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PERSONALITY.

By R. T. LOVELOCK, A.M.I.E.E.

SYNOPSIS.

The claim that personality exceeds the physical world and contacts some transcendent reality is reviewed. While it is admitted that there is evidence for phenomena irreducible to the laws of modern physics, it is stressed that such phenomena are neither good nor bad intrinsically, but that identical psychological experiences are found in all creeds and among all religions, including some of the least desirable pagan cults.

The life of Jesus is examined as an example of the true way of approach to God, and in particular His use of Scripture is noted. On this basis the mystical approach is seen to be dangerous and misleading when sought as an end in itself.

The changes in the values of life which result from the concept of a personality allowed to contact God and transcend time through such association are noted. When such a concept is viewed in relation to the known universe it is found to be an element harmonious with the whole and in no way contradicting it.

THE EXTERNAL WORLD.

THE history of human philosophy has been that of man's search for *reality*. Behind the world of sensory experience he has always suspected an unseen basis and striven to grasp this underlying reality. In classical times men sought by the exercise of pure reason to deduce these truths, while in our era the emphasis has been placed upon experiment. With the first victories of experimental science the search seemed hopeful, and we began to understand that behind our world of perception there did indeed lie an unseen universe in which clouds of whirling particles replaced our ideas of solid substance. Further advance however has led us to suspect that this second world of moving particles is no more *real* than our normal perceptions: both systems are our conceptual interpretation of certain stimuli, the one of our sensory data, and the other of a set of

pointer readings.¹ We have but progressed from the numerology of Pythagoras in a full circle back to the numbers of Eddington.

The present position of metaphysics has been examined with depressing clarity by a modern writer² and our sheer inability to progress in an unaided search for reality has been demonstrated. We might liken ourselves to a man who sits in a darkened room, whose only connection with the outside world is a number of telegraph wires. He may plug his sounder into any combination of wires in succession, but must learn to interpret that world in terms of a series of clicks. For him there exists neither the noisy activity of a city street, nor the song of a bird in the quietness of the countryside. We, it is true, have five differing sounders giving five types of "clicks," but we are just as isolated from the reality of the universe around us. It would be nice to think that the transcendent reality is identical with our concept, but if it were so the coincidence would be very great, while it is impossible to demonstrate that there is any direct relationship whatever between the two. It is usually assumed, however, as a working hypothesis, that there is a rational principle behind all nature, and that we are not cruelly deceived by our percepts. If this be granted, the most that we may claim is that our concepts are an *analogy* of the system responsible for our percepts; we shall find in our later considerations that this principle of inherent truth is only of limited application, and must be accepted with reserve.

In developing his general geometry Eddington has demonstrated³ the probability that the universe contains many more independent variables than we are able to contact with our senses. If he is correct it is possible for two entities to differ in an infinite number of ways, yet to appear identical to our senses providing their contracted tensors are identical. Unless, therefore, the additional terms deduced by Eddington are all zero, identical percept does not imply identical stimulus, and our assumption that concept is inherently true is of limited application, as indeed psychological research has demonstrated. The existence of that which does not affect our senses raises the stimulating question—"have we a sixth sense which might allow

¹ Karl Pearson, *The Grammar of Science*. Everyman, 1937.

² Dorothy M. Emmet, *The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking*. Macmillan, 1945.

³ A. S. Eddington, *The Mathematical Theory of Relativity*. 2nd Ed., Cambridge, 1937, pp. 226-228.

us to contact other aspects if it were developed?" The Bible is insistent that a *real* "spiritual" world does exist, and that, though unseen, God has provided us through His word with a channel whereby we may make contact. We shall also see later that we have other means of contact, but that they are deceptive, and apart from God's revelation we have no reliable guide in this matter. The scientist's progress is a series of "discontinuous leaps": from a preliminary examination of data he formulates an hypothesis, on the basis of which a further search is made by experiment that an improved hypothesis might result. So Richardson has sought to establish¹ that all types of human judgment are based on an act of faith in alignment with the scientific method. The Bible defines the approach to God (Heb. xi, 6) as based on the hypothesis of His existence, and that He is a Personality interested in our actions and rewarding our service.

THE HUMAN WILL.

Many people are deceived by the popular meaning of "cause and effect" into thinking that when the physicist has analysed his world into such a series, he has *explained* it. The scientific idea is purely one of time-sequence. Any two events which have always occurred in the same sequence within all human experience of which the observer is aware are dubbed cause and effect, without implying any explanation of the underlying *why*. In some cases it is possible to trace an event backwards through a chain of cause and effect until a particular type of discontinuity is reached—an act of the human will. Many rationalists, recognising the uniqueness of this phenomenon have striven to prove that the human will is but the result of chemistry within the brain, and but another step in the physical chain. The apologetics in this direction are multitudinous, but the case is far from proved, and most philosophers recognise many unexplained factors in the "free-will" of man.

