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883RD ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

HELD AT 12, QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, 25TH APRIL, 1949.

E. WELLISCH, ESQ., M.D., D.P.M., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The CHAIRMAN then called upon Rev. J. Stafford Wright, M.A., to read his Gunning Prize Essay, entitled, "The Decalogue and Psychological Well-being: its Present-day Significance and Value to Mankind."

THE DECALOGUE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING: ITS PRESENT-DAY SIGNIFICANCE AND VALUE TO MANKIND.

BY REV. J. STAFFORD WRIGHT, M.A.

(Being the Gunning Prize Essay, 1948.)

SYNOPSIS

The Decalogue must be tested afresh to-day. p. 122.

The value of the section that deals with life, family, property, and good faith, is proved by its recognition in the legal systems of most nations. p. 123.

The value of the theistic section might appear more debatable, but there is some good psychological justification for at least investigating it. pp. 124–127.

An examination of the Ten Commandments one by one shows that they are psychologically sound, and thus make for man's well-being, pp. 128–140, though they can be fully realised only by one who is in Christ. p. 140.

IN a day when mere antiquity fails to carry authority, it is necessary to submit all things old to fresh scrutiny so as to see whether they contain an intrinsic validity that is unaffected by the lapse of time. Even such a venerable code as the Decalogue cannot escape. The world to-day demands proofs that a thing works, that it produces results. Amidst the clamour of competing ideologies, it has no room for airy theories. Such an attitude may well be welcomed by the Christian. So long as the test of works is not simply £ s. d., but includes those deeper values that no money can buy, the Christian is well prepared to

bring out those things by which he lives to the light of day, and to weigh them in the balances, with the assurance that they will not be found wanting. It is in this spirit that the present essay is prepared to examine the Decalogue.

It is a Biblical axiom, with a more-than-Biblical application, that " in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established " (II Corinthians, xiii, 1). Looking back on the pages of history, one finds many more than two or three witnesses to the value of one half of the Decalogue. It would be true to say that almost all peoples have framed laws against murder, adultery, theft, and perjury, while respect for parents, if not explicitly enjoined by law, is implicit in social custom.

Any large-scale attempts to defy these laws have not only astounded neighbouring peoples, but have brought their inevitable penalty. Thus the present generation has been profoundly shocked by the outworkings of the Nazi philosophy in Germany, with its massacres and purges, its plundering of territory and private property, its encouragement of children to betray their parents, and its trumped-up charges against individuals and nations. Such a system could not last, for it was uprooting the very foundations of all that human conscience respects as morality.

For one can grant this to the human conscience in general. It is far from being an infallible guide. But it can give a meaning to the terms " right " and " wrong," and it can give decisions on broad points of morality. Hence the Book of Amos opens with denunciations of neighbouring nations for atrocities that shocked any reasonable man. Hence, too, the common conscience seeks to embody the sanctity of human life, family, property, and the pledged word, in every code of law.

It may, however, be equally true that mankind in general has reached this conclusion through experience. The moment that man realises his position as a member of a social group, he is forced to limit his own irresponsibility in the interests of the whole. The subject of duties and rights forces itself upon him and demands adjustment. The result inevitably is that, no matter what multiplicity of minor regulations and taboos come into being, the foundational commands to respect human life, family, property, and the pledged word, must underlie everything.

This appeal to history and experience might appear at first sight to militate against the claims of the Decalogue to be a Divine revelation. Such an objection is a relic of childhood

days, when one gathered the impression that on Sinai God, as it were, invented totally new laws, somewhat in the manner of a person inventing rules for a new game. Undoubtedly there was much that was new in the Law. But the Law was no freakish set of rules. According to its own estimate it was planned that the people who received it might be "an holy nation" (Exodus xix, 6). Whatever may be the primary connotation of the word "Kodesh" ("Holy") it cannot be divorced from the moral significance that it assumes in Scripture. This is well demonstrated in Norman Snaith's book, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (Chapters 2 and 3). Holiness towards God is expressed in righteousness of life.

The Decalogue professes to establish righteousness, and, even when one has allowed for the perversions of the human conscience, it is still clear that, whether through intuition or experience, the consciences of mankind in general have reached certain basic conclusions on what constitutes righteousness. On these points a divinely-given law from a righteous God would necessarily be in agreement with the conscience and experience of mankind.

We may agree with Henri Bergson when he writes, "Suppose we discern behind the social imperative a religious command? No matter the relation between the two terms: whether religion be interpreted in one way or another, whether it be social in essence or by accident, one thing is certain, that it has always played a social role. . . . In societies such as our own the first effect of religion is to sustain and reinforce the claims of society." (*The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, page 5.)

There is thus a *prima facie* case for regarding a large section of the Decalogue as being of permanent value for mankind. The great dread of peace-loving people at the present moment is that another totalitarian system will throw aside these basic laws, and plunge the world once more into misery. The well-being of mankind, psychological and physical, depends on the recognition of those great social factors, the right to life, family, property, and good faith.

Later it will be necessary to examine these individual laws of the Decalogue in greater detail. But before doing so, we must turn to the Decalogue as a whole. For, while it is true that for some commands we can appeal to the general opinion of mankind, there are others which stand in a different category.

The Decalogue falls into two obvious divisions. The first four commands concern duties towards God, the last six concern

duties towards our fellow men and women. Yet it is one Decalogue, and claims the same divine fiat for the first four commands as it does for the last six. The thing that differentiates the two groups of commands is that one can appeal to the results of tangible experiment for the second, but not for the first.

