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ARTICLE VII.

AN APPEAL TO THE NEW SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY.

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I.

It can hardly be said that we instinctively turn to comic papers for wise counsel on serious problems; but even the most trivial and cynical of them may occasionally contain a keen and true diagnosis of existing conditions. Some months ago a rather significant joke appeared in one of our humorous publications. A man had asked his friend for the cause of the trouble in a certain church, and the reply was that the minister was being "tried for orthodoxy." A little more recently a similar piece of wit tells of a woman's admiration for a visiting clergyman because "it is such a relief to hear a preacher that has nothing to say against the Bible." In Germany, too, they must like the same sort of jokes; for *Simplicissimus* represents the Herr Pastor as saying that his tears in the pulpit are because he "cannot believe what he preaches."

These flings, I say, are significant; they indicate the general belief in a revolution in things religious. One need not discuss the depth and scope of this real or imaginary movement to reach the trite conclusion that questioning, doubting, and reconstruction are characteristic of much of the religious opinion of our times. The popular divinity of the shallow crowd is change, novelty; and for not a few of a more serious mold, reconstruction has become a necessity. "Old things have passed away, and all things are become new,"—this is the chant

of the unthinking crowd, and many of the more thoughtful few give at least partial assent. Conservative notions are unpopular; the star of the New School is in the ascendant; for the time being, their word is law and gospel in the minds of many that are Christians, and of most of those who are not. If this be true, then, humanly speaking, the religious weal or woe, the faith or unfaith, of coming generations is largely in the hands of the representatives of this so popular movement. Does not such a responsibility invite a most careful self-criticism on the part of the leaders of the movement? Is not a severe analysis of their position imperative?

Now let it be clearly understood that this analysis, this criticism, comes from no unfriendly pen. Personally the writer remains indifferent to many of the points at issue between conservatives and radicals; on other questions he inclines toward the new view; and if he is "old-fashioned" in a few of his ideas, he does not feel that this fact incapacitates him for a fair discussion of the problem before us.

At this point a word of definition would be wise. What is meant by the "New School"? Whatever may be properly the notion conveyed by this term, in this discussion it will be limited in its application to three sets of thinkers, not *necessarily* identical, but all characteristic of the age, and, I venture to assert, on the large average, sympathetic, if not identical—I refer to the Anticreedists (if I may invent such a term), to the Reconstructionists, and to the Higher Critics, particularly those whose work has been preponderatingly negative and destructive. Now, though I have hinted at this trisection of the New School, nearly all that is said is meant to apply to the school as a whole, and not simply—if chiefly—to that especial type of thought in connection with which it is here discussed.

II.

"It is not what you believe, but what you do, that is important," or even, "Be good, and it makes no difference what you believe," are the words in which the faith of those whom I have called the Anticreedists is most often expressed,—statements to which nearly every Christian will give a more or less qualified assent, beginning with him who wrote, "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but a new creature." But expressed, as it so often is in an unqualified and dogmatic way, with sneers and vituperation for those who dare demur, I think I see in these phrases an element of danger and of rank injustice, besides an occasional lack of clear reasoning. At this point let us look for a moment at the constituency of this faith. In the first place, we shall notice a large body of earnest, thoughtful men (among whom most of the leaders of this movement should be numbered), who, sick of the preponderating attention sometimes given to mere belief, and longing for real moral progress, have taken a justifiable step; but who, being human and fallible, have run to an extreme, and need to be warned of their lack of balance. But, making allowance for these, we find in the same ranks others whose discernment or whose sincerity is not of the highest order.

Here, for instance, is a man engaged in the crusade against creeds. You talk with him, and find that the very center of his Christian life is a strong faith in those things whose importance he would seek to minimize. He tells you that what we need is not theology, but the spirit of Christ; and yet his whole attitude betrays a conviction about Christ (he would not let you call it his "creed") which is an essential part of his life, and which is theological though it be a little vague. Such a man does not understand himself. His thinking needs

a tonic. An interesting example of this failure to reason clearly, coupled with an eagerness to go far out of one's way in order to slap at theology, once occurred in the writer's presence. We had been discussing feminine morality, and one young man, though of skeptical tendencies, maintained that the woman who is religious is less likely than others to fall. This was too much for another of the party, whose hatred for theology may or may not be due to his close relationship with a theologian of a radical type. Instantly he replied: "I don't believe it. Such things are questions of right and wrong, and have nothing to do with theology." Think of it! Theology had not been mentioned, except as implied in religion; and yet so strong was prejudice in this man, a fine fellow and presumably a Christian, that he must go thus far out of his way to rob the religion of Jesus of a virtue accorded to it by far less sympathetic thinkers. And then this "no-matter-what-you-believe" idea is exceedingly popular with a large crowd of nominal Christians, and of most unchristians who prefer *morals* that are not too strenuous as well as diluted theology.