It is because only a few of the many physical sequences terminate in human volition that some feel that will-power does not constitute a fundamental *cause* in a different category from all others. The Bible however claims that all existence originates from this phenomenon, but would replace the puny human will with that of an ultra-personality—God, Himself. In God's will

¹ Alan Richardson, *Christian Apologetics*. S.C.M., 1947.

lies the ultimate cause of all nature, and the personality of man is but a dim shadow of the Creator. Kant recognised the difference when he declared that *good* and *bad* had no significance as applied to inanimate nature, but were functions of the will. A thing was either good or evil according to the purpose which lay behind its use: the terms are descriptive only of motives and moral relationship. When God addressed Cyrus, the "fire-worshipper" who considered all nature to express a warfare between good and evil principles, He told him of his error. God was responsible for the existence of all, whether good or evil, and it was man's use which differentiated between the two. So Jesus traces back the idea of Mosaic uncleanness from object to motive, and from act to thought, in which process he is followed also by Paul and James.

Perhaps the most striking point about will power is the great intensification which can occur due to relationship between many personalities. One writer has demonstrated that the highly complex instincts of man may be resolved into the simpler reactions of animals,¹ but that almost without exception they are all concerned with "social relationships." So, while the history of man may be that of a few outstanding personalities, it is only so because they have been able to control the emotional power of many thousands. Just as the living organism is much more than the sum of atoms which constitute its physical form, so a crowd with a single mind is more than the sum of individual personalities, and a recent writer has suggested² a "super biology" which shall consider, not an organism built from atoms, but one built from personalities. The social unit is a living creature of an unique type, and just as the human will transcends the brain, so personalities in union transcend the individual units.

Like the inanimate world, this mass emotion is inherently neither good nor bad, but may be used in either sense. Even the sacred ties of family life are things of evil in the hands of some. A pointer to the importance of association is found in that between Father and Son, and it was not to a life of seclusion that Jesus called us, but to "God's family" with all its blessings and responsibilities. In ancient Israel God's messengers ploughed a lonely furrow, but their fate was bound up

¹ W. McDougall, *Social Psychology*. Methuen, 24th Ed., 1942.

² Salvador De Madariaga, *The World's Design*. Allen & Unwin.

with that of an apostate nation, though their attitude was different. We all, as Adam's race, face a corporate condemnation¹ and the obverse of this has been advanced by another writer² who demonstrates that our hope for the future is bound up with the identification between our personality and that of Jesus.

A much stranger relationship between individual personalities is that existing under hypnotic influence. While the deep sleep or wakeful immobility under the direction of another is the extreme form of which most people think, the phenomenon is also very common in a much milder form. Many people can place themselves in a semi-hypnotic trance by unwavering attention to one object for a considerable period: the success of the modern "thought-curing" systems is obtained by suggestion under a self-imposed hypnotic state: the swelling harmony of a church organ, the glowing colours of a stained-glass window, or the dim light among the soaring stone, all these add vitally to the atmosphere of a cathedral by inducing a mild hypnotic effect upon the strained attention of the worshipper. Most popular orators owe their success more to the hypnotic effect of flowing periods or expressive eyes, than to the content of their message.

When a mind is thus under the control of another, it is capable of exercising powers over its own body which are normally latent. Thus a blister may be raised on the skin such as is normally produced only by physical stimulus. Driesch has pointed to a similarity between this power and our natural muscular control;³ if we wish to raise our arm, we visualise it rising, feel confident that it is doing so, and behold! it obeys; so under hypnosis, a confidence is induced and the effect follows. It may be argued that a network of nerve fibres connects the brain and muscles, but we are still unaware how an act of *will* sets the machinery in motion.

As in other cases noted, this fantastic effect is amoral. Though dangerous, it can be beneficial as a healing agent. As a source of amusement on the stage it can wreck the nervous system of those foolish enough to practise it. As an assistant to religious devotion and worship it may be a blessing, but as an agent seducing to the worship of false gods it has been of incalculable

¹ S. Kierkegaard, trans. Lowrie, *The Concept of Dread*. Oxford, 1944.

² R. C. Moberley, *Atonement and Personality*. Murray, 1901.

³ Hans Driesch, *Man and the Universe*. Allen & Unwin, 1929. Trans. Johnston, pp. 110-127.

harm in past ages. We are faced with a vital point: just because an agent is from the "beyond" it is not necessarily good. So many people have only to be convinced that an effect is supernatural to think that it comes from God, and many illogical claims to validity of worship have been built upon that basis in the past. Jesus persistently laid emphasis, not on the fact, but upon the nature of miracle: it was because He worked the works of God that men ought to believe, and He countered the claim that He was agent to Beelzebub, not by claiming supernatural powers, but by insisting that *His* miracles were good instead of evil.

THE NUMINOUS.

Otto coined the term "numinous" to describe the feeling of "wholly other" experienced by man when thinking of deity, and he describes it acutely as *Mysterium tremendum et fascinans*.¹ An appreciative but critical study by Brabant² deserves to be read in this connection. Whereas Otto would limit the term to the irrational elements of Deity, Brabant shows that the term covers our whole conception of God, thus destroying Otto's ontological proof. It is not necessarily caused by God, but is the natural reaction of mind when extending its conception from relative to absolute. It is essentially religious only in so far as it is concerned with goodness in the absolute, but may not be so caused. It can be generated suddenly by a glimpse of fantastic rocks, or by the deepening gloom of an ancient forest. This also is not necessarily good, but may also be evil. It was generated by the flickering lamp-light of the tabernacle, but was also associated with the dim majesty of Egyptian temples.