This statement needs a further qualification, or it may be misleading. It is obvious that if the first group of commands is right for man, in the same way as the second group is right, then its application will produce results that commend themselves to any reasonable man. On the other hand the contents of the commands are not what would naturally be discovered by man's use of experimental methods. Man by himself reaches, like the Athenians, the idea of the Unknown God, and must wait for some direct revelation if he is to know the True and Personal God (Acts xvii, 22–31). Thus one would expect that, taking the Decalogue at its face value as the revelation of the Supreme Being, the first four commands would be beyond man's unaided reason to discover, but would satisfy man's reason and heart when they were followed.

In the light of this one must examine the first four commands, at first in general, and then in particular.

There was a time not so long ago when the popular idea of the effect of the New Psychology was that it had explained away the validity of religion and of religious values. The dominance of the Freudian School did much to create this impression. God was no more than a projection of the Super-Ego or Ego Ideal. The attempt to suppress instincts, in response to what was believed to be a divine law, would result in the formation of dangerous complexes.

It is interesting from the point of view of this essay to notice Sigmund Freud's own lamentable excursus into the days of the giving of the Decalogue. His *Moses and Monotheism*, while not touching directly upon the Decalogue, is a Freudian reconstruction of the history and of the Jewish belief in the One God, not upon sound historical criteria but upon the writer's own psychological ideas of what must have happened.

Alfred Adler, on the other hand, was willing to admit the reality of God. Phyllis Bottome in her life of Adler tells us, "Any form of real religion formed on obedience to approved moral precepts, Adler always acknowledged as of the greatest possible value to a human being. 'The idea of God,' he often

said, 'is the most enlightening thought that has yet occurred to mankind.' He himself became a Protestant and even joined the Protestant Church early in life as a protest probably against what he believed to be the isolating quality of the Jewish religion. . . . It seemed to Adler to be a form of refined selfishness to keep God for one tribe or for one set of human beings rather than to share a universal Deity with the common family of mankind" (page 65).

It is difficult to tell from this how deep was Adler's faith. But it is clear that to him there was nothing damaging to psychological health in a belief in God. In fact he himself writes in his *Science of Living*, "In the last analysis to have a goal is to aspire to be like God. But to be like God is, of course, the ultimate goal—the goal of goals, if we may use the term" (page 54).

In turning to Jungian Psychology one finds oneself in a world that is completely different from that of Freud and Adler. As has been well said by Gerald Vann, "To be acquainted with traditional Christian theology and then to read the works of Jung is to be startled at every turn by the way in which the two dovetail or run parallel. The hunger for the infinite which alone can fill the human heart, the longing for spiritual re-birth, the felt need for the healing and turning to good of the 'dark shadow' within the self, the need of integration, of being made whole—all these things are both psychological fact and religious truth; psychology therefore confirming belief in religious doctrine, and religion fulfilling the needs and desires which psychology empirically reveals" (*The Heart of Man*, page 16).

This does not mean that Jung himself admits a belief in God as a part of his system. If a patient believes in God, Jung treats him or her on the basis of this belief. But the whole movement of Jungian psychology is inward rather than outward. Thus Jung closes his book, *The Integration of the Personality*, with these words, "The undiscovered way in us is like something of the psyche that is alive. The classic Chinese philosophy calls it 'Tao,' and compares it to a watercourse that resistlessly moves towards its goal. To be in Tao means fulfilment, wholeness, a vocation performed, beginning and end and complete realisation of the meaning of existence innate in things. Personality is Tao." Or to quote J. Jacobi's book that has a Foreword by Jung himself, *The Psychology of C. G. Jung*, "The Jungian system claims, in spite of its intimate reference to the fundamental

problems of our being, to be neither religion nor philosophy. It is the scientific summary and representation of all that the experienceable totality of the psyche includes " (page 145).

This inward turning of Jungian psychology makes it easier to expound many of its conclusions in terms of Oriental thought than of Occidental, though Jung himself has not identified himself with any religion. Certainly he is not unfavourable to Christianity, and many of his beliefs can be welded into the Christian scheme. He shows a certain sympathy with religious dogma when he writes in *Psychology and Religion*: " In itself any scientific theory, no matter how subtle, has, I think, less value from the standpoint of psychological truth than the religious dogma, for the simple reason that a theory is necessarily highly abstract and exclusively rational, whereas the dogma expresses an irrational entity through the image " (page 56).

The theories of the Gestalt School and of Behaviourism are not relevant to the subject in hand. It is those psychologists who are engaged in practical psychiatry to whom one must turn for a lead on the value of a belief in God, such as is pre-supposed by the Decalogue. It is not, however, a simple matter of counting heads. The most that can be shown is that a belief in God is fully consistent with psychological well-being, and that many people who lose faith in God suffer psychologically as a result. The former point has been shown by the beliefs of Adler and of Jung, and the latter is borne out by the experience of psychiatrists, whether or not they regard the patient's original faith in God as no more than an illusion.

Thus J. R. Rees of the Institute of Medical Psychology, London, in *The Health of the Mind*, sums up what probably most practising psychiatrists would agree with, when he says, " Religion and idealism play a very important part in the search for health. Religion is the result of an instinctive demand, and human beings, whatever their ' intelligence quotient ' may be, are always seeking hungrily for some philosophy of life which contains spiritual values " (page 81). And again, " Adjustment to the Infinite is a matter which everyone will have to express for him or herself in their own way " (page 220).

It is not by chance that the international conference on medical psychotherapy meeting in London this past summer heard lectures from representatives of the Christian faith.

