

WAR.

Power and the glory of huge motion fill him, fill utterly with massive single sensation. A cup seeking fulness, a glad mirror crowded with burning light, utterness of sense, of realization, hungers in him.

Of hugeness, demonstration, war, this man is glad; glad of its certainty, its massive will, its proof, its storm. War disturbs terribly man's moderations.

BEYOND PROTESTANTISM.¹

BY EDWARD SCRIBNER AMES.

A SURVEY of the changes in the underlying conceptions and convictions of religion suggests that we are in the midst of a vast movement of man's spiritual life, which is fully as profound as the Reformation in which Luther led the revolt against Catholicism, or as the transformation of early primitive Christianity by its acceptance of the instruments and methods of Greek philosophy.

In order to appreciate what is carrying the development of Protestant Christianity beyond the bounds of Protestantism it may be helpful to glance at the Catholicism of the Middle Ages, from which Protestantism arose. There were two important factors in Catholicism. One was the doctrine of the depravity of human nature, and the other was the conviction that the Church and its sacraments offered the means by which man's sinful nature could be redeemed from this wicked world and made fit for heaven above. The Church surrounded the child from infancy and offered its good offices as the means of grace. Through baptism the child experienced birth out of its inherited evil nature into spiritual life. Through confirmation he advanced to mature strength. In the Eucharist or Lord's Supper the inner life was renewed and nourished. Man's nature was held to be so deeply sinful that the cure of his maladies required also penance and extreme unction. Further, special consecration was needed for those who were to bear offspring and this was provided in the sacrament of marriage. The seventh sacrament was that of ordination by which one was given the spiritual qualities necessary to the priesthood and the various clerical duties.

¹ The reader will find the views expressed in this article elaborated in the writer's book *The New Orthodoxy*, just published.

Protestantism as seen in its first great leader, Martin Luther, was a protest against the second feature of Catholicism, against the plan of trying to obtain and develop the spiritual life by these sacraments or good works. Against the first principle of Catholicism, namely, the depravity of human nature, he made no protest but accepted and accentuated it. With him, as with the older system, there was complete agreement as to man's original sin and inherited taint and deformity. Luther's disagreement with the Church was as to the means of salvation. He repudiated the good works, the priestly offices, and the mortifications of the flesh as the way of salvation. For him, salvation was an absolutely free gift of God's grace. "The just shall live by faith" were the words which rang in his soul until he understood them as the real way of deliverance. Man feels himself a helpless sinner, impotent and unworthy, without means of salvation and justification. Then he comes into contact with Christ. "Christ took all our sins upon Him and for them dies upon the cross." When a sinful man sees this innocent Son of God borne down by the sin and sorrow of others, the sinner feels the pangs of his own guilt. Through remorse and contrition he is led to experience faith in Christ and by this faith, he becomes one with Christ. "incorporated in Christ," and all that Christ has is his. From this new life in Christ good works flow as a natural consequence. They are not the source of salvation but the fruits. We perform them not to acquire merit but as the natural, spontaneous expression of our love and faith.

Since this faith is an experience in the heart of the believer, he is not dependent upon priest or pope. Therefore Luther discarded the distinction between the clergy and the laity. He also went beyond Catholicism in holding that a Christian man who has been redeemed from his sinful nature, may enter into the life of society with full consistency. He should marry and engage in business and in affairs of State. Such a life is not inferior to the seclusion of the monastery or the convent. The common pursuits of daily existence are avenues of religious service for a Christian man, for one whose life has been transformed.

After Luther's time, Protestantism approached Catholicism again in its doctrines of authority and of the ordinances. The old dogma of man's inherent sinfulness continued, and more importance was attached to baptism and the Eucharist. One may say that the orthodox Protestant position to-day is that man is impotent in himself, because of his sinfulness, to attain salvation. He needs the aid of a divine Saviour, through whose love and sacrifice he may be

saved. Specific directions for appropriating this saving power of Christ are found in the Bible. Whatever the Bible teaches is to be accepted, whatever it forbids is forbidden, and only where it is silent does man have freedom to follow his own opinion. That opinion, however, is not the judgment of the natural man but of one who has been transformed by divine grace. This explains the deep hostility which orthodoxy feels toward the good moral man who is sometimes an eminent character in the community. He may be an upright and honorable citizen, generous in his charities, responsive to public need and to the call of public duty, a faithful husband and a kind father, but not a member of any church. Abraham Lincoln was of that type. The churches cannot be comfortable in the presence of such a man. They are unable to acknowledge the genuineness and value of his goodness. He is an unconverted man, an unregenerate soul. He has never acknowledged the need of the divine institution of the Church to insure his place in the spiritual kingdom, and therefore he remains outside, a child of the world and under the condemnation of his sinful nature. Such a person is often pointed out as the most subtle and deadly foe of true religion. His very virtues become dangerous because they may influence others to remain in an unsaved state. A vicious, degraded man of the world would be more tolerable for he would at least be repulsive and unattractive.