I do not maintain that this is a shockingly immoral class of people, nor do I ignore the fact that some lives of crystal purity have been lived without any religious faith whatever; but is it not just to say that many of these superficial admirers of ethics, and enemies of theology, are people who look with smiling disdain on a Christian Endeavor badge, who rail at temperance cranks (the writer is neither a C. E. nor a prohibitionist), and who turn up their noses at "Sunday-school boys," —to whom, in short, all of the great, strenuous, positive, moral movements of the day (and it would be strange if their opposition to *all* is on purely intellectual grounds) are as distasteful as are "worn-out creeds"? On the outskirts of this clan is the really immoral man, who puts in his word against

creeds. One such man I knew who spoke proudly of our age as "getting away from creeds," soon after of the missionaries who teach "what they say are the truths of Christianity," and at another time plainly declared his approval of what moralists of almost every type agree in pronouncing one of the worst of sins—and this, I feel safe in saying, not from conviction, but purely from the lack of moral earnestness. There you have it—the earnest, the illogical, the indifferent, and the immoral, all joining in the hue and cry against creeds.

This hasty and imperfect sketch of the personnel of the Anticreedist army has naturally anticipated a criticism of its standards. First and foremost among those objections is the great danger arising from its extremely negative character, and the natural inference that the whole movement betokens a lack of conviction. Dr. Van Dyke has put the case cogently. "But," says he, "in all this renewal and expansion of what is well and proudly called practical Christianity, there is, if I mistake not, a danger, or at least a serious possibility, of loss. The life of man is not only practical, it is also intellectual. . . . . He cannot help acting, neither can he help thinking. . . . . If the Christianity of to-day, by dwelling exclusively or too much on the ethical side of the gospel as a beautiful and beneficent rule of conduct illustrated by a perfect example, tends to ignore the intellectual necessities of man, and fails to realize that it has a message to deliver in the realm of truth as well as in the realm of righteousness, it will not and it cannot meet the deepest wants of the present age. . . . It may even aggravate those wants. . . . It may seem to give assent, by silence, to the desperate assumption of skepticism that the unseen world is unknown and unknowable. . . . . It may preach in effect a Christ whose character and conduct are to be accepted as infallible, but whose convictions in regard to God

and the soul and the future life are mere fallacies and illusions."[1] Listen next to the trenchant words of Phillips Brooks,—words which, if they had come from one of "the bats and owls of orthodoxy," might be laughed to scorn; but no sane man can accuse the splendid bishop either of narrowness or of unreasoning conservatism. This is what he says:—

"The decrying of creed in the interest of conduct is very natural, but very superficial. If it succeeded, it would make life and conduct blind and weak. There is no greater misnomer applied to creeds and opinions than that which lurks in the word 'advanced.' The man whose creed is the smallest, the most crude and colorless and flimsy, is called 'advanced,' while he whose beliefs are richest, and most full of hope and liberty, is called 'slow,' 'behind the times,' and other tardy names.

"The man who believes nothing with any energy; who masks the doctrines of our Lord's gospel under negations; who evaporates them into a thin mist of speculation; who emasculates them of their energy by faith—such a man is called an 'advanced thinker.' The cheerless iconoclasm, which is forever breaking down the strong barriers erected in a former time, parades before the world as 'free thought.' It is no advance, but inertia—no free thought, but dullard slavery—which leads man into a state like that. Exactness, earnestness, and precise fidelity to the truth of things are better than a limp negation, and make a man a true, free, and advanced thinker."

Moreover, this shallow defense of the unbeliever rests on the failure to see that skepticism can enter the sphere of morals as well as of theology. It is by no means impossible or unusual for doubt of morals, or at least of responsibility, to

[1] Gospel for an Age of Doubt, pp. 171-172.

follow close on the heels of religious unbelief. In fact this would seem to be a law of history.