This somewhat lengthy clearing of the ground has been necessary. It is useless to begin a piecemeal consideration of the

Decalogue and its influence on psychological well-being, unless one can admit that there is a *prima facie* case for considering a theistic statement as relevant at all. Not only may we feel encouraged to go forward in our examination, but, if we are to be guided by Jung's emphasis on the mysteries of the psyche and by the prominence that other psychiatrists give to religion, we may see a reason for the primacy that the spiritual group of commandments takes over the more material group. This primacy is no chance arrangement. It was re-affirmed by Jesus Christ in His summary of the two sections in terms first of love of God and then of love of one's neighbour (Mark xii, 30, 31). This was no unique interpretation. It underlies the whole of Judaism and of Christianity.

We may now come to an examination of the individual commandments which make up the Decalogue.

The First Commandment follows closely on the introductory words, "I am Yahweh thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." The last words mean literally "in My face" or "in My presence." There are several points here that are relevant to our theme. The first is the supreme authority of the One who speaks. There can be no psychological well-being without authority. Ancient and modern history is full of examples of the power for good or evil of dominating authorities. Man without authority is lost, and a nation without authority disintegrates as sheep without a shepherd. Thus it is that God begins the Decalogue with words of supreme and dogmatic authority. He claims man's highest devotion, and as the foundation of all that follows He declares that man must serve Him utterly and completely.

The second relevant point is the personal appeal of Person to person—"I"—"thou." Martin Buber points out the fallacy of speaking of the Decalogue as "the catechism of the Hebrews in the Mosaic period." For "a catechism means an instruction for the person who has to be in a position to demonstrate his full membership of a religious community on the basis of general sentences which he recites. . . . The soul of the Decalogue, however, is found in the word 'Thou.' Here nothing is either stated or confessed; but orders are given to the one addressed, to the listener" (*Moses*, page 130).

If there is one thing that makes for despair it is the thought that one is at the mercy of blind and insensate forces, that there

is no personal power behind the world, or that, if there is such a power, He is completely indifferent to the fate of mankind. But the First Commandment is the address of a Personal Being to a personal being. Although God's ways are far above man's ways, and although the Person of God transcends the person of man, there is yet that link of personality that makes it possible for God to say "I"—"thou."

A third relevant point emerges from the introductory words. They remind of an action that God has done on behalf of the one whom He addresses. "I have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." This is an appeal that in one sense is tied to a single period of time. But the New Testament picture of redemption through Christ warrants our extension of the time to eternity. There is a redemption from the bondage of Egypt that will be a perpetual memorial for all eternity, for the lamb that was slain on the night of redemption from Egypt foreshadowed the Lamb of whom it is written that "the Lamb is the light thereof," that is, of the New Jerusalem (Revelation xxi, 23).

This introductory reminder is essential for the understanding of the Decalogue. The commands of the Decalogue pre-suppose an experience of God. To one who has not had this experience the commands appear burdensome and sometimes meaningless. While it is true that anyone who follows the commands of the Decalogue for their own sake will find a blessing thereby, he will find far fuller blessing in following the commands for God's sake. This difference of attitude underlies the experience of St. Paul in Romans vii. So long as the Law was an external commandment, it was a burden too heavy for him to bear. But when he grasped the significance of redemption in Christ, then he found that the righteousness of the Law was fulfilled in him as he walked not after the flesh but after the Spirit (Romans viii, 1–4). Thus although one may be able to demonstrate that the Decalogue makes for the psychological well-being of mankind, there is all the time the pre-supposition that for its utmost effectiveness there must have been that experience of God that is summed up by the word Redemption.

There is yet a fourth point of significance in this First Commandment. It has been asserted that this command suggests monolatry rather than monotheism. This assertion takes no account of the fact that it is well-nigh impossible to frame monotheism in the form of a command, nor of the obvious fact that, whether

he is monolatrous or monotheistic, man is continually adopting other gods besides the One. Hence Jesus Christ stated the possibility of attempting to serve both God and Mammon (Matthew vi, 24), while in the same strain St. Paul on two occasions identified covetousness with idolatry (Ephesians v, 5, and Colossians iii, 5).

Here is a profound truth. The secret of integration for any man is a single-mindedness. This is the secret of all the courses in practical psychology that attempt to teach the way to success in life. There must be one dominating purpose to which all other aims are subservient. It is when a man has his interests and affections centred on two or three diverse objects that his life lacks coherence and integration. There is only One chief end of man, and that is God. All life to be coherent must centre in Him, " for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also " (Matthew vi, 21), and " if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light " (Matthew vi, 22). And this is only the New Testament way of expressing the truth that is stated in this First Commandment, " Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

The Second Commandment is a prohibition against the worship of God in any visible form. Judaism is not alone in its horror of images of God. The man who is in earnest in his search for the true God echoes the words ascribed to Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita, " Blind are the eyes which deem the Unmanifested manifest." It would probably be impossible to find a religion of idol-worship that was not degrading to the worshippers. Certainly the Books of Amos and Hosea are clear enough witnesses to the moral state of the Israelites who turned after the Baalim of the high places and after the golden calves.

The application of this Commandment to modern civilised man is simple. Modern man has not freed himself from trust in charms and superstitions. If he does not bow down to them, he at least serves and worships them. The lucky sixpence, a little carved god of good fortune, the mascot, are all examples of devotion to powers other than the Most High God.

One cannot believe that these superstitions make for the psychological well-being of man. J. C. Flugel in *Man, Morals and Society*, speaks of " the essential psychological resemblance between taboo and obsessional neurosis, in which the patient also feels strain and worry whenever the compulsive ceremonial is not carried out " (page 136). In the context Professor Flugel

has been comparing the dictates of superstition with the dictates of taboo. If then a man becomes wholly free from superstition through his devotion to God, then he is free from at least one form of obsessional neurosis.

