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KIERKEGAARD'S MESSAGE TO OUR AGE.

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REFERENCES.

L = Kierkegaard: Walter Lowrie, D.D. (O.U.P., 1938).

J = The Journals of Soren Kierkegaard; ed. and tr. by Alexander Dru (O.U.P., 1938).

R = Repetition: Soren Kierkegaard (O.U.P., 1942).

P = From the Papers of one still living: Kierkegaard (1838).

U.P. = Unscientific Postscript: Kierkegaard (1845).

P.F. = Philosophical Fragments, by Johannes Climacus, tr. by David F. Swenson (O.U.P., 1936).

S.D. = Sickness unto Death by S. Kierkegaard, tr. by Walter Lowrie (O.U.P., 1941).

P.A. = The Present Age, by S. Kierkegaard, tr. by Alexander Dru and Walter Lowrie (O.U.P., 1940).

I.—CONDITIONS.

CHRISTIANITY is both reactionary and revolutionary. It reacts to and fulfils the "Law and the Prophets" of religious tradition; but it fulfils them with a meaning so profound or so forgotten that, in the true connotation of the term, it is also revolutionary. It revolves the orb of an eternal Wisdom, turning darkened or hitherto unrevealed aspects of it to the light. It brings out of the immemorial and inexhaustible treasure of that wisdom "things new and old." Its new truths are, indeed, as old as the hills; but, seen anew, they "turn the world upside down." Its old truths are also eternally new. Such is the basic paradox of this profoundly traditional, profoundly revolutionary faith. Because it is so all the most profound of Christian thinkers have been both traditionalist and revolutionary, both conservative and creative.

As Dr. Lowrie has truly said, Kierkegaard "remained a conservative to the end of his days" (L. p. 91). Nevertheless, in

this proper meaning of the term, there are few Christian thinkers more entitled to the style of " Christian Revolutionary " than Soren Kierkegaard. The revolutionary character of his thought was also, as he constantly insisted, a reversal to the traditional truth which, so he believed, the Christianity of his time had betrayed. But, so penetrating was his insight into the treasury of Christian truth that the apostasy of Christendom which he denounced a hundred years ago to an age, in the main, incapable of understanding his meaning, is one of which our own age has become generally and ardently aware. He was, in fact, the forerunner of a Christian revolution which is only now approaching its flood-tide.

But the revolution which he heralded was one not only of religion but also of culture and life. He denounced the whole trend of thought, both religious and secular, of the romantic, liberal, idealistic, pseudo-democratic culture dominant in his day and the acquisitive, callous, comfort-loving society of laissez-faire individualism which it begot in life—a way of thought and life which is only now being seriously or generally assailed. When to say such things seemed insane and seditious, he declared that " Christianity does not exist " (L. p. 525), that " parsons canonize bourgeois mediocrity " (J. 1134) and " are trained in the art of introducing Christianity in such a way that it signifies nothing " (Papers, p. 23), that both " official " Christianity and " academic " or " donnish " criticism and philosophy were idiotic, that " Christianity has nothing to do with nationalism " (J. 1034), that " liberal constitutions " arouse " longing for an Eastern despotism as something more fortunate to live under " (J. 1066) and point to the " intensive development of the state itself " (J. 657), that " ideas such as ' state ' (*e.g.*, as it existed among the Greeks ; ' Church ' in the older Catholic sense) must necessarily return " (J. 85), that romanticism " implies overflowing all boundaries " (J. 44), a vain vagueness, that " Protestantism has produced a fundamental confusion in Christianity " (J. 1385), that humanism is " vaporised Christianity, a culture-consciousness, the dregs of Christianity " (J. 1209). Many make such criticisms today ; Kierkegaard's was a voice crying almost alone in a wilderness of nineteenth century " progress " and complacency.

Kierkegaard's revolutionary criticism of life thus includes the whole fabric of socio-political life of the modern age in its scope and the majority of the institutions, ideas and attitudes which he

condemned, are, though increasingly attacked, those with which we have still to deal to-day. And the revolution which he preached was radical; he laid his axe to the tap-root of the tree of life—the religious attitude in which such ideas and institutions originate. The present preoccupation with religion as the root of all political, economic and psychological problems echoes his prophetic diagnosis of our disease. He said that he "came out polemically against his age" (J. 588); his polemic applies no less to our own.

His constructive criticism was no less revolutionary and modern in its trend. His dialectical mode of thought anticipated the Marxian dialectic; his "existential" thinking is a salient feature in modern philosophy and theology. His doctrine of the "Instant" and "Repetition" propounded a conception of time which is now to the fore. His insistence upon the "leap" of life and faith as the way of reality as opposed to the "gradualism" of the evolutionists corresponds to the most recent conclusions of biology and physics. In his call to "inwardness" and awareness and his own profound psychological insight and fearless self-analysis he foreran modern psychology. His doctrine of the life and nature of Spirit forecast that theology of the Spirit with which the religious thought of our own time is increasingly concerned.

Kierkegaard's thought is thus not only revolutionary and not, in the cant and restricted sense of the word, limited to religion, it is also highly relevant to our own political, cultural and social conditions and problems. By temperament, moreover, he belonged rather to our than to his own age; he shared with the typical modern an acute sense of catastrophe and divided consciousness and, in his Journals and other writings, gave to posterity a profound and searching record and analysis of that condition. The realisation of the conditioned nature of all our thought and conduct is only to-day becoming general. Kierkegaard recognised the fact a century ago and, in his searching self-scrutiny and "existential" thinking, applied that philosophically revolutionary conclusion to all the problems which confronted him. The sources of his thought are, therefore, in a degree rare among philosophers and theologians, to be traced to his own physical and psychological conditions and some knowledge of those conditions is essential for the comprehension of his work.

His outer history was singularly uneventful. His real drama was inward and of the spirit; it was not the less dramatic,

catastrophic or tragic for that. He was born in Copenhagen in 1813. His father was a moderately prosperous and "self-made" wool-merchant and was aged 56 when Soren, the youngest of seven children, was born. His mother was of a lower social grade and had been his father's servant. His home conditions were thus those of the comfortable middle-classes, his psychological climate that of an urban, industrial, respectable, bourgeois and Protestant piety.