Through exceptional personal circumstances many people have been driven to religion with a new intensity of feeling arising from a strained psychological state. James³ has recognised two types of personality, the *once-born* and the *twice-born*. The former are the imperturbable optimists, seeing nothing wrong with life, whose perpetual aim is fine physique, good health, and living for the day. Of this type were many of the ancient Greeks, and the same outlook lay behind the Nazi philosophy, which accomplished much for its people, but led them eventually into beastliness. The twice-born tend to pessimism and suffer

¹ Rudolf Otto, trans. Harvey, *The Idea of the Holy*. Oxford, 1943.

² F. H. Brabant in *Liturgy and Worship*. S.C.M., 1932, pp. 12-22.

³ W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Longmans Green, 1928.

from a tender conscience. Perpetual strain in their life has intensified until breaking point was reached, and through crisis they passed into a condition similar to the tranquility of hypnosis. Paul describes his own experience as closely approaching this pattern. (Rom. vii, 7-viii, 17).

The experience of *conversion* is not confined to the Christian religion, but is found in all the great systems, and even outside religion altogether; it too can be either good or evil. Thouless cites Benvenuto Cellini¹ as an example of one who could feel the emotions of a saint while living the life of a debauchee. This case proves that conscience, even within the Christian Church, is no infallible guide. So conversion, the crisis of conscience, has been as common among the followers of Allah as among those of Yahweh.

All of the abnormal states previously mentioned are embodied in part or whole within the life of those termed "mystics," and are there directed towards the development of the religious life. The theories advanced to explain the phenomenon are various, and Evelyn Underhill² has codified the many facts concerning it. If we believe that there is a God, we must automatically believe that all which is transcendent in personality is designed to be directed God-ward, even though we have the power of diverting it, and since the mystics claim that their discipline develops this transcendent part by opening a direct channel of communication with God, the subject is of primary importance. One point becomes embarrassingly clear as we proceed—all the great religions have numbered mystics among their members. Furthermore, it is no solution to claim that all religions have contained an element of truth, since the only difference between mystic and practiser of black-magic lies in motive, and not in mental states. The man who passes into a trance at Mass, and the one raising the Devil in evil ritual have much in common from a purely psychological viewpoint. Though possessed of an inner certainty which no experience could shake, each famous mystic has been an orthodox follower of the system in which he was nurtured, Teresa a Catholic, Boehme a Lutheran, the Kabalists orthodox Jews, and the Sufis good Mohammedans. The one common factor was that they each sought the

¹ R. H. Thouless, *An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion*. Cambridge, 2nd Ed., 1936;

Benvenuto Cellini, *Memoirs*. Everyman, 1942, pp. 109-111, 181-197.

² Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*. Methuen, 16th Ed. 1948.

God of their ancestors with a selfless love of burning intensity, whereas the ancient Egyptian or modern Rosicrucian seek for control over the forces of nature for narrow selfish ends. Paganism had its own miracles; the magicians of Pharaoh were able to follow Moses in some of his signs, while even Paul describes the power behind the idol as a Demon.¹

THE APPROACH TO GOD.

Since the crude dividing line between magic and mysticism is seen to consist of personal motive, the question of acceptable attitude in the sight of God may well be raised. In God's mercy the way to Him has been revealed to all; it was Jesus who said—"I am the way . . . no one cometh unto the Father but by (or through) me." An acceptable way of life has been lived by Jesus, and he assures us that it is also a necessary way. The mystic way has often ended (as with St. Francis) in self-less service to others, but it frequently begins with a selfish seeking after the serenity and comfort expected in the presence of God; motivated truly by a love for God, yet the love for the individual's neighbour falls woefully short of that for his own personality. The "kenosis" of Jesus provides a striking contrast to holiness sought by fleeing the world in a monastery. The mystic may use a hair shirt, a bed of nails, a lash for self flagellation, and thereby educate his body to bear indescribable torments. Jesus also disciplined his to bear the tearing agony of blunt nails driven through feet and hands, but he adopted a different system of mortification—the spending of self in the service of others. The mystic has often forsaken all possessions that he might escape the distracting love of that which is less than God; Paul laboured through the night to earn money—that he might spend it on the eternal good of others.

The way of Jesus may be the longer method of acquiring tranquillity, but it is God's way, and "no man cometh . . . but by me." Jesus showed much of the psychological phenomena common to mystics, the long nights in prayer from which he emerged strengthened, the voices and visions experienced, the tranquillity of soul which on the eve of Calvary could speak of His *peace*, all agree with the stage of introversion which opens the

¹ E. J. Dingwall, *Some Human Oddities*. Home and Van Thal, 1947, ch. 1 and 6.

mystic life. May we in reverence suggest that the mysterious cry—"My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me?"—may coincide with entry into "the dark night of the soul" which follows the opening phase? If this be so, he proceeded at a slower pace than many orthodox mystics, detained by the self-sacrificing method of renunciation adopted for our sakes.