It might, however, be agreed that it is possible to treat God in a purely superstitious way. He too may be "used" to bring good fortune or to avert bad. It is here that the reason given for the Second Commandment has its force. God is a jealous God. The adjective implies that God is zealous for the whole of our devotion, and demands our love and obedience not simply for His sake, but for our sake too; since man is so made that he can only realise the potentialities that are in him and function perfectly if he is perfectly adjusted to God. This means that the initiative comes from God. It is not we who use God—which is magic—but God who uses us—which is religion. It is not we who are jealous for God, so as to use Him for our own good fortune, possibly at the expense of others, but God who is jealous for us that He may take us into His vast plan for the universe.

It is in this Commandment too that we are shown the solidarity of the human race. Man cannot flourish in isolation, neither is he responsible to himself alone. The life and destiny of generations yet unborn lie in his body. There is a physical truth in the statement that God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children. A dishonoured body can leave a miserable heritage to its descendants. Here is something to move man from his selfishness. Even if he is prepared to face the consequences of his sin with the proud boast of "I can take it!" yet he must think that he is sentencing others to "take it" also.

Yet after all this is only a partial application of the Commandment. In its context the reference is to idolatry and superstition, to turning after some substitute for the true God. And the warning and promise are extended to succeeding generations who walk in the footprints of their father. Where the father sets an example of indifference to God, the father's iniquity is liable to be followed by the children. Similarly the father's love and obedience are likely to be found in his children also. God here speaks of the persistence of good or bad habits, and warns that the children who do not take warning from their father's sins will be visited with their father's punishment. Ezekiel xviii shows that the son may break the entail of sin or

good, but it is not easy. No man can be living in a state of psychological well-being who thinks that his life begins and ends with himself alone.

The Third Commandment forbids the taking of the Name of Yahweh thy God in vain. Here is blasphemy, which coarsens a man's character, because he treats his Creator as a name beneath contempt. Here too is hypocrisy, where a man professes to name the Name which is unutterable holiness, while his life is deliberately turning into unholy channels. "Name" denotes character, and it is a solemn thing to profess to belong to the Holy One and to belie this profession with one's life. A double life of this sort will sooner or later bring its fruit. A conflict will be set up in the unconscious, and the unconscious will take its revenge. Man is not so made that he can take the Name of the true God in vain and still be guiltless. He may not admit his guilt to himself, but the depths of his mind will admit it for him.

The Fourth Commandment is the last of the section that concerns man's duties specifically towards God. It concerns the Sabbath rest. This Commandment is a notorious centre of debate, but there are some well-defined principles in it that are applicable for man's total well-being.

The New Testament teaching is that the Sabbath itself was a shadow, or type-picture of things to come (Colossians ii, 16, 17). This means that it takes its place with the ritual of the Old Testament as something which vanished in its outward form when Christ brought in the reality. According to Hebrews iv, 10, it pictured the complete cessation of all human works in order to find rest in Christ. It is thus a witness to justification through simple faith in the finished work of Christ.

But the principle of one special day in seven was admitted into the New Testament Church when it commemorated the first day of each week, presumably in memory of Christ's Resurrection on that day. Thus in Acts xx, 7, the disciples at Troas gather to break bread on the first day of the week, and in I Corinthians xvi, 2, a weekly collection of money for Christian purposes is made on the first day, presumably at the weekly service.

While therefore we may not say that the stringent regulations of the Sabbath apply to the Christian Lord's Day, or Sunday, we are justified in seeing clear indications in the Sabbath regulations of the principles that should guide the keeping of the one day in

seven. For the Old Testament types had a significance in themselves as well as for what they ultimately signified. The godly Jew could find the sacrifices a means of grace. Similarly, he found the Sabbath rest a means of refreshment.

Experience has borne out the value of this rest day. It was said that during the last war those factories that turned over to a seven-day working week produced no more in the long run than did those that closed down on Sunday. Neither men nor animals nor machinery can endure a continuous grind. This Commandment lays down the solemn duty both of work and of rest.

But in what sense is man to rest on this one day? The reference can hardly be to mere relaxation. The peoples of the East, who first received this Commandment, know what it means to relax at every opportunity. They need no Fourth Commandment to instruct them in this. A modern song writer has declared that it is mad dogs and Englishmen who go out in the mid-day sun! And with the advances of modern life, even Englishmen are finding more leisure than ever before.

It would be strange if the Fourth Commandment inculcated no more than the observance of a special day in the spirit of a Saturday afternoon off. This Commandment belongs to the group of duties towards God. There is a Godward movement about it. The rest on this day is so that the day may be holy to the Lord in the fullest sense, as is said in Isaiah lviii, 13, "Call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and . . . honour Him."

In this spirit the early Church sanctified the Lord's Day, and met then for worship. One cannot say how they spent the remainder of the day. Their masters would hardly excuse them from their employment. But if for us it is possible to rest, we should rest and devote the day so far as possible to the building up of the spiritual life.

There is a psychological value in this. It is a bulwark against materialism. A man who spends Sunday in resting over the Sunday newspaper and secular books, or engaged in the same hobbies as he pursues on the week-night evenings, is as much a materialist as the man who opens his shop as usual. Spiritual values must be fought for. They do not come easily. That is why the Lord's Day has been given, so that we may form the habit of turning to spiritual things very definitely on that day.

A good habit is psychologically a blessing. It tends to affect a considerable area of our life and outlook. That is why the

habit of resting on Sunday with the purpose of devoting the day especially to God has its effect upon the way in which one spends the remainder of the week. The spiritual outlook of Sunday colours the outlook of the whole of the week.