His father, a passionate, austere, guilt-haunted and, in a Puritan mode, deeply religious man, dominated, both by attraction and repulsion, the life of his son. He was obsessed with conviction of sin and its consequent curse upon him and his family. For he had once, in his own sad and bitter boyhood, cursed God and, particularly in his second marriage with Soren's mother, was agonisedly conscious of sexual incontinence. He carried that curse and sense of sin to the grave in a tortured contrition. It was a burden which his son was to inherit and assume as his own. Soren's mother appears in the records as a somewhat wraith-like and insignificant figure, submissive, repressed and impersonal, who made little impact upon her children; the gaunt figure of the father filled the family horizon. It is not hard to reconstruct that grim and gloomy world. It is a family scene of which we have many examples in our own Victorian age; a remarkably similar situation is described in Edmund Gosse's "Father and Son."

Soren himself, a somewhat sickly son of elderly parents and, as is common in such cases, hyper-sensitive and intellectual in bent, was acutely responsive to such oppressive conditions. The massive personality of his father imposed upon the child an adult and austere form of faith. "As a child," he has recorded, "I was strictly and austerely brought up in Christianity . . . a child crazily travestied as a melancholy old man" (L. p. 48). As he grew to manhood he fluctuated between a reverent affection for and resentment and rebellion against his father. But the latter's influence remained dominant to the end and was the mould of his piety. It was from his father that he learned how to live with God; "I have, quite literally, lived with God as one lives with one's father" (J. 771), he writes towards the end of his life. It seems certain that it was his father's confession to him of his own faith and failings which precipitated his own conversion and he continually testifies to the depth of his debt to him. It is unquestionable that it is to this dominating relation-

ship with his father that the markedly patriarchal pattern of his piety and his insight into the mystery of the fatherly love of God are chiefly to be attributed.

In 1830, at the age of 17, he proceeded from the Copenhagen High School to the University with a view to ordination—a prospect with which he flirted but never fulfilled throughout his life. For several years he lived the life of a brilliant, wayward, dilletante, mildly self-indulgent and wild young undergraduate and, until he attained his majority, he does not seem to have desired or approached an adult attitude to life. Then, in 1834, his mother, and, a few months later, his favourite sister Petrea, died. In the following spring he met Regina Oslen to whom he became engaged six years later.

The sequence of events in the nine crucial years from 1834 to 1843 provide the psychological key to the pattern of his mature mind and character for, during that period, Kierkegaard, an unformed boy of 21 when it began and a man of 30 when it closed, became adult in character and mind. In May, 1838, the year after Regina had entered his life, he experienced, with a profundity reminiscent of Pascal's " heure et demie " of " Fire," the " sudden," " inexplicable " and " indescribable joy " (J. 207) of conversion to Christianity. In August his father, with whom he had recently become reconciled, died, and in December he records in his Journal what he describes as " the great earthquake . . . the terrible revolution which suddenly forced upon me a new and infallible law of interpretation of all the facts " (J. 243). All these events, for his acute sensitivity, were of a peculiarly revolutionary and catastrophic kind; in the words of St. John of the Cross, they meant " a fearful breaking up in the innermost part " (The Dark Night of the Soul).

The " earthquake " appears to have been caused by the knowledge of his father's real faith and of his rebellion against God and incontinence of life and of the continuing curse which Soren believed that he must inherit and expiate. It was, for him and his particular conditions, the general guilt of mankind which each sinner shares. And through this knowledge he found a new realisation of his own relation to his father and so to God the Father. He became convinced, in Dr. Lowrie's words, that " his defiance of God was primarily defiance of his father " (L. p. 183). It was the significance of fatherhood which he had found, of the Divine Fatherhood and of the human fatherhood which is the mortal and fallible channel of the " great tradition."

It is in the light of this flash of understanding that he can say that religious truth is real " because my father told me so " (J. 785). He had plumbed to a profound piety in the rich Latin sense of " *pietas.*" And he had also learned " what father-love is . . . the divine father-love, the one unshakable thing in life, the true Archimedian point " (L. p. 183). This conception of the true " *pietas* " and of the reciprocal love of God the Father of men was henceforward to be the rock of his own religious faith and his " new and infallible law of interpretation of life." He explored that filial relation in religion to the end.

With a new sense of responsibility he set himself to study and equip himself for life and, in 1840, took his theological degree. In the following year he became engaged to Regina Olsen ; it was a token of his acceptance of his conditions. " The next day I saw that I had made a mistake " (J. 207), he wrote afterwards, Just under a year later he broke off the engagement and " to save her, to give her soul resiliency " (L. p. 226), he determined to make her believe that he did not love her and that the rupture was due to his own frivolity and worthlessness. The event, coupled with the " great earthquake " and his conversion, was the climacteric point of his spiritual and intellectual development.

From the sequence which has been sketched it will be seen that Kierkegaard's engagement to Regina coincided with a watershed period in his own life, a phase of great inner eruption, and before his own life-attitude had become fixed, during which, in a profound conversion (a turning " upside down ") of life and mind, he was passing from an irresponsible, dilettante and, to use his own terms, " erotic " and " observer " to a responsible, realistic and religious attitude and from immaturity to maturity. The feminine element in his life had faded out with the deaths of his mother and sister ; in his intercourse with Regina he seems to have sought to fill that gap and to fulfil himself in his human life. He saw in marriage the fulfilment of both natural and spiritual life and seems never, though he failed to attain to it, to have abandoned that belief. In later years he confesses in his Journal " had I had faith I should have remained with Regina " (J. 444). But he found it psychologically and religiously impossible to do so. His reasons for that " great refusal " have a vital relevance for his later thought.

Regina appears to have been a girl who lived very near to nature ; her world was that of human nature, of (in Kierkegaard's term) the " first immediacy," of feeling and the " erotic." It was

a world which, with a mounting realisation during these years, Kierkegaard had come to know that he must renounce. For he knew himself to be "dedicated" to an "idea" (J. 600)—the Christian idea, and that, in his conversion, his mode of life had changed from "immediacy (*i.e.*, natural spontaneity) to spirituality" (J. 1041), a way of life which he called the "second immediacy." It was an inner renunciation, dedication and way of life which Regina, with a "woman's loving lack of understanding," could not conceive. He knew that, by virtue of this conversion, he was, in his own words, "an eternity too old for her" (J. 781). For, he quotes from Johan Georg Hamann, "a man who lives in God therefore stands in the same relation to the 'natural' man that a waking man does . . . to a dreamer. . . . He has been 'born again' . . . he has become an eternity older . . . he has now become spirit . . ." He knew that "essentially I live in a spirit-world"—of which Regina knew nothing. "So then," he comments, "she would have gone to smash" (L. p. 221).