The certainty that they had received a revelation from God was one of the insidious dangers of mysticism, and the more sober members of the fraternity were ever suspicious of their detailed visions: the *unconscious* carries over into the hypnotic state the ideas of normal theology, and on emergence from hypnosis they have acquired a new emphasis. While the personality in this condition may be in touch with the transcendent, it would appear that a knowledge of God must come through other channels. Of the vision word and dream by which God's message came in Old Testament days we know little, and must rest upon the assurance of Jesus that it was "the word of God." Accuracy of prediction was suggested by God (Deut. xviii, 21-22) as a secondary test, but at times even a false prophet could give an accurate forecast (Deut. xiii, 1-5) and consistency was the primary standard—to speak in the name and character of Yahweh. Thus at a later date a prophet was adjudged worthy of death (I Kin. xiii) because he failed to reject the message which he knew to be inconsistent with the word of God through him. Writing to Corinth, Paul recognised that "glossolalia" had been also manifested in them during pagan worship¹ and suggested a check by consistency of their spirit gifts—did they acknowledge Jesus as *Lord*, and walk in His footsteps? John also commands the "spirits" to be tried by the same method, and finally, in the last message, commends Ephesus for so doing and reproves Pergamum for harbouring false prophets of the Balaam type. Throughout the early days described in *Acts* perpetual appeal is made to consistency with Yahweh's way as revealed in scripture. Controversy does not rage between the word of Moses and that of Jesus, but rather as to whether Jesus was the Messiah promised by Moses, and both sides are content to abide by scripture once its meaning can be established.

In stating both that the just shall live by faith, and also that

¹ K. Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*. Rivingtons, 2nd Ed., 1914, pp. 241-252;

J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, H. and S., 1930. Article "apago."

Jesus was tempted in all points as we, the New Testament indicates a drastic restriction to the "supernatural" knowledge of Jesus. So also in the statement that he *learned* by his experience a finite horizon to knowledge is implied, and a modern writer has given an interesting discussion of the point.¹ Jesus always refers to the Old Testament as authoritative, suggesting that it was also His source of knowledge. The "Spirit" which dwelt within Him enabled him to read beneath the surface that which was not apparent to the uninterested, and he promised also to his disciples that the Spirit should dwell with them to this same end. On the resurrection day disciples were chidden for failing to believe the scriptures previously expounded, and while Paul points out that only the Spirit of God can comprehend the things of God, Jesus by parable taught that our heavenly Father would freely give Holy Spirit to those who asked. A development of this teaching may be found in Swete's treatise.² If therefore we seek by mystical hypnosis to give psychological certainty to the scheme already in our minds, it is imperative that we first fill our minds with God's truth, lest we forge a chain of lies which shall hold us in bondage all our life.

Jesus taught that God gives only to those who ask and desire earnestly. It is the humble approach seeking guidance not otherwise available which elicits response. Of such Jesus promised they should know truth, but of those who willingly forsake God, Paul says that God will send a strong delusion that they should believe a lie. Even so, in Old Testament days, a spirit of error was said to go forth from God to deceive a king. Those thus seeking God are spoken of as unity, Jesus desires that they may be *one*, even as He and God were one, and Thornton has compiled an interesting study of this common life.³ This is the "good" for which union of personality was intended, but several writers have noted the opposite "evil" to which man has prostituted it as forming a unity in the Devil.⁴ From this viewpoint evil is the non-submission of the personality to God, and the Devil is the unity of those in that state. Thus also, the temptations of Jesus may be viewed as the interaction between

¹ Forbes Robinson, *The Self-Limitation of the Word of God*. Longmans Green, 1914.

² H. B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament*. Macmillan, 1910.

³ L. S. Thornton, *The Common Life in the Body of Christ*. Dacre Press, 2nd Ed., 1946.

⁴ e.g., Theologica Germanica ch. 36, 40, 47, 49, and Theresa—*The History of Her Foundations*, ch. 5, 6, 8.

his personality and that of those around him. They, with their false scale of values, mis-use of the scriptures, and seeking for signs in accordance with their warped ideas, presented a severe temptation to him who was about to proclaim the Kingdom of God. The mental disease known as "Demon possession" would appear to be due to unhealthy mental attitude, and fled before the light of Christianity.

LIFE.