The two reasons that are given for keeping the Fourth commandment supplement each other, and point to something more than mere relaxation. In Exodus xx, 11, there is the reminder of the Creation story. The precise interpretation of the "seven days of creation" need not concern us here. The emphasis is upon the six stages, followed by a cessation of creation. It is obvious that God did not need physical relaxation after labour. His rest has some deeper spiritual significance, as was seen by the writer of Psalm xcv, 11, and Hebrews iv. A description of this rest belongs to the language of Christian mysticism, and only those who have some experience, however feeble, of union with God, can say something of its content. But its realisation belongs to quiet communion with God, and not simply to bodily and mental recreation.

Deuteronomy v, 15 gives a further reason for resting on this day. It is to be in memory of deliverance from the hard labour of Egypt. The thought again here is of redemption, and this redemption, both for the Jew and the Christian, is fundamentally a spiritual action. God redeemed, so that the people might be for His own possession. The hard labour of the world is to be changed for the rest in Him.

Thus it is that both in the Commandment itself and in the reasons that are given for it, one finds a principle that is valid for the present day, and that is vital for the maintenance of a spiritual way of life.

So the Decalogue passes to its second great division. It has spoken of life in relation to God. Now, before passing to life in relation to one's general environment, it recognises the more intimate environment of the family. It is the family that makes the first impact on the growing child. Growth in the family is presented as the normal ideal. It is a well proved fact that a child is handicapped if it is forced by circumstances to grow up under orphanage conditions, however kind the orphanage may be. Hence such orphanages as Dr. Barnardo's make extensive use of foster parents for their children.

A similar handicap faces the children of disrupted families, where the parents are divorced or separated, or even where such circumstances as war mean that the father is absent for a long

period. To have a father and a mother to honour is something that makes for the well-being of the child both in childhood and in later life.

St. Paul rightly saw that this Commandment is reciprocal. Not only must the child be told to honour father and mother, but father and mother must prove themselves worthy of honour. Thus when St. Paul quotes the Fifth Commandment in Ephesians vi, 2, he immediately urges fathers not to provoke their children to wrath, but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In Colossians iii, 21, he gives as a reason for not provoking the children, " lest they be discouraged."

Whether or not one follows Freud wholly in his stress on the derivation of much of the contents of the Super-Ego and Ego-Ideal from the commands and example of the parents, one must admit that these commands do become built into the background of the conscience. How important then it is that the commands should be worthy, and the example in accord with the commands !

But granted that the parents are true to God, it is important that the child should honour them. The Decalogue mentions both parents. The child must be guided wisely through its Oedipus period, and should reach maturity without any fixation upon the one parent rather than the other. There may be various difficulties owing to the dominance of one or the other of the parents, but the Fifth Commandment gives the ideal.

There is a promise attached to this Commandment, a promise of long life in the land. While there may be, and are, individual exceptions, this promise is perfectly valid. A nation of happy families, with a respect for family authority, is slow to embark on programmes that rebel against authority, and plunge the country into revolution. Revolution shortens life, and defiance of the Fifth Commandment is a well-known concomitant of revolution. We have already noticed the encouragement that Nazism gave to children to spy on their parents. The Russian revolution also made one of its aims the taking of children from the immediate care of their parents and putting them under the direct care of the State. One hears that this system in its crude form is largely abandoned in Russian to-day. Evidently results proved that the Fifth Commandment was wiser than Communist theory.

The Sixth Commandment stands out in stark directness, " Thou shalt not kill." The extent of its application is still a matter of controversy. In the light of the fact that the Israelites

were shortly to take the land of Canaan by force of arms, one can hardly suppose that to them the Commandment banned killing in war. Moreover the Law prescribed the death penalty for certain offences, thus indicating that the Commandment had no necessary reference to this. Therefore most interpreters adopt the interpretation of the Revised Version that appears in the Church of England Prayer Book and elsewhere, and translate, " Thou shalt do no murder."

It is impossible to dogmatise, but one may surmise that if Christian principles continue to spread in the world, there will be a deepening application of this command not to kill. This happened with the command to love one's neighbour as oneself. For centuries this command was interpreted in a manner that was not inconsistent with slavery. But gradually its fuller implications were realised. In the same way there is an increasing feeling that the Sixth Commandment has as its ideal the outlawing of war. Some would go further and extend it to the animal world, applying it not only to vivisection, but also to the wearing of furs and the eating of flesh food. Although the Christian Church is not yet prepared for these further applications, and in fact they may be mis-applications, yet it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that they are correct.

In the meantime one can see that this assertion of the sanctity of human life is vital for the well-being of society. War always has a brutalising effect. But one can go further. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus Christ took this Commandment even deeper, and applied it to that anger which is the seed from which murder grows (Matthew v, 21–26). Psychology is fully in agreement here. There is a righteous anger that generates the needed energy for decisive action. But there is anger that disintegrates a man, that throws his rational thought out of gear, and that pours poisons into his blood-stream. If " Thou shalt not kill " also means " Thou shalt not indulge in unrighteous anger," then one can see how valid this Sixth Commandment is, even for those people to whom murder seems something completely irrelevant to their lives.

The Seventh Commandment forbids adultery, that is sexual relationship of a married person with someone other than his or her partner. It is necessary to give this literal definition to make it clear that polygamy is not adultery. There is, for example, no reason to suppose that Solomon broke the letter of this Commandment. It would probably be true to say that almost

all nations and tribes have some regulations against adultery, whether they practise polygamy or monogamy. Unfortunately, however, adultery has often been defined too narrowly, as though a married man could go with a girl and be guiltless, while in similar circumstances a married woman would be guilty.