This was part of the "secret" which he could not tell her. But there was more. For he felt himself to be a "penitent." He had, so he believed, inherited his father's sin and curse. For he, too, in his wilder youth, had defied both his father and God. And he, too, in a sudden blind sensuality, had been guilty of sexual incontinence. Moreover, he knew his own deep melancholy of disposition. "Had I not been a penitent, not had my *vita ante acta*, not been melancholy—," he wrote, "union with her would have made me happy as I had never dreamed of becoming" (L. p. 218). He was conscious too of his own dawning genius which "like a thunder-storm comes up against the wind" (J. 309) and of the "pale, bloodless, hard-lived, midnight shapes" (J. 345) to which he must "give life and existence," and of, as he believed, "the curse which rests upon me . . . never to be allowed to let anyone deeply and inwardly join themselves to me" (J. 79). Therefore, for her sake and his own—and God's—he was driven to the conclusion that he must not marry. "It was for her sake that I broke it off. This is my consolation," he wrote.

It was no simple or easy sacrifice. "I loved her dearly," he declares with an obvious sincerity, "she was as light as a bird, as daring as a thought" (J. 363). And again—"there is nothing so infinite as love" (J. 368); he could not forget her. But the reborn life required, so he conceived, the renunciation of the

" erotic " natural life. Again to quote St. John of the Cross, it required " the emptying . . . of all that is not God " (The Dark Night of the Soul). Regina personified that erotic, natural life. To abandon her and it meant a death ; " when I left her," he wrote, " I chose death " (J. 655). He abandoned more than Regina—a whole world. " Ce n'est pas Regina Olsen seulement," comments M. Leon Chestov, " c'est le monde entier qui s'est transformé pour Kierkegaard en une ombre, en une fantôme " (Kierkegaard et la Philosophie Existentielle : Leon Chestov, p. 55). But however bitter that renunciation may have been, it was not barren ; in that sacrifice he was taught his truth. Six years later he adds, " I owe what is best in me to a girl ; but I did not exactly learn it from her, I learnt through her " (J. 761). However his conduct in this affair may be judged there can be no doubt that he acted under an overmastering sense of compulsion. " I had not the strength to abstain from marriage, I was compelled " (J. xxxviii), he confessed.

The experience was crucial and creative for Kierkegaard's life and thought. Here is the forge of his passionate and paradoxical faith. Here was the conflict and dialectic of " Yes " and " No " in life from which came his Christian coordination of contraries and the dialectic, the poignant paradox in his own experience whence stemmed his governing conception of the dialectic and paradox at the heart of religious reality. Here was a knowledge of passion " proved on the pulses " by the light of which he affirmed that " faith is a passion " (though a passion which must be purified) (J. 590). Therefore he found in paradox " the passion of thought " and judged that " the thinker who is devoid of paradox is like the lover who is devoid of passion—a pretty poor sort of fellow " (J. 335). Since his own faith was thus forged in the furnace of an existential passion, therefore he found no use for a religion not rooted in reality, in actual existence. Here is the " *fons et origo* " of his " existential " theology.

Two years after his breach with Regina Kierkegaard began his serious career as a writer with four books, all written as an " indirect communication " for Regina, " Either—Or," " Two Edifying Discourses," " Repetition " and " Fear and Trembling "; all were published in 1843. He had succeeded in representing himself to the public of Copenhagen (though not to Regina) as a worthless cynic and in provoking a publicity and unpopularity which broke into flame in a series of anonymous lampoons upon him in the " Corsair " in 1845-6. He learned what it meant

to be " trampled to death by geese " (L. p. 358) ; for his extreme sensitivity, as he wrote, " such a galling sort of abuse is about the most torturing experience."

He continued to write voluminously until his death twelve years later at the age of 42, at first under a variety of pseudonymns after the Socratic model and because, as he said, " I am a penitent," and later, when in 1848 he experienced a second conversion of which he writes—" My whole nature is changed. My closeness and reservedness are broken—I must speak " (J. 747)—under his own name. This second crisis of spirit seems to have convinced him of his own integration as a spiritual person and of an urgent calls to action. " From now on," he said, " I shall have to take over clearly and directly everything which up till now has been indirect and come forward personally, definitely and directly as one who wished to serve the cause of Christianity " (J. 806). During the remaining seven years of his life he published twelve books. A year before his death in 1855 he launched a campaign against the established Church in Denmark in a periodical called " The Instant." On his death-bed he refused the ministrations of the Church but died in the calm assurance of grace.

The chief characters in this intense personal drama are few in number. Kierkegaard's retiring and introverted disposition and semi-recluse existence did not conduce to the making of intimate friendships. Apart from members of his family and Regina the figures of a university tutor and Bishop Mynster play the most important roles in his life and thought ; in spite of personal affection, they seem to have become representative for him, the one of the Hegelian idealism, the other of the " official " Christianity which he abhorred.

In the making of his mind books played a more important part than persons. Apart from the Bible, the dialogues of Socrates (to whom his dialectical mode of thought is largely due), the works of Hegel and the Jena Romantics such as Fichte, Novalis, Schelling and the Schlegels (mainly in violent reaction from their teaching), the plays of Shakespere (and, in particular, Hamlet and King Lear) and the writings of Johan Georg Hamann (whose conversion and attitude to conventional Christianity so nearly resembled his own) were the main formative influences upon his thought. Though he repudiated the name of " mystic " and held that " mysticism has not the patience to wait for God's revelation " (J. 321), he studied Gorres' " Mystik " and was

acquainted with mystical writers such as Boehme, Tauler and the Victorines.

The source of Kierkegaard's profound and persistent sense of crisis and catastrophe is thus to be found very largely in his own inner and private life. But the course of public affairs in Denmark during his lifetime fomented that feeling. He had long, and with the persistence of an Isaiah, prophesied political disaster; with the Danish-German war of 1848, in the course of which Denmark lost Schleswig-Holstein, the storm broke with a sense of catastrophe for his countrymen and contemporaries, which, for an age attuned to disaster upon so much more vast a scale, is not altogether easy to appreciate. Nevertheless Kierkegaard's generation in Denmark lived with thunder in the air and his thought was shaped under the shadow of a coming catastrophe clearly foreseen by him. Moreover, Kierkegaard, with a prophetic vision which is alone sufficient to acclaim his genius, foresaw with a terrible clarity what he described as the " total bankruptcy towards which the whole of Europe seems to be heading " (L. p. 157); it is a bankruptcy of which our world is now all too well aware. With an uncanny prescience he foresaw and foretold the whirlwind which we are reaping. He conceived it to be his duty and destiny to sound a " cry of alarm." It is, therefore, as a " corrective " (the title with which he himself described his role as he saw it) and " cry of alarm " rather than as systematic theology or philosophy that his work can alone, with justice, be judged.