"Modern fiction," says Dr. H. C. Minton, in another connection, "reeks with this false gospel of self-gratification. The culprit's answer to every charge is, 'I am built that way.' Temper is substituted for will, and temperament for character. Realism in art, with all its salacious appeals and vice-breeding influences, is its hellish spawn. Renan was a brilliant high-priest at this altar of instinctive lubricity. Tess of the D'Urbervilles breaks an accepted social law, but obeyed a natural impulse, and, although men said she had fallen from her innocence, men lied; Tess is as guiltless 'as the sleeping birds in the hedges, or the skipping rabbits on a moon-lit warren.' She has her philosophy and these are her words: 'Feelings are feelings. I won't be a hypocrite any longer, so there! . . . . I must be as I was born.' Again and again does Mr. Hardy apologize for adultery and seduction because they have the sanction of impulse."

These creed-haters will tell you plausibly enough that

> "There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds":

but you must beware lest, before you know it, their song have become

> "For God is not censorious
> When his children take their fling."

This is no defense of theology-slavery; the contention here made is that the indiscriminate hostility to all theology, now so popular with the less thoughtful, is a perilous attitude, and may inflict a mortal wound in the very heart of religion. I rejoice in the decay of microscopic differences in theology. Schools of thought that once branded each other as allies of Satan now gladly dwell on what they have in common, and are willing to admit that one may disagree with them on mi-

nor points without being wholly bad. I rejoice, I say, that denominational differences are weakening; but how can a sane man believe that this movement involves the belittling of the fundamentals of religious belief? Arminian and Calvinist can and should fraternize: are we to infer that it makes no difference what view we have about Christ, or the soul, or moral responsibility?

We all know the man who thinks that the sum and substance of religious education is learning some highly elaborated philosophical system embodied in a catechism, with a minute dissection of salvation and accurate descriptions of the Almighty's state of mind at every stage in the proceedings. Now it is not casting aspersions upon the historical value of these sometimes wonderful expressions of religious thought, nor upon their dynamic virtues in the past and, when wisely used, the present time too,—it is not decrying catechisms and confessions of faith to question the wisdom of cramming the undeveloped mind with intricate systems or unessential teaching. In doing this, the progressives have done well. But have they stopped there? Examine critically their method, and you will find a wide use of an old fallacy that we learned in school to abhor,—arguing from the particular to the general. "Intricate catechisms," we hear them say, "are not religion; therefore all theological teaching is useless for religious purposes, and we want none of it. Let us teach our children to be honest and virtuous truth-seekers, and that will be religion enough." Could anything be more absurdly false to simple logic and simple Christian teaching? If this view be true, let us be honest with ourselves, and preach a real, not a disguised, ethical culture or positivism; let us admit that religion is dead, and that its place must be taken by sociology and science; let us support *The Philistine* in its efforts to found a new church,

"Church of Man," and "turn our attention from God, who does not need us, to his children, who do." (But when you have lost God, are you very sure you will keep on caring for "his children"?)

Nine-tenths of the serious objectors to the theological element in religion would promptly answer, "No," when the question is thus baldly put; and when this is done one object of this discussion has been attained, for the issue will have been clearly drawn between the effort to do away with some of the bitter hair-splitting polemics of the past and this apparent hostility to all and any doctrinal teaching. Let us be explicit. The objection here raised is not aimed at the ethicizing tendency *in toto,* but at its preponderatingly negative spirit,—one that saps the very life from our religion. The thinking man needs, demands, a rational basis for his moral and religious life. It would be difficult to overestimate the effect "mere belief" has had on public morals. Can one imagine Christian civilization without the fundamental beliefs of Christianity? "In their beginning," says John Fiske, "theology and ethics were inseparable; in all the vast historic development of religion they have remained inseparable." "Neither in the crude fancies of primitive men nor in the most refined modern philosophy can theology divorce itself from ethics. Take away the ethical significance from our conceptions of the unseen World . . . . . and no element of significance remains. All that was vital in theism is gone."[1] And yet some spiritual spendthrifts would have us squander or neglect our theological principle which is paying its rich ethical dividends, heedless of bankrupt generations to come.

Professor Goldwin Smith has attacked liberalism in its very vitals by his recent article on the future of ethics. After mak-

[1] Through Nature to God, pp. 172–173.

ing the rather peculiar statements that recent scientific discoveries have destroyed theism and the advance in criticism weakened Christianity, he reaches the conclusion that, whatever may be the basis of the newer ethics, *it certainly will not be the Sermon on the Mount*—alack, alas! and if you listen to some liberals, the Sermon on the Mount is the only thing in the Gospels worth having.