Darwin, Spencer and Haeckel led a school of thought which considered life to be but an unsolved chemical reaction, and it was Bergson who initiated the break-away from this rationalist position with his doctrine that life was a continuity, using the physical universe and moulding it to its own purpose. The Bible indicates that this is but a half truth, a halt half-way between the error of scepticism and the actual facts. Life, we are told is a spirit sent from God, belonging uniquely to Him, and breathed by Him into the inanimate body; should He withdraw it, "all flesh would perish together." But life, though a unity extending through vast vistas of time and manifest in microbe and man, is itself impersonal force, and it is suggested that as the physical exists for life, and life is the energising force, so also life exists for personality, and personality is the power through which it is conscious. We are faced therefore with an ascending ladder; the physical exists in great prodigality that life may propagate in some small corner of the universe; life spreads in multifarious forms over the earth that personality may be conscious in a few million bodies; personality exists that it may progress into union with God, and by analogy above we might expect to find only some small percentage so doing. The analogy is strengthened when we see only a small portion of a season's seeds germinating and reaching maturity, our ponds swarming with frog-spawn to produce a few adults, and the earth filled with people who are indifferent to religion.

Our view of life is necessarily modified by our ideas of *time*. The meaning of time is largely relative to the context; for the physicist it is extension with warped scale; to the living *organism* it is extension with a rapidly contracting scale due to the accumulation of toxins in the blood,¹ and where this contraction is absent, as in laboratory-propagated cellular tissue, a semi-

¹ Du Nouy, *Biological Time*. Methuen, 1936.

immortality is enjoyed. Temple has shown¹ that for personality there are two possible schemes, that of "past and future" as now experienced by the organism, and that of the eternal present associated with freedom from time in God. Peter points to the fact that time is meaningless to God, and when we speak of immortality or eternal life, it is this type of life, as centred in God, which is meant. Thus Paul says that only God is immortal, yet speaks of men as called to immortality and life in its fullest sense, that is, to union in God.

Keith has summarised² the biological argument that our consciousness is a function of chemical reactions within the brain. While admitting dependence on this process, an attempt has been made in this paper to show that human personality has in some form a contact with the transcendent and thus differs from animal mental experience. During recurrent periods of sleep, when some of the vital mental processes are suspended, we are entirely unconscious, and while our body lives, it is as though that portion of the time extension were non-existent for our personality. It is logical therefore to argue that during the longer suspension in death a similar hiatus in consciousness occurs. Both Old and New Testaments alike agree in frequent reference to death as a "sleep" and while the whole teaching of the Bible is self-consistent, a gradual extension of detailed revelation is to be found in its pages. The hope of a further life after death is centred on a resurrection (or standing again) of the body with a time scale which is not contracting, and in consequence an eternal existence; thus the Bible visualises an organism to provide the mechanism for personal self-consciousness. The doctrine of man's *unity* has been well expounded by Laidlaw.³ When Paul spoke of Jesus as "the first fruits of them that slept," he presented a picture of our hope of personal survival.

In our ideas of personal survival we are often deceived by false analogy with the living organism. For a particular organism hiatus of life spells eternal dissolution (apart from resurrection in Jesus), but our experience in sleep demonstrates that this is not so with personality, since every morning on awaking our memory serves to establish connection with previous

¹ W. Temple, *Christus Veritas*. Macmillan, 1926, ch. 5 and 11.

² A. Keith, *Darwinism and What it Implies*. Watts, 1928.

³ J. Laidlaw, *The Bible Doctrine of Man*. T. and T. Clark, 1895.

days. It is this function of memory which constitutes the continuity of personality, and in teaching that Jesus was tried in all points as we, the Bible indicates that as *man* He had no pre-existence, but "grew in knowledge." As the risen Lord however, he is immortal, has passed out of all personal relationship to time even as God exists, and in reference to Him thus the term "pre-existence" has no meaning. We also, at the resurrection, hope to so pass from time to eternity in the terms of the great oath (Rev. x, 5-7).

There is an independent way in which personality may be said to have continuity of existence, even when not self-conscious—in the minds of other personalities. Thus Socrates enjoys an immortality in the minds of other men, though dead for many centuries. This type of existence is only semi-immortal however, being dependent upon the continuity of other personalities in which to reside. For the Christian there is true continuity, since he exists in the mind of God, and, as Jesus has said, "all live unto Him." This is the figurative "book of life" in which is inscribed the names of those to enter into eternity. Thus baptism into the Christian community was described as a "new birth" in which a fresh start was made as "new-born babes" to develop a personality which should be acceptable to God and reside in His memory. That man is not necessarily immortal is shown by Jesus' readiness to answer the question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Swete has well shown¹ that our future personality is a function of that suspended at death, and while the resurrection body may be new, and be made incorruptible, it is only if our present personality is worthy of survival in union with God that it will enter that age. C. S. Lewis has argued in figurative language² that we are created for union with God, and in personal refusal of that union we create our own hell—the corruptible state of being "without God."

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

Mr. W. E. LESLIE wrote: *The External World*.—Mr. Lovelock opens his paper with a destructive criticism of the means by which we try to obtain knowledge of the world around us. Against this uncertainty he says "the Bible is insistent that a real *spiritual*

¹ H. B. Swete, *The Life of the World to Come*. S. P. C. K., 1917.

² C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*. Bles.

world does exist," and that through God's word we may make contact with it. This seems encouraging, but Mr. Lovelock had not noticed that the Bible is a phenomenon of the external world, our knowledge of which he considers so uncertain. Our sensory percepts are the first link in a chain of which the contents of the Bible are later links. A chain cannot be stronger than its weakest (in this case its first) link. From this point of view the teaching of the Bible can only be relied upon when supported by direct revelation to the individual.