Kierkegaard's conditions were thus of a kind to render them a happy hunting ground for psychologists. An Oedipus-complex, making him at once the psychological murderer and " spiritual wife " (cp., the article on Kierkegaard in " Horizon," by Rudolph Friedmann, Oct., 1943) of his father, bi-sexuality and homosexuality are eagerly diagnosed by Freudian fanatics.

A full and modern estimate of his thought cannot, indeed omit such a mode of enquiry. It illuminates, from one angle, the nature of the tension which he, like all men who, in Dr. Reinholdt Niebuhr's words, stand " at the junction of nature and spirit," inherit " as the sparks fly upward " (The Nature and Destiny of Man, I. 18). They cannot, save for a bigoted and uncritical psychological dogmatism, pass any final verdict upon the " unmapped, unmeasured, secret heart " (Laurence Binyon : The Mirror) of Kierkegaard or any other genius, nor can they, as is sometimes so glibly assumed, denigrate the spark of spirit,

the flame of personal truth born, in the womb of genius, from such inner conflict. In the words of M. Henri Massis, " . . . là où l'esprit est libre, actif, il n'y a pas de désastre irreparable " (Les Idées Restent, p. 65) for the soul wrestling with its psychological contraries.

But such psychological criticism serves to emphasise the kinship of Kirkegaard's spirit with the temper, so conscious of a similar division of consciousness, of our own age. It is thus with an especial affinity of feeling that the modern man can contemplate the inner drama of Kierkegaard's life and the knotty texture of his thought. For, with a lonely heroism of spirit which can but elicit the admiration of the understanding, he confronted, a century before its full time, a conflict of consciousness of which the majority of Europeans have only lately become aware. But it is with the wisdom born from that travail of soul that we are concerned. In such a presence preconceived formulas and dogmas are best laid by.

II.—Existential Thinking.

The foundations of Kierkegaard s faith were laid in his own life; the only truth which was of any value for him was that which was " existential," which spoke to his own suffering and corresponded with the paradox, conflict and despair so poignantly experienced in his own individual existence and passion. He had known the paradox and dialectic of life and love, the extremity of inner division and had plumbed the depths of human futility. " I stick my finger into existence—it smells of nothing " (R. 114-5), he wrote in " Repetition," and again, " the whole content of my being shrieks in contradiction against itself " (L. p. 364). It was in this " tension of reality " that his thought was rooted and for such a " sickness unto death " in his own experience of human existence that he sought a " radical cure " in an " existential truth." Both his need and his psychological state were thus remarkably similar to those of our own time.

Such a personal truth had always been his aim. When only 22 he had already stated his life's quest. " The thing is to understand myself, to see what God really wishes *me* to do; the thing is to find *the idea for which I can live and die* " (the italics are Kierkegaard's). That truth was alone true for him which he could, in Keats' phrase, " prove upon his pulses." Such a truth he styled " existential." It is a term which is fundamental for

his faith and now in common use—and abuse. It therefore requires careful consideration.

Although modern " existential philosophy " largely derives from the thought of Kierkegaard, he himself never precisely defined the term. But he has stated what " existence " implied for him. " Existence is the child of the infinite and the finite, the eternal and the temporal, and is therefore constantly striving . . . an existing individual is constantly in process of becoming." (U.P. p. 79). Existence thus implies, for Kierkegaard, not the calm of being but the conflict of becoming and, not life in the abstract, but conditioned human life lived in the " tension of reality." The "existing individual" exists on the frontier between time and eternity, finite and infinite, a—

> " . . . swinging-wicket set
> Between
> The Unseen and the Seen."
> (Francis Thompson : Any Saint.)

He is, in Dr. Reinnold Niebuhr's words, " under the tension of finiteness and freedom, of the limited and the unlimited " (The Nature and Destiny of Man : II, p. 222). It is to this specifically human predicament in existence that Kierkegaard's use of the word refers, with such existence that his " existential thought " is concerned and by such existence that he believes it to be conditioned. He thus anticipated the notion of the conditioned nature of all thought and of the " tension of faith " upon which such leaders of modern thought as Professor Karl Mannheim and Dr. Niebuhr to-day insist.

It is thus with such actual existence that, for Kierkegaard, real thinking is alone concerned and by its conditions that it is itself conditioned. Thinking which recognises such existence as at once its only real subject-matter and its test of truth and that the thinker is himself, as an " existing individual," immersed in the conditions of his existence and therefore " in process of becoming " is, for him, " existential thinking "—the thought of " the whole man facing the whole mystery of life " (Either/Or). In Dr. Paul Tillich's definition of this type of thought, " . . . truth is bound to the existence of the knower . . . Only so much of knowledge is possible as the degree to which the contradictions of existence are recognised and overcome " (The Interpretation of History, p. 63).

But it is important to observe that, for Kierkegaard, experience of existence is not limited to the experience of personal human existence apart from God; it includes the existence of God. For God has Himself entered into existence and the existential experience of man; "the God-Man is himself the existential" (J. 1054). Of His existence Kierkegaard is as sure as of his own with the stedfast conviction of Browning's—

". . . thy soul and God stand sure" (Rabbi Ben Ezra).

That initial faith in the existence of God in human history and in his own individual experience, is, for Kierkegaard, his datum; he accepts it as axiomatic and beyond either proof or dispute; it is, not rational, but faith-knowledge. That some such premise which is always in reality, not rational, but faith-knowledge, lies at the root of all thought is obvious; the rationalist could not reason unless he believed in the validity of reason and this he cannot know, he can only believe. For Kierkegaard this dual premise of the existence of his own soul and God was his "jumping-off point." He believed that both existences are knowable by the individual's inner experience of existence and are, indeed, only, by such an "inwardness," to be known at all. And it is this, to reason, apparent contradiction and "absurdity" of the entry of being into becoming, essence into existence, God into history which constitutes the tension and paradox of life and necessitates a dialectical mode of thinking—a simultaneous Yes and No.