The application of this Law in the Pentateuch itself shows that both man and woman are regarded as guilty, even though the punishment in one case falls more heavily on the woman. Adultery with a married woman, whether or not the man is married, is punished by the death of both parties (Leviticus xx, 10). Any man, married or unmarried, who has relations with an unmarried or unbetrothed girl, is forced to pay a heavy fine to her father, marry the girl, and then is forbidden ever to divorce her (Deuteronomy xxii, 28, 29).

In practice there is no known instance of the death penalty ever having been enforced for adultery amongst the Jews, according to an article in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* (Volume I, page 521). We may presume that the death penalty was regarded as the maximum possible, and not as necessarily enjoined for every case. But it is clear that both husband and wife are regarded as guilty.

This equality commends itself to modern civilised man. The only point at issue is the vital one of whether adultery is sin at all. At the moment the world is witnessing a rapid drift away from the Seventh Commandment. Some years ago Bertrand Russell, in *Marriage and Morals*, urged that legal marriage should not be held to impose any obligation of sexual faithfulness, and neither husband nor wife should be jealous of the other's relationships. A recent book by L. E. Jones, *The Bishop and the Cobbler*, advocates the sanction of a distinction between a legal wife for child-bearing and other women for "love" relationships.

This new morality has not yet had a long enough vogue to prove itself to modern man by its results. The Christian has no doubts as to what these results will be. The verdict of history is against it. More than ten years ago J. D. Unwin showed in his book, *Sex and Culture*, that the decay of the ancient civilisations coincided with the breaking down of sexual self-restraint and violation of the marriage bond.

Jesus Christ pointed out that the glory of monogamy is seen in its original institution with Adam and Eve, but that God left it to man to find out through painful trial and error that, after

all, God's way was best, and that polygamy and divorce were due to the hardness of man's heart (Matthew xix, 4–9). Many of the Jews had already approximated to that position by the time of Christ. Christian experience has confirmed it.

Those who would now set it aside in favour of greater sexual freedom cannot show that this freedom makes for psychological well-being. Their freedom breaks down on the rock of jealousy—not an evil jealousy, but the natural jealousy that the husband and wife, if they are truly one, feel for each other. It is, moreover, well recognised that harmony between father and mother is necessary for the well-being of the children, and even Bertrand Russell, in the book already referred to, advocates a more or less constant union of husband and wife until the children are grown up.

There is no doubt that the Christian Church needs to give more frank and personal instruction on the marriage-relationship. It is not simple adultery, but the roots of adultery, that need to be attacked. A right adjustment to sex from the beginning; clean-living, such as is suggested by Jesus Christ's interpretation of this Commandment in Matthew v, 28; good sense in the choice of a partner; and the readiness to co-operate after marriage; all these things are part and parcel of this Commandment. This is the way of well-being for individual, home and nation. Popular reports of Hollywood morals do not suggest that here is a psychologist's paradise.

The Eighth Commandment needs no expansion. It is a Commandment that everyone applauds, but that many people break. One effect of the war has been the large increase in pilfering and scrounging, which is still stealing, by whatever name it is called. Commonsense, however, can probably be relied upon to adjust matters here. Much will depend upon how far private ownership remains. Few people, beyond professional thieves, will rob an individual. But it is not so easy to feel that one is stealing from a nebulous corporation or from the nation in the abstract. The realisation that stealing from the nation is the same as stealing from oneself will probably come gradually. But in the meantime one can assume that the Eighth Commandment is still recognised as making for man's total well-being.

The Ninth Commandment denounces the bearing of false witness against one's neighbour. While there is a primary reference to a court of law, it is fair to include all malicious gossip under this head. Again there is no need to expound this

Commandment. A citizen has a right to his good name. To rob a man of his good name is recognised as the meanest of actions. Such robbery is not good for the psychological well-being either of the victim or the one who slanders him.

So we come to the Tenth and last Commandment, " Thou shalt not covet." This is the only Commandment that speaks of a purely inward disposition. It is striking to find it here. It is as though God is anticipating the boast of anyone who declares that he has kept the letter of the four previous Commandments. Covetousness, in one form or another, is the seed from which murder, adultery, theft and slander grow. Covetousness means a lack of contentment. The realisation of the Tenth Commandment means an inward serenity.

All the great men of the world who have approximated in any way to inward serenity have seen the truth of " Thou shalt not covet." It was at the heart of Gautama Buddha's Four Truths : desire is the origin of all suffering. This idea is basic to the wisdom of the East, it has brought contentment to mystics of the East and West alike, and it has been asserted in the writings of poets like Walt Whitman, and prose writers like Thoreau and David Grayson, in ways to which many human hearts respond. If only one could be free from covetousness !

But not all feel this. The modern world is caught up in a thirst for money-making. There must always be full scope for the acquisitive instinct in man, and a society that cannot find work for all must inevitably produce covetousness amongst its workless members. But the covetousness of which this Commandment speaks is that covetousness which is found even in those who already have possessions. It is expressed in gambling and other get-rich-quick schemes, that not only take from one's neighbour by methods other than those of the legitimate ones of exchange, purchase, labour or benevolence, but produce that constant desire for acquiring more that becomes like the power of a drug.

Covetousness of property or of money produces a restlessness and dissatisfaction that spoil the life. The solution to the problem of psychological well-being is not to be found here.

But the Tenth Commandment is not intended to leave us with the *Via Negativa* of Buddhism and of some forms of mysticism. The Decalogue in our Bibles is written in a straight column. In experience it should be written in a circle so that the end leads on to the beginning. Why should a man not covet

his neighbour's goods? The answer is, "I am the Lord thy God." It is as the writer to the Hebrews expresses it, "Let your manner of life be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Hebrews xiii, 5). A man who has his all in God finds nothing to covet in that which is his neighbour's.