The Numinous.—Is Mr. Lovelock quite sure that Otto's argument is strictly "ontological"? As to James's "twice born," surely they are troubled with pessimism and a tender conscience *before* their second birth. To say that their later state is similar to the tranquility of hypnosis is quite inadequate. Why should the fact that there have been mystics in all religions be "embarrassing"? The tendency to connect mysticism and black magic is, I fear, due to an uncritical (sometimes almost superstitious) approach. Compare the attitude of Dean Inge with that of Miss Underhill. Surely Paul is a famous mystic who did not remain a follower of the system in which he was nurtured.

The Approach to God.—What has the *kenosis* (emptying) of Jesus to do with holiness? I know of no indication in the New Testament that he disciplined his body to bear the physical pain of crucifixion. Surely he suffered as did the thieves. It is interesting that while so many sober mystics mistrusted their detailed visions, Paul, who was surely a sober member of the fraternity, did not. Surely the testing of spirits was done by a special gift of discerning of spirits. The words "Jesus is Lord" were an ejaculation in an ecstatic state—the question of "walking in his footsteps" is not introduced.

Life.—In the first of the four paragraphs in which Mr. Lovelock discusses the nature of life, he states that it is a spirit sent from God and breathed into the inanimate body—presumably into the inanimate bodies of microbes and plants as well as man. I find this suggestion less convincing than others in the paper.

Dr. BASIL ATKINSON wrote: This interesting and very readable paper seems to have been written from a Unitarian point of view. Thus the writer says that the Bible indicates that as *man* Jesus

had no pre-existence. If this means that the Second Person of the Trinity had no *human* nature until His conception in the womb of the virgin, it is almost a truism. If it does not mean this, it appears as it stands to deny the doctrine of the Trinity, and to place the Lord's pre-existence on the same plane as our own post-resurrection external condition. Is this consistent with the statements made in John i, 1-2? A Unitarian position seems also to be indicated on p. 24, where the word "Spirit" is placed between inverted commas and the expression "Holy Spirit" occurs without the definite article. There seem hints elsewhere in the paper that the writer's viewpoint is not simply Unitarian. I suggest that the background of the paper might be more clearly understood if the writer would develop further his view of Trinitarian doctrine.

Mr. A. CONSTANCE wrote: To that fascinating, almost terrifying, territory which we term "personality" Mr. Lovelock proves himself an unreliable guide: an explorer who ignores the experience of the most notable adventurers in this region of human philosophy, and one who has only a few byways and insignificant places to show us. For he makes no mention of such indispensable authorities as Myers, Bradley, Sturt, Bosanquet, Brugmans, Carington and others whose writings are surely vitally relevant to a paper of this kind. Even less excusable is his neglect of those problems which are the main areas and mountain peaks of his subject. For his incredibly complacent omission of any reference whatever to such subjects as Professor Dunne's *Serialism* discoveries, Ogden's *Semantics*, J. B. Rhine's experiments in extra-sensory perception, Upton Sinclair's telepathic experiments, the work of G. N. M. Tyrrell, Hettinger, S. G. Soal; Jephson, the Estabrooks, and that of Professor Fukurai and other Eastern students of human personality, is quite unforgivable. He presumes to write of a subject which cries aloud for reference to these competent authorities and relevant subjects, yet is content with threadbare ideas and trivial quotations. He is as one who would presume to lecture on Tibet, yet would make no mention of Lhasa, the Himalayas, or the characteristics of its people. There is no word in his paper of personality in its historical implications, nor of any of the association theories, nor of the K-ideas, of the personality theories of spiritists, of the Psychon systems and sub-

systems. He uses a thousand words or so to introduce his subject, vaguely and uncertainly, and then reveals the fact that he has an axe to grind—a rusty axe which has had many name-handles during the past nineteen centuries, but one which is still recognisable for what it is : a two-edged weapon, and one which has been laid again and again to the roots of our Christian faith. Its two edges are unitarianism and conditional immortality ; and the fact that the roots remain, vitally sound and unassailable, is due to no lack of energy on the part of those who have wielded the axe—in recent times the Millennial Dawnist Pastor C. T. Russell, the Christadelphian writer Robert Roberts, in his book *Christendom Astray*, and others. Mr. Lovelock chooses his sentences carefully, but his intentions are all too evident. It is quite evident that he has no appreciation of the real nature or need of the human personality. For if the Divine Personality of our Lord was merely derived through a series of human personalities as the natural son of Joseph, the Christian message is false, we are yet in our sins, and the world is without hope.