Therefore the datum of existential thinking and the existential test of truth, for Kierkegaard, are dual—the existence and experience of, not only self, but God. It is this supremely important fact which differentiates the "existentialism" of Kierkegaard from that of the Nazis. The latter accept and affirm the existence of Man (in the abstract) only; Kierkegaard accepts and affirms the existence of both man and God. Therefore the criticism of existential philosophy delivered by Miss Dorothy Emmett that it implies "no external standard of truth and morality above the individual decision" (Kierkegaard's Existential Philosophy: "Philosophy," July, 1941), while true of the Nazi form of existentialism, is false for that of Kierkegaard. For the latter, in his experience of existence, posits both the subjective standard of self-knowledge and the objective standard of knowledge of God. For him the Nazi form of existentialism

is unexistential since it omits the greater part of existential experience.

The test of truth for Kierkegaard and all existential Christian thinking which accepts his dual premise is thus an existential decision or apprehension of the self when confronted with the objective reality of life and God. It is not some arbitrary and arrogant " private judgment " of the self upon life and God and as such subject to the manifold corruption and fallibility of all human judgment. It is that truth and conviction which are struck from the meeting of the subjective and inward "passion" or feeling of the " whole man " with a reality and revelation which, though apprehended subjectively, are, in fact, utterly objective to him.

It is, indeed, like his own apprehension, embodied in and conveyed to him by tradition. For tradition (that which is handed across the generations to the individual) both conditions the " passion " of the individual and confronts him in the " great tradition " of history and revelation. Thus the tradition of Christian truth is conveyed to him by the Christian Church. It is to this objective element in existential truth that Kierkegaard refers when he says that he accepts Christian truth " because my father told me so." Thus an existential decision after the pattern of Kierkegaard in fact includes " an external standard of truth and morality " as a major factor in its decision. The ultimate decision is itself dialectical; from the opposition and meeting of the individual soul and God a new condition, that of faith, is born. To pose the process in simple Christian language, the soul, when confronted by Christ, is constrained to obey that call of Reality; when it does so it becomes a " new man " and leads a " new life."

Existential thinking is thus based upon a primary postulate which is the precise contrary of that of Descartes from which the whole of the Cartesian and idealistic philosophy, liberal sociology, scientific evolutionism and humanism of the modern age derive. Where Descartes declared that " I think, therefore I am," Kierkegaard retorted, " I am, therefore I think." For the one abstract thought, for the other concrete and total existence was the foundation of faith. Both thus accept primary postulates which cannot be proved. The Cartesian and humanist accept their fundamental faith in the validity and sovereignty of the human reason upon the supposed evidence of human experience; Kierkegaard accepts his faith in the existence of himself

and God upon the evidence of an existential experience which includes both human feeling and divine revelation. His revolution in thought was thus of the most radical kind which can be conceived and one which, if accepted, must re-orientate the whole course of thought and life.

This fundamental faith not only provides the ultimate criterion of truth ; it also shapes to its pattern all thought and life proceeding from it. For Descartes and his followers truth is that which is true for thought ; for Kierkegaard and existential thinkers it is that which is true for life. For the former intellect, for the latter the whole personality in its " human predicament " is dominant and decisive. The one necessarily tends towards a predominantly rational and intellectual, the other towards a vital and intuitive way of life and thought.

The revolt against the Cartesian philosophy and that which ensued from it and dominated European thought in Kierkegaard's day is now general. It has recently been well expressed by Mr. H. J. Massingham. " What he (Descartes) did," he writes, " was to elevate man above his proper station, above, that is to say, his ' creatureliness ' by his intellectual gospel of egocentricity. ' I am,' he wrote, ' because I think.' Neither God nor ' I ' were realities, both being intellectual abstractions . . ." (The Tree of Life, p. 109). But, in Kierkegaard's day, such a denunciation of the dominant dogma of philosophy was a radical revolution in the realm of ideas. It is a revolution which is still in process to-day.

This revolutionary doctrine of the nature of human truth and human thinking gives to " existential thinking " characteristics which are quite contrary to those of the prevalent idealistic philosophy. In the first place, it is a different mode of thought and therefore begets a different type of thinker. While the tradition of Descartes produced philosophers and scientists who seek to be detached observers of life, " above the battle," that of Kierkegaard produced thinkers involved in the concrete battle of existence, and it is noteworthy that Kierkegaard repudiated the title of " philosopher " and preferred that of a " Christian thinker."

As Professor Karl Heim has said of Kierkegaard's type of thought, " a proposition or truth is said to be *existential* when I cannot apprehend or assent to it from the standpoint of a mere spectator but only on ground of my total existence " (God Transcendent, p. 75). Such thinkers are " educated by experi-

ence " R. p. xx) rather than by thought. Since their " concern implies relationship to life, to the reality of personal existence" (S.D., 3 and 4), they therefore renounce both " the high aloofness of indifferent learning " and " scientific aloofness from life." And since they are primarily concerned, not with thinking, but with living, their thinking is, to employ a phrase now popular in scientific circles, " operational " ; it is " drawn from life and expressed again in life " (L. p. 214).

Therefore Kierkegaard and " existential thinking " repudiate all abstract thinking and thinkers. Thus he asserts that " the sciences . . . reduce everything to calm and objective observation " (J. 1051) and, therefore, that " the whole of science is a parenthesis " (J. 617). Again he denounces " the hopeless forest fire of abstraction " (P.A. p. 64) and is acid in his comments upon " dons " and " professors." The don is " a man in whom there is nothing human, where enthusiasm and the desire to act . . . is concerned, but who believes it to be a learned question." " The truth " is crucified like a thief, mocked and spat upon—and dying, calls out : follow me. Only the " Don " (the inhuman being) understands not a single word of it all, he construes it as a learned problem." " One is to suffer ; the other is to become a professor of the fact that another has suffered " (J. 1362). " Take away the paradox from the thinker and you have the professor " (L. p. 506).

" Parsons " come under the same condemnation but, in so far as they are " observers " of the Passion of God their offence is the more rank. He does not condemn the parson as such but the generality of professional parsons whom he knew. " The true priest," he says, " is even more rare than the true poet " (S.D. p. 166). He found small reason to change his view of parsons at the end of his life. " . . . one thing I adjure thee," he cries in almost his last published utterance, " for the sake of God in heaven and by all that is holy, flee the parsons . . ." (L. p. 582).