Just the clear statement of these conspicuous features of Protestantism is sufficient to make men of the modern spirit shrink and withhold their full allegiance. There is doubtless much in and about orthodox Protestant churches which attracts them. There are family ties and congenial social attachments. The philanthropies and social service and spiritual aspirations all make their appeal. But the doctrines are distasteful. They seem remote and unconvincing. The churches appear to nourish certain impossible estimates of human life and of the present world. Religious leaders have not been insensitive to this. They have introduced gymnasiums and amusement parlors and reading-rooms and night schools. They have moving pictures. Gradually they have lessened emphasis upon doctrines and creeds, upon the necessity of conversion and the observance of the ordinances. The candidates for membership are examined less thoroughly as to their "experience," and the number of ministers and members is increasing who are cherishing, consciously or unconsciously, a fundamentally different feeling about religion and the Church. In this quiet, steady process of the secularization of religion Protestantism as a definite body of doctrines

and practices is passing away. That which is coming in its place has scarcely been named. One writer calls it the religion of the spirit, in contrast to the old religions of authority and of the letter. Others call it the new social religion, and still others name it the religion of democracy and the religion of man. A few would like to have it known as the religion of science, or free religion, or simply natural religion.

I shall call it here the religion of the spirit, not forgetting that it is also social and democratic and natural and scientific and free. Neither should it be forgotten that it is, in the best sense, Biblical and Christian.

This religion of the spirit stands in most marked contrast to Protestantism, and to Catholicism as well, in the fact that it feels itself to be natural to man. It accepts the view of modern psychology and ethics, both of which reject the doctrine of the innate sinfulness and evil disposition of the child. It holds that the infant should be regarded as an open possibility for good or for evil according to his environment, his education, and his experience in life. If of normal physique and mentality he may be expected to respond to intelligent, sympathetic direction and instruction. He will be naturally affectionate and imaginative, active and idealistic. Growing up among earnest reasonable Christian people he will see the attractiveness of the character of Jesus and respond to his heroism and to his vision of human brotherhood. He will naturally be drawn into the association of those who cherish the same ideals and who band themselves together in the church to labor for the coming of the gracious kingdom of love and beauty. He will have a divine passion for serving his fellow men as is the case with multitudes of teachers, nurses, physicians, social workers, artists, and scholars who have grown quite naturally into their enthusiasm and lifelong devotion.

Such an individual is not the ruthless superman of Nietzsche. He is conscious of his own limitations and failures and cruel mistakes. Suffering and remorse chasten him, but he seeks strength and courage and wisdom to renew his efforts. The pain of the world pierces his heart, but he does not accept it as wholly inevitable or as entirely beyond human power to correct. Like the patriot and the social reformer, he, too, labors for an incipient and unpopular cause, believing that it will become more powerful and more beneficent.

Modern knowledge of the history of religion strengthens faith in such a religion of the spirit. All peoples, even the most primi-

tive, have their rites and ceremonials which idealize their life and extend the horizon of their world. Sometimes these religions are crude and occasionally they are vicious from the standpoint of more developed civilizations, but the impressive things are their organization and control, their social sympathy and idealization. The missionaries among the more developed cultures of India and China and Japan find many sentiments and customs in the religions of those lands which they can endorse and incorporate in their interpretation of Christianity. Just as family affection and honest dealings within the group and regard for public opinion prevail throughout the world, so it is found that God has not left Himself without witness. When modern Christianity is presented adequately to people in the most diverse places it finds response in the natural sentiments of gratitude and of eager faith. It is beginning to be apparent that in so far as Protestantism has virtually prefaced its appeal to the races of men with the doctrine of depravity it has stood in its own way and wasted measureless energy and emotion. How much more attractive is the figure of Jesus surrounded by the crowd of hardened faces, saying "Let the little children come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He never administered any purificatory rites to overcome the evil nature of men before they could join his company. On the contrary, he said to them, "Come and follow me," "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Human nature has changed since then, but it has not become so depraved and sinful that a new method of joining the company of Jesus is necessary. It was as easy and as natural to become a follower of Jesus in his day as it is to matriculate in a free public school now. The religion of the spirit which is taking possession of the churches in our time repudiates the fundamental Protestant doctrine of original sin and substitutes in its place a vital faith in the idealism and spiritual energy of unfallen human nature.