Mr. Lovelock speaks of an “identification” between our personality and that of Jesus. But his paper as a whole shows that he does not mean what orthodox Christians mean when they speak of the Atonement. Our Lord is quite evidently an “elder brother” and no more. He has no supernatural authority, according to Mr. Lovelock—for this is implicit in his reference to miracles. It is truly amazing that he can refer to miracles like this, yet blind himself to the truth expressed by our Lord Himself as He did many of His miracles—that He had an even greater power, *the power to forgive sins*, and that this power, when proved by implication in the working of any associated miracle, was absolute and undeniable evidence that He was God. For Mr. Lovelock must surely admit that none can forgive sins save God Himself. In another passage Mr. Lovelock says that “the man who passes into a trance at Mass, and the one raising the Devil in evil ritual have much in common from a purely psychological viewpoint.” This statement is perilously near blasphemy, and it is demonstrably quite untrue. It is the kind of thing that is published with approval by the Rationalist Press Association. One does not expose the fundamental error of the Mass by linking it with “raising the Devil”—such a mental

association merely exposes the muddled thinking of the mind that conceives it. Again, Mr. Lovelock speaks of the *kenosis* of Jesus as a striking contrast to holiness sought by fleeing the world in a monastery. Yet our Lord rejected the world more consistently than any monastic recluse. That He did not seek monastic seclusion evidences a stronger sanctity that is not in opposition to the spirit of the recluse, but rather a firmer and fuller expression of it. Mr. Lovelock fails to see that there are degrees of holiness, but that these are not in opposition to each other but to the spirit of the world. But Mr. Lovelock has no reverence for the Author of personal holiness—he speaks of the Holy Spirit as an impersonal influence. This is consistent with his unitarianism, but not with the numerous references to the Personality of the Holy Spirit in Holy Writ, in which He is spoken of as guiding and comforting, reproving and (in short) acting as only a *person* can act. It is not surprising that Mr. Lovelock goes on to say that “we must fill our minds with God’s truth.” Yet we might as well speak of creating ourselves, saving ourselves and sanctifying ourselves! To such passes do men come who deny the truth of the Triune Nature of God. Mr. Lovelock speaks of demon possession as “mental disease.” As one reads of our Lord expelling demons this is quite obviously untrue. Our Lord could hardly have spoken to a disease and commanded it to come out of a man, and received a spoken reply from it. Nor could He have referred to demons and demon possession as He did, again and again, if He had been speaking of diseases. All instances of demon possession require indwelling personalities. My own experiences in psychical research, with prominent mediums, during a time of my life when I was actually a spiritist and before I came to Christ, convinced me that the mediums, with their distorted faces and writhing bodies, were demon-possessed. My reading of the concentration camp horrors of the last war, and more recently of those in Soviet Russia, confirms this fact of the reality of demon possession. Mr. Lovelock says that “personality exists that it may progress into union with God.” This is in direct conflict with the Scriptural truth that the human personality must undergo a drastic and revolutionary change to come into union with God—that it must be re-born. Not by progress, but by surrender so absolute that it is likened to death does

the personality find union with God. To be saved from sin and its consequences through Christ involves nothing less than the death of the old personality. The result is a new personality quite distinct from the old, and a sanctification which is so far removed from being a "progress of the personality" that it might better be described as a series of deaths. For this is at once the paradox and the truth of Christian experience: that the soul which has come to see our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour (and the terms are inseparable in the experience we call "conversion") can only escape spiritual death by spiritually dying, "spiritual death" being separation from God, and "spiritually dying" union with Him. From the surrendering adoration of "My Lord and my God," the personality passes, timelessly and deathlessly, to the "eternal-now" position of "Not I, but Christ."

Mr. TITTERINGTON wrote: I have read this paper through several times, as carefully as I knew how, but have been unable to discern what is the thread connecting together the various sections of which it is composed, unless it be that it is an attempt to provide a philosophical basis for the doctrine—quite clearly enunciated in the concluding section—of conditional immortality.

There are many other things in this paper, too, that give rise to serious misgiving, especially in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity. Mr. Lovelock's references to our Lord prompt the question whether he believes, as a Christian must believe, that He is very God of very God, the Son from everlasting. Thus when he says: "As the risen Lord . . . He is immortal, has passed out of all personal relationship to time even as God exists, and in reference to Him thus the term pre-existence has no meaning," does he accept our Lord's claim, "Before Abraham was, I am"? or again: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was"? and many like passages. On this fundamental issue the paper seems very ambiguous.

Then again, the speculation concerning our Lord's supposed mystical experiences on page 22 I find both dubious and distasteful. His experience of oneness with the Father was a far deeper, more intimate matter—far more vital—than any that a mere man may know.

When Mr. Lovelock says "Jesus . . . taught that our heavenly Father would freely give Holy Spirit to those who asked," why does he omit the article? Does he deny personality to the Holy Spirit?

On pages 24 and 25 he quite definitely denies the personality of the Devil, and the reality of demon possession. He accuses those holding other views of "misuse of Scripture," but what a misuse of Scripture is it when he says: "The temptations of Jesus may be viewed as the interaction between His personality and that of those around Him." The only ones around Him, as St. Mark tells us, were the wild beasts, and Mr. Lovelock is scarcely referring to these!