Second, existential thinking proposes a different objective to that of abstract philosophy and science ; it is concerned, not with intellectual proofs or certainty but with pragmatic faith ; " . . . certainty can only be had in the infinite, where he (the existing subject) cannot remain, but only repeatedly arrive " (U.P. p. 75). For Kierkegaard this " prolix knowledge . . . this certainty which lies at faith's door and lusts after it " (L. p. 339) is anathema. Therefore abstract philosophy unrelated to life (as he conceived the Hegelian system to be) is both futile and

fatal for faith, which alone matters. For while "a logical system is possible, a system of existence is impossible" (L. p. 308). ". . . existence must be content with a fighting certainty." (L. p. 310). The quest for certainty, which is the quest of such a philosophy, has thus nothing whatever to do with existential truth, or with Christianity as Kierkegaard conceives it, "wherein," he writes, "lies the misunderstanding between Speculation and Christianity" (L. p. 301). Therefore, for him, "Christianity and philosophy cannot be reconciled" (J. 32).

Third, since existential thinking is concerned with "the reality of personal existence," it is, not objective but subjective, not coldly external to life but inward with an "endless passion" of "inwardness" (U.P. p. 185), and, not impersonal, but profoundly personal. ". . . the real task is to be objective to oneself and subjective towards all others" (J. 676).

But by "subjectivity" Kierkegaard does not mean mere individualism or that the individual judgment is the measure of all things. The term is used by him in opposition to the Hegelian claim to objectivity or personal disinterestedness in the effects of speculative thinking. The subjective thinker, for Kierkegaard, is not he who judges solely by subjective standards and private judgment but he who is concerned with the truth for him and his own concrete situation. Moreover by subjectivity he also implies personality, a spiritual person derived from and dependent upon a transcendent God known to him in his own "inwardness."

This emphasis upon the personal apprehension of truth is, perhaps, Kierkegaard's most important contribution to modern thought; it is one which gives him a spiritual paternity to that "personalism" which, with Maritain and many more, is now in the vans of philosophical and political speculation. In Professor Theodor Haecker's judgment—"The being and essence of the person are the elements which Kierkegaard brought into philosophy" (Soren Kierkegaard, p. 29).

Fourth, existential thinking is, not dispassionate (as philosophy aspires to be) but passionate. "Passion is the real thing, the real measure of man's powers. And the age in which we live is wretched, because it is without passion." (J. 396). For him both truth and faith are passions. But he equates passion with *pathos* in its proper Greek sense of feeling or suffering—a suffering to which mind and soul as well as body are subject. He is careful to discriminate it, in this sense, from what he calls "unshaven

passion " (J. 488) and insists that " passion must be purified " (J. 590).

He emphasises the fact that " passion and feeling are open to all men in an equal degree " ; here is the basis of the universalism which he constantly and vehemently affirms. Such an exaltation of " passion " or feeling as a primary means for the apprehension of truth is therefore profoundly democratic in tendency. For, since all can feel, but few can reason in the meaning of rationalism, truth is thus within the reach, not merely of a learned élite, but of every man who has been schooled by suffering.

This conception of " passionate " thinking is also, though Kierkegaard repudiated the pseudo-mysticism which, as he wrote, " has not the patience to wait for God's revelation " (J. 321), closely akin to the mystic approach to reality. Thus, " by love may he be gotten and holden ; but by thought never," it is written in the " Cloud of Unknowing " where a form of knowledge is expounded " . . . not coming from without . . . by the windows of the wits, but from within." Such a *via mystica* is evidently of the same order as the Kierkegaardian way of " passion " and " inwardness."

It seems clear, indeed, that he ranks " passion " or feeling higher than reason in the scale of apprehension of existential truth. Upon the premise that it is " the whole man facing the whole mystery of life " who can alone reach reality, it must be so. For, while reason is rare and at one remove from reality, feeling is universal and immediate.

In so far as it denies to abstract reason and intellect the monopoly of truth, existential thinking thus tends towards anti-intellectualism and even irrationalism. For Kierkegaard " the intelligence and all that goes with it has done away with Christianity . . . the fight is against intelligence." In the modern tendency towards irrationalism and the popular feeling against " intellectuals " and " high-brows " Kierkegaard's revolt against the tyranny of rationalism is peculiarly modern in its trend. But the tendency towards irrationalism in such " corrective " sayings has been exaggerated by some of his successors. Thus a modern disciple of Kierkegaard, Miguel de Unanumo, declares that " reason is the enemy of life. A terrible thing is intelligence . . . All that is vital is irrational " (The Tragic Sense of Life, pp. 90–91).

It seems very doubtful whether Kierkegaard would have endorsed such statements. Intellect, abstract reason and analy-

tical science are, for him, not primary, but secondary ; they are servants of the human spirit who have usurped the sovereign seat of the existential decision of the " whole man " and, as such, are to be fought. But he nowhere suggests that reason is not an important element in the apprehension of the whole man to which he appeals, and he himself attacks what he believes to be a false use of reason with the weapons of reason. Indeed, he specifically declares that " the race must go through reason to the absolute " (J. 1256). " Life can only be explained after it has been lived " (J. 192), he wrote, and he himself devoted his life to explaining it. He does not deny the need to explain life ; he is concerned to put rational explanation in its proper place in the approach of man to reality.

Moreover, the reason which Kierkegaard attacked was neither reason in the Greek sense of " *nous* " nor that " natural reason " to which, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, " all are compelled to assent " (Summa contra Gentiles, I, i, ii) ; on the contrary the " existential thinking " which he desired had much in common with these conceptions of reason as also with the " understanding" of the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament. It was the cold, abstract, analytic and arrogant reason of the Cartesian school which Hegel, as he thought, had inherited, which he condemned.

Fifth, the whole man, by virtue of such " passion " in existential thinking, is believed to be capable, in Dr. W. M. Horton's words, of " consciousness of an extra dimension of reality inaccessible to the cool intellect but accessible to a warmer and more vital faculty " (Contemporary Continental Theology, p. 90) ; existential thinking opens the door to new realms of reality and " faith-knowledge " of which " intellect " can know nothing. " With the eyes of the heart I read it " (R. p. 121), Kierkegaard declares. It is a mode of comprehension of which Pascal wrote : " le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connait poînt " (Pensees). For, with that " eye of the heart," so the existentialist claims, the " world of reality " which is " the world of qualities "(S.D. p. 156) (not of quantities) can be perceived. By such an existential approach, in Rilke's phrase, " the heart is born into the whole " (Sonnets to Orpheus).