Take another case,—a Scotch friend of mine of a skeptical, speculative turn of mind. "Why make such a fuss," said he, "about the personality of Christ any more than about Plato? We have the teachings of both, and ought to be thankful for them." Place beside that this other statement of his, and then ask yourself whether a better theology would have helped him? "Jesus had no æsthetic sense; his remarks about looking lustfully on a woman made a German prince destroy a splendid work of art, and have caused lots of suffering in the world [that is to say from self-restraint]. We make too much of purity. How can a mere marriage ceremony make things different?" In another place it might be pertinent to question whether we can be said to have the teachings of Jesus and be wholly indifferent to his personality, or perhaps my friend's philosophy of purity (not to speak of his habits) might come in for criticism; but all that is in place here is to point out to our creed-haters the kind of moral challenges they will be getting when religious belief is quite dead.

The question is not so much whether a few hundred ethical culturists can lead pure lives without religion, but whether, given an unthinkable society with a *complete absence of all religious beliefs,* the great mass of average humanity would care a fig for morals, and in fact whether even the ethical-culture idea itself would have arisen. A keen skeptical spirit will rob you of your very ethics unless you are more careful.

How long will a high moral tone outlive the general belief in God and immortality? How long are we going to be sure of the soul and of a God who loves us and will hold us to account, after Christ's teachings have ceased to be authoritative? Ah! gentlemen of the New School, you have fought a noble battle against ultracreedism, and you have won many a victory; beware lest unthinking enthusiasm for a single idea carry you to a point where friend may lament, and foe rejoice, that you, the unconscious apostles of Nihilism, came not to fulfill, but to destroy. No more convincing exposition of man's need for something more than mere morals need be sought than a recent editorial in a prominent weekly magazine on "What is Religion?" Here from no reactionary pen one may read the calm convincing warning that if a man is to be saved from sin he needs a strong spiritual life based on a firm grasp of spiritual realities.

At this point a serious question emerges. Our modern theologian may say: "You are astray. Our fight has been, not against a doctrinal religion, whose importance we join with you in asserting, but against the teaching that all who are unable, for purely intellectual reasons, to accept these doctrines ["honest skeptics"] are under the wrath of God. When you maintain that doctrine is essential, do you mean to the existence of religion or to salvation?" I beg leave to make three simple assertions of opinion in reply to this perplexing problem: 1. Whatever may be the motive of the battle against creeds, its manifest influence has in the main been sweepingly hostile to doctrinal teaching of every kind; 2. It is manifestly every man's duty to "respond to Christ"[1] in so far as he puts a demand on his faith and practice; 3. That an honest and even intelligent man may maintain an agnostic

[1] The Fact of Christ, by P. Carnegie Simpson.

and at least a hopeful position regarding those whose reason leads them away from God and Christ.

Nor is there great weight in the objection that creeds are exclusive. Some tell us that "Orthodoxy is my-doxy, and heterodoxy is your-doxy," and there is a certain catchiness about the phrase that might deceive the superficial, as well as a disconcerting *argumentum ad hominem,* with its insinuation that self-conceit is the only basis for religious conviction. But just try to imagine for a moment that John Fiske is the speaker and Robert Ingersoll the person addressed, and you will then discover that, according to these critics, belief in God is orthodoxy while atheism is heterodoxy, a rather unusual use of the terms, and one that reflects a little on the ability of various eminent writers to frame definitions in the religious field. One of the many perplexing things in life is the fact that sincere and intelligent men differ so widely about so many important matters. Yes; it must be admitted; creeds do divide and exclude. Theism cuts out atheists and agnostics, and theism is theology. But a pure ethical code, too, cuts off the immoral and the careless, does it not? Let us make our creeds as wide as we dare. Let us leave out everything but the most essential points; but then let us jealously guard the residuum; and fearlessly, but humbly and kindly, proclaim that anything less than this is, in our estimation, not the Christianity needed by humanity and taught by Jesus Christ and his followers.

And then there is that absurd habit of insinuating that people who emphasize belief are apt to be weak in their morals or indifferent to the needs of their fellowmen—an accusation which, while doubtless well founded in individual cases, all history and observation of those around us will easily show to be unjust. I have watched men of various sorts, and I cannot help noting that those who are indifferent to the princi-