The Decalogue then is a wheel of life round which man may travel to perfection. Only the circumference of the wheel appears in the Commandments as they stand written. But every wheel has a hub, and the hub of this wheel is Jesus Christ. A man who seeks to travel round the circumference will find much help, but the man who finds his own centre in Christ will be taken to become a part of the wheel itself. When he fails to fulfil the Law, he is not plunged into despair, but finds peace and renewed well-being in true repentance and faith in Christ, who kept all the Law Himself, and yet who died for the sins of mankind who had broken the Law. And when he comes to the Law, he no longer comes with the thought, "The righteousness of the Law must be fulfilled *by* me," but, like St. Paul, he says, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled *in* me, as I walk in the new power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ within."

DISCUSSION:

The CHAIRMAN (Dr. E. WELLISCH) said: I have listened with the greatest interest and appreciation to the Rev. J. Stafford Wright's inspiring paper, and should like to congratulate him in your name on the winning of the Gunning Prize.

May I thank you for your kindness in inviting me, as a psychiatrist, to come and be chairman at this meeting. It is a great honour and joy for me to do so, because I believe that theology and psychology have very much in common.

Theology and Psychology not only have the same origin, but also the same aim. Unfortunately, however, both sciences move at present along separate ways, and are even in certain aspects hostile to each other. This split is a dangerous sign for the spiritual situation of our time.

The New Psychology has arrived to-day at a decisive stage, and the direction of its further development will be of immense importance for the future of our world. There is no doubt that Sigmund Freud's discoveries are of the highest ethical value, but it cannot be

denied that some features of psychoanalysis are liable to promote atheistic tendencies in predisposed persons. The religiosity of Jung is a great inspiration, but his belief amounts to polytheism, a fact which should not be underestimated. Unless the New Psychology can find that its roots lie in the Old Theology it will become a force dangerously undermining the religion of the Bible.

Also the New Theology is to-day at the cross roads. If it should continue to disregard the discoveries of science, of which psychology is an important branch, this would have dangerous consequences. Salvation is of the soul, and whatever facts the new psychology has revealed about the miraculous mechanisms of the soul should arouse a vital interest in theologians. This is not a question of academic interest only, but also of the greatest practical importance. The common man, in his search for healing from the mental stresses of this world, is turning in increasing measure for help no longer to the priest but the psychotherapist. Whilst the churches are empty, the psychiatric outpatient clinics are so full that they cannot meet their demands. The common man feels that the new psychology has something to offer which the Church lacks. Unless the Church will return to its ancient office of the sacrament of healing, and the clergy will take up the study of psychology seriously, it will promote the feeling of disappointment in the masses.

Of the many thoughts of the Rev. J. Stafford Wright's paper, I should like to discuss one in particular. It is the fourth point of significance in the First Commandment: "that there must be one dominating purpose to which all other aims are subservient." This is exactly the view of modern psychiatry as regards the integration of man. The integration of the psyche is most seriously disturbed in a form of insanity which is called "schizophrenia"—this means "split mind." In this disorder the belief in one purpose, one goal of life, is split. If man's belief in a dominating purpose is split he becomes slothful. Slothfulness was regarded by mediæval theology as one of the seven deadly sins, called "accedia." Slothfulness, however, is also a leading sign of schizophrenia. "Accedia" and "schizophrenia" are therefore largely the same notion. This example shows the great importance of a common approach to mental problems by theologians and psychiatrists.

It also shows that the cure of mental illness lies in the last instance

in religion. Not, however, in any kind of religion whatsoever, but in the only one which can redeem all mankind, the religion based on the Holy Decalogue.

Dr. B. F. C. ATKINSON said : I would like to make the following comment on the paper of my friend, Mr. J. Stafford Wright, which I have read with great interest and pleasure.

On page 135 he discusses the scope of the sixth commandment. I think he will find that the Greek word used in some of the quotations of this commandment in the New Testament has the sense of *to take human life*. The word is φονεύειν (phoneuein). It is difficult to suppose that we are intended to confine the sense to acts which artificial human legal codes define as " murder." At the same time, the use of the word appears to rule out any prohibition against the taking of animal life, such as Mr. Wright tentatively suggests may be intended. We may compare 2 Peter ii, 12. The limitations upon the scope of the commandment, which Mr. Wright very properly mentions, appear to me to have been inherent in the temporary dispensation of the law and to be parallel with divorce and polygamy, but to have been quite clearly swept away by the perfect ethical teaching of the New Testament.

Mrs. DOROTHY BEACH spoke at length. She drew attention to the difference between the moral and ritual law of Moses. She believed that the Sabbath was a part of the moral law and that it was not Jewish only. In evidence of this statement, she said that the ancient Babylonians kept the Sabbath. Therefore she did not think that Sunday could, in any sense, take the place of the Sabbath. The New Testament gave no countenance to the view that Jesus had altered the customary Sabbath observance. The law of Sunday was not enforced until A.D. 321, but on this matter a mistake had clearly been made. Even in the hereafter, the Scripture showed that the Sabbath, not Sunday, would be observed.

Dr. NORMAN S. DENHAM said : It is doubtful whether the question of the incidence of the Sabbath observance as enjoined in the Decalogue is entirely relevant to our discussion, but one would make some observations in respect of Mrs. Dorothy Beach's statement that even Mary the mother of the Lord Jesus was so concerned as to

keeping Sabbath that she refrained from anointing the body of Jesus, in order to observe it faithfully. It is to be noted, however, that Joseph and Nicodemus handled the body of our Lord, thus incurring ceremonial defilement. Regarding works of necessity or mercy, did not the Lord say that if an ox or ass fell into a pit, the Jews would certainly rescue it if the accident befell on a Sabbath ?