Sixth, since man's existential apprehension of reality is that of his " human predicament," a state of constant and, in time, irresolvable tension between " mighty opposites," that tension and conflict can no more be eliminated from real thinking than from real life. He is everywhere inescapably conscious of con-

tradiction and paradox in his existential experience; it is the paradox, the clash of contraries in life which causes its passion. Therefore, for existential thinking, paradox must also be " the passion of thought " and " . . . the thinker who is devoid of paradox is like the lover who is devoid of passion—a pretty poor sort of fellow " (L. p. 335). " Take away the paradox from the thinker and you have the professor " (L. p. 506). " The paradox," Kierkegaard writes, " is really the *pathos* of the intellectual life " (J. 206). It is " a category of its own " (J. 633), with its own dialectic.

The predominance of paradox in existential thinking and in the thought of Kierkegaard is thus, in his use of it, no wilful or obscurantist irrationalism but (since it is the very texture of the " tension of life ") also the very texture of the only real reasoning which the human mind, thus conditioned by tension and paradox, can achieve. All reasoning which seeks to smooth out that paradox is therefore both unrealistic and arrogant.

Seventh, since the speech of paradox is dialectic and " existence is surely a debate " (R. p. 114), the dialectic of paradox is the proper mode of existential thought. This dialectical mode of thought has been lucidly described by Canon V. A. Demant. " Dialectical thinking . . . bids us look for the unity behind any pair of conflicting opposites and leads us to expect a re-emergence of something which will stand in relation to the original unity of both as the same and not the same, like it but on a new plane " (Christian Polity, pp. 152-3). It is thus " the opposite of continuity thinking which conceived change as the sum of increments of movement in one direction."

The necessity for such dialectical thinking is proved, for Kierkegaard, by his existential apprehension, through passion or feeling, of the double paradox of his own experience and the Incarnation, the two, for him, axiomatic facts from which all his thinking derives. Of the paradox of his own experience he has written in " Repetition " and his Journals; for Christianity " the eternal truth has to come into time, this is the Paradox " (L. p. 319). Yet " . . . if man is to receive any knowledge about the Unknown (God) he must be made to know that it is unlike him, absolutely unlike him " (P.F. pp. 36-7). " As a sinner man is separated from God by a yawning qualitative abyss " (S.D. p. 199).

Therefore, again to quote Dr. Horton, " a truly reverent theology, which knows that God is in heaven and man on earth,

must never pass directly from human thought and experience to God, as Schleiermacher and Hegal sought to do. It must reverse the Hegelian dialectic . . . look for no synthesis on the earthly plane, but balance every thesis with an antithesis, every Yes with a No, and then, standing helplessly in the contradiction, appeal to God for a revelation, an act of grace " (*op. cit.* p. 101). The dialectic of paradox thus leads direct to a doctrine of despair —despair of all attempts of the intellect or any other human faculty fully to comprehend the paradox either of man's own existence or that of God.

Existential thinking thus leads to an abyss which thought cannot cross; Kierkegaard's conclusion is that of Jan van Ruysbroek—" . . . we must all found our lives upon a fathomless abyss " (The Sparkling Stone)—an abyss which can only be crossed by the " leap in the dark " which is faith, that " happy passion " (P.F. p. 59). But, for existential thinking, faith itself remains a " tension." Existential truth is thus a " troubled truth " (J. 915) which points to despair and so to the decision of faith.

In the meaning of Kierkegaard " existential thinking " is thus a mode of thought which accepts the " tension of life " and is therefore concrete not abstract, subjective and personal not objective and impersonal, passionate (in the sense of suffering) not dispassionate, which seeks, not rational proof for thought but the assurance of faith for life and claims to explore a dimension of reality closed to the analytical reason, which carries the paradox of life into the process of living thought and employs in that thought a dialectic which the recognition of that paradox requires, which expects its synthesis, not in time and the mind of man, but in eternity and the Mind of God.

It is a mode of thought which begins, as has been seen, with a religious affirmation of the existence of the self and of God and ends with a declaration of despair and points to the " leap " of faith as the only " radical cure " of that despair. It is conditioned and " operational " thinking of a kind which completely reverses the " continuity " systems of Cartesian, idealistic and evolutionary philosophy and science. Its fundamental proposition is that " . . . truth is bound to the situation of the knower."

It is thus, in all respects, a mode of thought which is remarkably modern and apposite to our age. It is also one which, as Dr. Tillich has pointed out, speaks the same language of thought

(though not of faith) as Marxian Communism. For, such a truth "bound to the individual situation in Kierkegaard" is of the same order as the Marxian dialectic which is bound "to the social situation in Marx" (*op. cit.* p. 63). In the case of Kierkegaard, owing to his initial and axiomatic faith, not only in the existence of self but also in that of the "God-Man," it inevitably leads to a Christian theology reconsidered by such an "existential thinking." That theology remains to be explored.

Written Communications.

Rev. L. Stephens-Hodge, M.A., wrote: I am sure we are all grateful to Mr. Chaning-Pierce for his readable account of the life and teaching of Søren Kierkegaard.

Kierkegaard's experience puts me in mind of Hosea. Hosea's wife Gomer proved unfaithful to him, and out of this bitter experience the prophet was able to see just what Israel's unfaithfulness meant to Jahweh. And in his own act of buying back Gomer out of the slave-market Hosea saw the lengths to which God's loving solicitude for his people was prepared to go.

In all this, Hosea remained the innocent party. (I cannot help feeling that Hos. i, 2: "The Lord said unto Hosea, Go, take thee a wife of whoredom," is retrospective; Hosea later came to see that the Lord's hand had been in this business all along, that it was His doing.) But in the case of Kierkegaard and Regina Olsen, it is the "prophet" himself who has done the wrong. Granted that, as a result, Kierkegaard was led to the desperately needed re-emphasis of the Divine Transcendence and Human Sinfulness, what exoneration, if any, can be found for his unpleasant treatment of Regina? Was he ever reconciled to her and did he ever have the assurance of forgiveness? His idea of being a "penitent" seems at best sub-Christian. In spite of his plea for a personal or existential approach to Christianity, he seems to have been singularly defective in personal relationships. Is this just to be set down as "paradox"?

Rev. H. S. Curr wrote: I have read this admirable essay on Kierkegaard with equal profit and pleasure. The author has rendered valuable service to many thoughtful people by making

available so much information regarding the great Danish thinker in a form which is both popular and scholarly.