ples of religion and who seize every opportunity to ridicule "theology," and orthodoxy in particular, also have their slur ready for "piety." Your experience has been different from mine if you have never met the man who is always ready with blatant denunciation for religious thought and religious people from theism to foreign missions, and who, when his turn comes for preaching, draws his ideals from the Erasmian spirit of compromise with right, or gets a text from Omar, "Take the cash, and let the credit go,"—or perhaps even stoutly defends sins of the grossest sort. Far be it from me to assert that such a man is wholly depraved,—perhaps he is only silly; nor dare I assume that his is the prevailing type of Anticreedism,—perhaps it is only very common; but I should like to protest against the ordinary assumption that the majority of the Anti-theological crowd are high-browed, lofty-minded youths who tell us with a pained expression that they "cannot accept the old orthodox position" on this or that question, and whose morality exists in inverse poportion to their beliefs. Such cases, of course, are not infrequent; but every one very well knows that much, if not most, of the clamor against creeds (excepting the leaders of the movement) comes either from people who think they are doing something very smart, or from those who have no use for religion whether expressed in terms of philosophy or of ethics.

After all, could not this spirit of anticreedism, when expressed in saner, more moderate, terms, be accepted by all of us? If one were to maintain that the Christianity of the last few generations laid far too much emphasis on mere belief, and that practice as well as faith is essential to true religion, who would demur? "It makes no difference what you believe?" Can we go so far? "The importance of be-

lief on minor points has been greatly exaggerated"; is it not self-evident?

Thus far doctrinal teaching has been discussed in a purely theoretical way. Let us now, in passing, ask ourselves whether there was anything more than ethics in the minds of those who first tried to spread the great Christian religion. Here the unlearned layman must look out for the rocks. When profound scholars are disputing about the essence of Christianity, how can he be sure of his ground? This is a discouraging thought. Is nothing about the whole matter sure or even probable? Possibly; but in default of scholarship most of us must use our humble common sense, and this tells us two things pretty plainly: (1) that there is undeniably a large doctrinal element in the recorded writings of such people as Paul and Peter, who, it may be presumed, had an idea of Christ's teachings that would compare favorably even with that of some of the modern scholars; and (2) that in the record of Christ's life (made, most men say, do they not? by his contemporaries), the ethical and the doctrinal are so closely interwoven that an unprejudiced person would find it difficult to discard the latter without damaging the authenticity of the former. It is, however, a question whether a discussion of this sort has not the right to take more for granted. The apologist himself yields but little more, and it surely goes without saying that we are here assuming Christianity to be true.

Be that as it may, when some of the extreme advocates of mere ethics advance an obligatory system of morals joined to the assertion that "it makes no difference" what you think of Christ's person, the purpose of his coming, his alleged miraculous powers and resurrection,—when, I say, this theory is calmly presented and labeled Christianity, common sense

is bound to assert itself, and ask, Why then is this ethical system obligatory? What do you think Paul and John would say of it? And how do you know anything about Christ, after all, if you thus suit yourselves about rejecting so large parts of the only record of his life and teaching? No; this will not do. The needs of man and the evident spirit of early Christianity make belief an essential part of our religion.

III.

Closely connected with the idea just discussed is the passion for reconstruction in religion, which is characteristic of much of our modern theological thinking. Now with reconstruction as such no intelligent man can quarrel. The conservative assertion that one cannot change the old doctrines may be true; but it is always in order to ask what basis these old doctrines have, and, moreover, whether our conception of them is correct. Jesus Christ was a reconstructionist, in the eyes of his contemporaries at least. So were Luther and Calvin. If some pretty serious tearing down and rebuilding had not taken place, some of our contemporary opponents of all change would probably be staunch supporters of the Papal See. On, then, with free criticism, and let us rebuild what is faulty. The great weaknesses to which this spirit of reconstruction may lead us are an exaggeration of the destructive elements, and a blind worship of novelty, with its accompanying contempt for the past. As intellectual beings we cannot, of course, believe more than we think true; but those of us who pretend to be teachers of Christianity must remember that it is not much inspiration to struggling men simply to be told continually how we have "outgrown this old notion" or "given up that tradition," with but a scant word of positive teaching. And then the allurements of novelty must be guarded against. It is sometimes amusing to call our forefathers

names, and sometimes they (but especially those now alive whose reverence for the past is little better than ancestor worship) richly deserve it. But not all the past is bad or foolish, and our fiery steed of progress must be held in check by reason. Mere ridicule of the atonement as "mediæval legalism" can easily beget, and shortly, a similar contempt for the "mediæval mysticism" of the indwelling Christ who works regeneration; and then, having sneered regeneration out of court, we shall be ready with our "tardy names" for the "mediæval credulity" that yields unquestioning obedience to Jesus' moral and spiritual authority. Noveltyism, misnamed progress, may get us into trouble.