And lastly (though there is much else on which one could comment), Mr. Lovelock's view of conversion seems far distant from the Christian concept. If "conversion, the crisis of conscience, has been common among the followers of Allah" (a very doubtful statement in any case), it can have nothing to do with what the Christian understands by the term; for it means a transformation of the whole life and being, resting on the finished work of Christ through the blood of His cross, and resulting in a personal relation to Him. Apart from Christ there can be no conversion.

Mr. R. E. FORD wrote: In the paragraph commencing "In stating both that the just," etc., I take great exception to the statement that the words "tempted in all points as we" indicates a drastic restriction of the supernatural knowledge of Jesus. It is vital to us, as Christians, to be extremely careful how we expand statements in the New Testament concerning the person of Christ, as it is impossible for any human mind to solve, or fully understand, the mystery of the Incarnation. In fact, the statement "drastic restriction to the 'supernatural' knowledge" is, of course, a contradiction of terms. Knowledge that is "supernatural" cannot suffer drastic restriction. Further, Mr. Lovelock goes on to make the statement that: "He learned by his experience, implies a finite horizon to knowledge." How can there be a finite horizon in one who is infinite? It would appear from this and other passages that Mr. Lovelock denies the Deity of Christ. The great mystery of the incarnation is shown many times in such incidents as the Saviour being thirsty and unable to draw water at the well of Samaria, and yet the next minute reading the secrets of the woman's

heart. Also one minute weary and asleep in the boat and the next minute stilling the waves and storm, and again one minute standing weeping as a powerless man outside the Tomb of Lazarus and the next moment calling forth the dead in resurrection power. There are many, many similar incidents in the Gospels which will come to everybody's mind. To come to hasty deductions from any of these would lead to great error concerning the Lord's person—in fact, if Mr. Lovelock's reasoning is valid in the passage he quotes from Hebrew v, 8, where he says "a finite horizon to knowledge is implied," then we can also imply that the Lord was imperfect from the following statement in verse 9, whence we read "and being made perfect." In fact, we have no right to infer, deduce or imply anything from Scripture which is not plainly stated, most especially concerning the miracle of the Incarnation and Person of the Blessed Lord. There are other statements on page 27 about the pre-existence of the Lord which are most distasteful. It would appear from this passage that Mr. Lovelock does not believe in the Eternal Sonship; again he seeks to lay emphasis only on the manhood of Jesus. This, as I have sought to show from the instances given already, is impossible and dangerous.

A communication was also received from Mr. R. E. Hamilton, in which many of the criticisms raised in the above communications were again made.

AUTHOR'S REPLY.

I would like to express thanks for the many comments which various members have forwarded on my recent paper, "Personality." In particular I would like to thank Mr. Leslie for his list of Press corrections, of which I have made full use. In the following sections an endeavour is made to acknowledge briefly the major points raised.

To the rather violent charge of omitting the principal authorities which is levied by Mr. Constance, I can only reply that this paper was compressed from a longer version, and had, perforce, to eliminate much: as to which authorities are most important, however, a difference of opinion is to be expected, and it is doubtful whether a census taken round the Victoria Institute would reveal a unanimous choice.

Several members have questioned inferences on the subject of the Godhead. Two are mistaken in supposing that I wrote with a Unitarian bias—in fact, their own abhorrence of this blasphemy cannot be any greater than is my own. Neither have I any sympathy with the teaching of Arius, though having some predilection towards a few of the points made by Paul of Samosata. In connection with missing capitals when referring to our Lord, I am very sorry if the usual practice of the Institute has been violated. I have used capitals where emphasis was on Jesus as Son, but not where reference was to his human personality as representative of that which we ourselves experience. The reality of this human side is well emphasised by Du Bose in *The History of the Oecumenical Councils*. In reply to Mr. Titterington's comment on the nature of Jesus, it is apparent throughout the Scriptures that although bearing the authority of the Father, that authority was distinct in being delegated; for an expansion of this point may I refer to H. R. Mackintosh, *The Person of Jesus Christ* (T. & T. Clark, International Theological Library), where the incontrovertible teaching of 1 Corinthians xv, 28 is dealt with.

Mr. Titterington asks why I omitted the article when quoting Luke xi, 13, and the answer is simple, because it is omitted in the original: there are many places where the article is contained, and if a list of the two usages be compiled a general difference will become apparent. This point answers several additional matters raised by others. A second objection made concerning the physical isolation of Jesus during the temptation seems to miss the point; we, as children of our age, are influenced by the general outlook and code of values held by our human ambient, and even in isolation on the mountain side our personalities are still partly a product of many others. No more than this influence of the world in which He increased in stature and favour with God and man was intended in my reference.

There is not space to reply to the many detailed points, but Mr. Leslie's fundamental criticism must be noted. The Bible is certainly a phenomenon in the "outside world," but it is a stage nearer to our own personality than a tree or table. If we take the extreme view that all percepts are illusory, then we are without any hope whatever; if, on the other hand, we believe that there is some

rational relation between percept and stimulus, then the Bible as a series of words becomes a mechanism for transferring thoughts from one mind to another, whereas the table is still a series of stimuli with unknown relation to the concept. We are faced in the Bible with *thoughts* not *things*, and the task is to decide whether they are human or Divine thoughts.