitude." Just how long is this thing to go on? The contrast is open, clear, and unmistakable. Though few scientific men have ventured or cared to state that they took exactly the same attitude toward the human species that they do, for example, toward a maple seed, yet tacitly that *is* the attitude and some of the franker and freer-spoken ones are without pains to conceal it. Now is any reconciliation with such an attitude possible for the theologian? Is there a ground possible for the man who lives in and loves the ministry of Christ as revealed in the New Testament to hold any sort of sympathy with this great generalization of physical science? No such sympathy is possible. If it were possible for the theologian, it would not be possible for the scientist. The theologians sometimes pretend to have it, but chiefly among those who know nothing about binding up the wounds of the broken men and women of the world, and who have no sort of knowledge of the great immediate sorrows of the human heart. To go about looking for any sort of *modus vivendi* with a science of this description is to commit a kind of folly by the side of which Mrs. Partington's performance in trying to sweep back the Atlantic is a rational deed. Now what I am contending is, that it is not worth while to make the at-

tempt. Such an attitude is so utterly and hopelessly at variance with the necessary moods and fundamental concepts of theological thought that it is worse than useless to try it. My belief is that the scientists think so also. This will do well enough for some incumbent of a chair where he can say whatever he pleases without the facts of human life steadily to face him and force him to exercise the revisionary judgment of daily contact with human need and sin. That is the reason why the theological product has been what it is, and why, as a profession, we are the weak sisters of the educated class. But if we had boldly taken into our hands and heads, what we already knew in our hearts, whether we got the damnation of faint praise from scientific men or not, the trust that we were in spiritual alliance with the Infinite, and that when we worked with God in the great transformation program which made the human heart a temple of God and the human will a drive-wheel for righteousness, we were eternally and powerfully right, we might not have had so many useless theological treatises, but we should have had a mighty force of righteousness in the churches, which would have answered a thousand questions which ratiocination never will answer. The vision of the shepherd leaving the ninety and nine in the fold and going out into the night and the dark to look after the *one that was lost* is the sufficient, certain, lasting, overwhelming, answer to the scientific doctrine of the uselessness of the individual, except as a transmitter of species. Theology should say it. It should reject, as its own damnation, any implication in the interest of science, that leaves one child of God out of the full, fundamental record of the love of God. It strikes its flag to pirates or scuttles its own ship when it does not so stand.

5. And what is the summation of it all? That the theistic conception which lies at the basis of all theological thought

carries with it the whole program of prayer, providence, yes, and as I dare to believe, miracle — and not remote miracle in the cloudland of dimly comprehended legend and fable, but modern miracle daily abounding in the rush of the Eternal through the vital life of mankind, hastening on to the ultimate reality, the completion of human personality in the life and thought of God. It seems to me the veriest bosh to try to evade the implications of a theistic universe. And I cannot for the very life of me see that the intellectual status of religion or Christianity is one whit improved by endeavoring to formulate in terms which shall render innocuous to the contempt of the scientific world, the vital truths of religion and Christianity. Nor do I look for the greatest advance till once again the theory of a synthetic union of science, as at present held or even as it ever may be held, (for science, like everything else in this world, is a flowing stream, never to be regarded in fixed formal terms, and even its great generalizations do not constitute the necessary background for the future of science itself,) be given up as a fundamentally hopeless task, because there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, and one star differeth from another star in glory. It is not necessary to come into the consciousness of Christ even with full intellectual stature and respectability, that such a synthesis should be made. It is not of the slightest importance, except to a very small fragment of the human race, that it should be made, and it is of very doubtful importance to these. The "imperial thinkers of the race" have been noted for nothing so distinctively as their refusal to be bound to the chariot-wheels of conventional intellectual respectability. They have left no clearer illustration of their imperialism, if it must be so styled, than that they have broken away from the alleged formulas of knowledge, and have simply af-

firmly what they knew and waited till the world found out that it was true. In this sense the whole world of Christian men can think, and ought to think, imperially. But there is a higher and finer way of thinking than to think imperially. It is to think in the democracy of thought, where, in the broad highway of God, the truth lover follows after in the terms of truth known to him, heeding not the raucous cries of arrogance about him, least of all the fine clothes vendors of the cultivated world. Strip them all naked and they all look alike; and when all their artificial distinctions are gone, they are alike the children of sin and sorrow, whose great problem is personal forgiveness and personal reconciliation in the love and peace of God. I do not know whether Professor Harnack still talks, as I used to hear him talk, about a scientific spirit in theology, but I cannot close this group of reflections upon some of the fundamental contrasts between what is now called science and what I conceive theology must be, than by quoting him concerning the supreme mystery, the central fact in human history and religious experience — the atonement of Christ:—

“When the Holy One descends to sinners, when he lives with them and walks with them, when he does not count them as unworthy, but calls them his brethren, when he serves them and dies for them, then their terror of the awful judge melts away and they believe that the Holy One is love and that there is something mightier still than Justice—Mercy. . . . His death is thus the culminating point of the service which he rendered for sinners during his mission. . . . They now know God as their Redeemer, but they also know Jesus Christ as their Reconciler. . . . They consider His passion and His death vicarious. How can they do otherwise? . . . In the presence of the cross no other feeling, no other note is possible. . . . Let us gaze with reverential reticence upon the Cross of Christ from which God shines forth as Infinite Love. It is a holy secret not understood of the profane and yet ‘the power of God and the wisdom of God.’”

Let some one who can, nay, let some one who dares, translate this in the vernacular of modern science!