Not only is an excessive zeal for reconstruction prone to be dangerously negative and foolishly fond of any new idea, but it is not always strictly logical in the way it reconstructs. I mean that it is apt to pick out the beliefs that suit it, rather than those demanded by the stern logic of the situation. For instance, I suppose that the two positive opinions most conspicuous in the meager assortment offered by the New Theology (I refer here chiefly to the leaders) are God's love for man, and the claims of moral obligation. Now I should like to ask where you find God's love in earthquake or plague, in claw or fang, in sin or suffering? And as to the general principles or the details of ethical conduct, who will assure us that God cares, that life means duty, and that duty means destiny here and beyond the tomb? And how shall we decide these vexing questions of conduct? Back will come a prompt reply: "Why these things are, beyond question, the essence of Christ's teaching. In him you will find the solution of all your problems." Exactly. But, my dear sir, is it not also true that the "most advanced" of modern theologians are rather uncertain on this very point of Christ's authority? Un-

less we feel pretty sure that he has the right to demand our attention, why should we believe that God loves us, and holds us to account, simply because "Jesus" says so?

I grant that we may get some foundation for religion in philosophy and in science; let us be thankful for it, let us not disparage these sources. But it seems to me that some very loose thinking is being done by those who believe what they want about God and the soul, because of teachings recorded on the same page with other statements which they reject or seek to minimize, and on an authority which they do not allow. Is it not natural that one should, in this connection, be reminded of George Romanes' words, "Those in whom the religious sentiment is intact, but who have rejected Christianity on intellectual grounds, still almost deify Christ"?[1] Here is John preaching the love of God and (admittedly, does he not?) the absolute divinity of Christ. Is it logic or divination or partisanship, that leads us to reject the one we dislike and accept the other? Read, if you will, Professor Howison's comforting defense of God's personality and of human immortality from the philosopher's point of view. To the book as a whole, Christians of all classes should repeat the loud Amen; but the chapter on reason and religion cannot fail to arouse protest. Passing by such flaws as the surprising self-confidence which allows a man flatly to assert the impossibility of the Incarnation[2] and of miracles,[3] and not dwelling on the

[1] Thoughts on Religion, p. 169.

[2] The Limits of Evolution, p. 233. "The entire theory of external evidence for Divine Revelation is shown . . . to be a survival from the religious consciousness of primitive times when men really thought that God could be clothed in a limited body."

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 240. "Superficial philosophy which treats miracles as real possibilities."

Contrast George Romanes' statements, in his Thoughts on Religion (p. 178): "Pure agnosticism must allow that reason is incompetent to

weak objections to a belief in authority (however rationally derived), nor giving more than passing mention to the dogmatic rejection of human testimony because documents and witnesses are not absolutely indefectible (is the professor's belief in God and immortality established, then, beyond a cavil?), let us turn to the significant close of the chapter.

Here we find Christianity reduced to these terms: God is love; duty is paramount. Fine, wonderful conceptions; but why ignore the whole body of apostolic teaching and all of the gospel record except what suits us, in order to prove that Christ taught no high doctrine about himself or about many other things written large on every page? But the climax of the fallacy is reached in these words, "Christ taught and revealed by his life, but especially by his death, the previously unknown truth that God is a being of exhaustless Love."[1] Obviously we must not employ a mere trick of debate, and make too much of the perhaps unwisely chosen verb, "revealed"; but suppose we make it mean nothing more than "taught for the first time in human history." Suppose it is to be taken as the simple counsel or teaching of a man who made no unusual claims, and had no unusual testimony to his value, what then? Are we to accept it blindly? Shall we believe that God is love simply because a Buddha or a Socrates or a Jesus "revealed" it? And yet it honestly seems as though the gifted philosopher, after allowing himself to denude Christianity of most of the teachings that seem to have given it power in its incipiency, gladly, but most unphilo-

adjudicate *a priori* for or against Christian miracles, including the Incarnation"; and (p. 191) that "the antecedent improbability of miracles wrought by a man without a moral object is apt to be confused with that of its being done by God with an adequate moral end."

[1] Limits of Evolution, p. 246. Moral freedom and responsibility are also added as part of Christ's teaching, and on page 251 we find the further statement that "his theistic step was absolutely revolutionary."

sophically, accepts without a question the teaching of Jesus, as he conceives it. And how about this "previously unknown" truth, this "revolutionary theistic step"? If Plato and Confucius were ignorant of it, what right had Jesus to feel so sure about it, and why should we in the twentieth century be more ready to believe it than men who lived before our era, upon the mere statement of Christ?

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]