I regret that I am unable to endorse his estimate of Kierkegaard's significance. To my thinking an even more drastic revolution, consisting in an even more thorough reaction, is required by modern theology. Kierkegaard, like Barth, has rendered yeoman service by the strength and cogency of his protest against the dominance of a philosophical school whose teaching has for its latter end the substitution of humanism for religion in the ordinary acceptation of that term. It was even more necessary on the Continent than here, since the English love of compromise and aversion to extremes manifest themselves even in philosophy and theology.

Has the reaction gone far enough? Tested by New Testament standards, the answer must be an emphatic negative. That is manifest in Kierkegaard's religious experience, which is said to be the head and fountain of his philosophy. There can be no doubt that there was clamant need for the re-emergence of these elements, which can never disappear from religious experience without serious danger and loss. But that is not the whole account of the matter. Man must pass from the unrest and darkness caused by sin to the peace of God with its three strands—peace of conscience, peace of mind, and peace of heart. The Slough of Despond is only a passing stage in the soul's pilgrimage, but Kierkegaard never seems to have scrambled out on the farther side due to his failure to take account of the supreme paradox of religion stated in Paul's classic words; "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Galatians 2, 20 R.V. margin). The spiritual experience of Kierkegaard is very different from that of Paul, Augustine, and Luther, who trod the same path in essence. The love of Christ constrained them.

Regarding the existential philosophy and its relations to Cartesian methods, one is apt to think of Milton's words that new presbyter is but old priest writ large. Kierkegaard transfers the centre of gravity from thought to the object of thought. "I am" must obviously be a fact of self-consciousness. The person who makes such a claim must surely be aware of it. Indeed, justice does not

seem to be done to the Cartesian principle. On the other hand, Kierkegaard has rendered invaluable service by his emphasis that there are other paths to reality as well as that of ratiocination. The heart has its own reasons, especially in the realm of religion. Even in science results are reached first by means of intuition, imagination, or even scientific instinct, if such a strange phrase may be permitted and pardoned. They are then placed on an impregnable foundation by logical processes. To enthrone reason as a kind of despot is a great mistake which the history of humanism illustrates and demonstrates. But there is no reason at all why reason should not rule as a constitutional monarch. But that, perhaps, is precisely the position of the great Danish thinker.

W. F. SPANNER, Esq., R.C.N.C., wrote: The author of this paper has given a timely outline of the life and work of one whose influence cannot be doubted. I am not at all sure that I have been able to grasp the meaning of many statements in this paper, and I personally would have welcomed more definition.

The story of Kierkegaard's life is tragic, and I am not speaking as an unkind critic when I say that I cannot help feeling—if I have understood the learned author rightly—that Kierkegaard allowed the tragedy of his own life to tinge with a certain bitterness his outlook on the world. He seems to have been a stranger to the triumphant certainties of the Christian Faith. "I *know* Whom I have believed" was the witness of the Apostle Paul, and the Apostle John declared, "We *know* that we have passed from death unto life." Historic Protestantism has confessed the blessed possibility of such knowledge, and multitudes of humble believers have testified to it as a result of their experience. Our knowledge is of necessity limited—we know in part—but the important point, as I see it, is that our gracious God has so revealed Himself to sinful men that it is possible for us to have a true (although partial) knowledge of God, and rest in the assurance of His grace and favour in Christ Jesus. True faith in the historic Christian sense is not a "leap in the dark"; it is based on knowledge. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

I have found difficulty in understanding Kierkegaard's view of the nature of faith and would be grateful if the author could more

fully elucidate this point and in particular relate Kierkegaard's view to the historic Christian view embodied, say in, the 39 Articles, and the Westminster Standards.

Mr. E. W. BATTERSBEY wrote: Mr. Chaning-Pearce is to be complimented on the thoroughness of his study of Kierkegaard, and for the able way in which he presented the metaphysical teachings with clarity. I shall have to limit my comments to pages 9 to 12 of his lecture. They are as follows:

Our knowledge is, undoubtedly, the sum-total of our experience in the form of an eternal kaleidoscope, but then it has no value apart from the interpretation we give it. Therefore, although experience is the co-relate of existence, it is not of the same importance as the individual philosophy one formulates. So, Kierkegaard's "existential experience," "which includes both human feeling and divine revelation" (p. 41), that he stresses, in contradistinction to the Cartesian theory, appears to me to have been exaggerated in importance.

Similarly, the statement "passion and feeling are open to all men in an equal degree" (p. 44), on which Mr. Chaning-Pearce comments "for, since all can feel, but few can reason in the meaning of rationalism, truth is thus within the reach, not merely of a learned élite, but of every man who has been schooled by suffering," does not convey sufficiently clearly the idea that it is only through learning, or the refinement of one's interpretation of the incidents in one's life, that one can bring about perfection of character.

Krishnamurti has written in this respect: "To me the memory should not be the memory of experience itself, but rather the memory of that which is the outcome of the experience. You must forget the experience, and remember its lessons. That is true memory." (Biography by Carlo Suarès.)

I agree with Miguel de Unamuno's statement quoted on p. 44 that "all that is vital is irrational," and that is one more reason why intellectual development, rather than the accumulation of a disentangled mass of ecstasic emotions, should be the dominant factor in one's life.

I cannot, however, concede to Unamuno that "reason is the enemy of life," for it brings out quality of life, through self-discipline,

and growth to maturity through the restraining and corrective influences of society.

Pitfalls are to be found in the exaggeration of the value of either rationalism or emotionalism. "Thinking," however, we would do well to understand, is, according to the definition of Professor Dewey, "a term denoting the various ways in which things (*i.e.*, of experience) acquire significance" ("How We Think," ch. III), and that it is only by the logical organisation of subject-matter that we can attain to growth of mind. Therefore, I fail to comprehend why "all reasoning which seeks to smooth out that paradox (*i.e.*, of existential thinking) is both unrealistic and arrogant." It is true that there are many things that one cannot understand, or which one cannot reconcile, because their natures are fundamentally different, but that need not stop us attempting to form some opinion on the world we live in, be it only to discover or apprehend the existence of these basic contraries, if not to propound conjectures as to their possible use, relation or value.

Author's Reply

The discussion was submitted as usual to the writer of the paper. In reply, he has expressed his great regret that, owing to pressure of work, he finds himself unable to reply to the various points raised with the fulness which they deserve.