Nine of the commandments are reiterated in the New Testament, but not the fourth. The only case in which it is mentioned, apart from its spiritual keeping in Hebrews iv, 9, is in Colossians ii, 16, where Paul exhorts that no one should judge another concerning keeping the Sabbath day. In Romans iv, he refers to the same matter, saying that one regards it while another does not.

However, Mary did not rest because of the weekly Sabbath, but because of the Paschal Sabbath, 15th Nisan. The command which she obeyed (Luke xxiii, 56) is seen in Leviticus xxiii, 7. Not only was the Passover day when our Lord suffered a holy day, but on the following day no servile work was to be done. Accordingly, Mary and the women rested on that day. In A.D. 30, the year of the Crucifixion, the Passover fell on a Wednesday, as many are aware. Thus Mary rested on Thursday, the 15th Nisan, and the women were at liberty to purchase and prepare spices on the Friday.

Mrs. Ellen G. White writes under supposed inspiration in her *Early Writings* and in *The Desire of Ages* that Christ rose on the first day of the week. Careful examination of Matthew xxviii, 1, will evidence that Christ had risen ere the first day of the week drew on (*epiphoskō*), the same word being used in Luke xxiii, 54. Reference to Matthew xii, 40, assures us that our Lord's body had lain in the grave exactly three days and three nights from the evening of the Passover day. Dr. Torrey, among many others, was fully assured of this.

As our Lecturer has truly noted, the Fourth Commandment is a notorious centre of debate. Surely, in this Dispensation of Grace, as he well remarks, the rest now envisaged is not that of outward form or incidence of dates, but in the heart's sense of rest in Christ's redemptive work, now finished.

Mr. RATTENBURY said that there was a suggestion in the mind of the common man that psychology has something that Christianity has not. This is a fallacy.

Dr. ERNEST WHITE said: Mr. Stafford Wright has made an important contribution to thought in his careful analysis of the Decalogue and the relation of its components to psychological theories.

There are three points I should like to make.

Mr. Stafford Wright is doubtful about Jung's belief in God. Many of Jung's statements on this subject are ambiguous, but it must be remembered that he deals with psychology and not with theology. In his book, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, he lays it down as one of the necessary qualifications of a practising psychotherapist that he should believe in God, from which we may safely infer that he himself believes in God.

Secondly, in these days when the old moral standards are being called into question on every hand, and spoken of as old fashioned and out of date, it is important to stress the fact that the keeping of God's laws makes for mental health and social stability. How necessary for health is one day's rest in seven! I have more than once been consulted by Christian ministers and others who were suffering from breakdown because they failed to observe this law, working all day every day, Sundays included.

Then again, breakdown in marriage often leads to serious consequences, not only in the emotional life of the divorced or separated couple, but in the children of the union. Stability in home life is most important for the mental growth and stability of the children.

Many patients who consult me have suffered in childhood from the unhappiness of divided homes, or were themselves illegitimate, and it was in the insecurity attendant on unhappy and divided homes in early childhood that the seeds of later neurosis were sown.

Thirdly, it should be emphasised that God does not impose His laws upon us in an arbitrary manner, like a tyrant imposing his will upon unhappy subjects in a harsh and unreasonable way. God loves and understands His creatures, and knows what is best for their ultimate good and happiness. In giving His laws, He has at heart the highest welfare of mankind, both individually and socially. The great principles of the Decalogue are psychologically sound, and make for mental health and stability.

Mr. C. E. A. TURNER said: The author's excellent argument suggests that the well-being of the child demands that the Decalogue

be a definite part of modern education, to be taught authoritatively, sympathetically and with understanding. Its divine principles, intended for the good of man, should not only be learned by heart from early years and practised in the home and school, but also expounded to form an intelligent and intelligible foundation for the child's future.

Author's Reply.

I should like to thank those who have contributed to this discussion, and particularly the Chairman and Dr. White for what they have said from the standpoint of applied psychology.

Dr. Basil Atkinson, in adducing the use of *phoneuein* in the New Testament, has produced a piece of evidence that I had overlooked, and I agree with what he says in this connection.

To discuss the whole question of the Sabbath and Sunday would require a paper in itself. When Mrs. Dorothy Beach says that "Sunday worship was introduced in A.D. 321 . . .," she has failed to distinguish between legal introduction and prevailing practice. Constantine enforced Sunday worship as a Christian measure because Christians already met for their services on that day. The evidence of the early Christian writers soon after New Testament times is that Sunday was the day when they met. So far as the New Testament goes it seems to me that Colossians ii, 16, 17, is the vital passage. Paul definitely asserts that the Sabbath in itself was only a shadow or type, and, like other Old Testament types, it has been fulfilled by Jesus Christ. The only way of evading the plain sense of this passage is to say that Paul was referring to the extra Sabbaths of certain festivals, and was not alluding to the weekly Sabbath. To my mind such a limited use would be impossible without qualification in the context. If one speaks to a Jew about the Sabbath, or Sabbaths, he would be bound to suppose that one was speaking of the weekly Sabbaths. Certainly he could not suppose that these were excluded.

I would not deny that Jewish customs lingered on amongst Hebrew Christians. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles bear witness to this, especially with circumcision. So far as A.D. 70 is concerned, Jerusalem was still Jewish, and even Christians who did not observe the Sabbath would find their movements restricted

on the Sabbath day. This would account for the reference in Matthew xxiv, 20.

Dr. Norman Denham has taken up the point about the *paraskeue*, though I do not agree with him about the day of the Crucifixion.

I think that the question of the Babylonian Sabbath is not so simple as Miss Beach implies. One of the latest books that deals with it is Dr. Norman Snaith's *The Jewish New Year Festival.*