This new form of Christianity, in the second place, is free. It is free from dependence upon the Church and its sacraments, as Luther held. That is, man does not languish in the bonds of original sin and remain there helpless until brought to the spiritual birth by baptism and the other sacraments of the Church. But neither does he depend upon some supernatural gift of grace as Luther and as Protestantism have taught. The light of divine love and aspiration is in and about every normal human being. "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It is not necessary that a miracle be wrought upon every

soul before it can believe in the love and righteousness of Christ or have saving faith. As Jesus himself knew, the natural human soul, whether child or publican or nobleman or harlot or thief on the cross, had the capacity to hear his voice and to follow him even if it should be at first afar off. He said, "If any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink." It was the old prophetic call straight to the heart of mankind, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

The Protestant view despised and pitied human nature; the newer view asserts the value and dignity of man and has faith in his capacity to advance through the unfolding of his native powers, taught by the great teachers of the race. This is the same conviction which has made for the new order in the State. The traditional conviction was that only those who had been divinely appointed and empowered should rule, but the modern State is founded upon the natural and inalienable rights of all men. Democracy rests upon the sense of the power and wisdom and justice potentially present in all citizens. The great political revolutions of recent centuries and those now in progress are the struggles of the masses of men to take possession of their own and to develop their native resources of mind and soul with full freedom and by the authority of their own experience and ideals.

Protestantism in seeking freedom from dependence upon the Church wrought a new bondage to the Bible. The religion of the spirit proclaims freedom here also. The Bible is accepted to-day by thoughtful people of all churches with discrimination. It is recognized that in this vast collection of scripture there is great diversity. It shows differences of culture and of spiritual ideals. In some parts social institutions are enjoined and allowed which in other parts are condemned and prohibited. Animal sacrifice, human slavery, polygamy, war and violence, are sanctioned in some records of the Old Testament and denounced at least in spirit in the New Testament. We have learned to test all sayings by our most enlightened standards. We do not accept everything which the Apostle Paul says as of supreme importance, nor because he wrote some things which seem unimportant, do we therefore abandon him entirely. We are not much concerned about his views of marriage and of woman, but we cherish with genuine appreciation his psalm of love in the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians. Or again the scholars may have proved that the Fourth Gospel, the

Gospel of John, is not so early as the Synoptics and that it is probably a less accurate record of the sayings and deeds of Jesus, but nevertheless we often find it richer and deeper and more persuasive, more satisfying to the heart.

Not only is this religion of the spirit free in its rejection of the authority of the letter of Scripture. It is free also in its appropriation and creation of other literature. Men are still writing psalms and hymns of faith. We use in our devotion the lyric poetry of Tennyson, Longfellow, Whittier, Goethe, and a host of other poets. Their words inspire and illuminate us. Similarly we employ the literature of our statesmen, moralists, and dramatists to refresh our souls and to direct our wills. They are our living prophets, and we have no doubt that they too speak inspired messages.

A third characteristic of the religion which is superseding Protestantism is its relation to the social order. Luther did indeed approve of Christians entering into marriage and into business and industry. But he felt that they were able to do this safely because they had first been "saved" and regenerated. He did not regard society itself as sacred. The present world remained for him a foreign and hostile realm. It was only the special grace of God in the hearts of men which could enable them to participate in this common life.

The newer spirit of religion regards this social order as itself sharing in the divine life. It regards patriotism and labor and art as inherently sacred, sacred because they contribute to the fulfilment of man's larger and nobler life. Existing social institutions are not perfect. They are in the keeping of finite and fallible hands, but they are the organs and instruments of our corporate life. They preserve the finest fruits of the long struggle of the race up from savagery and superstition. The modern Christian therefore takes them in good faith and with full enthusiasm. He is entirely in earnest when he asserts that he has abolished the distinction between the secular and the sacred. To him all life, all occupations, are saturated with ideal meaning, with tender spiritual intimacy and aspiration.

Therefore there is a new *rapprochment* between science and religion. Protestantism was doubtful of the value and validity of science. Even to this day one may find survivals of that old suspicion of learning and of inventions and the arts. But religion is becoming conscious that natural science is the instrument and workman of our wonderful modern social progress. It is destined to include the experimenters, discoverers, and inventors with its apostles,

prophets, and martyrs. It is becoming apparent that modern medicine, especially in foreign lands, is like the healing hand of Christ himself, and that the introduction of sanitation, efficient agriculture, better political systems, together with education and the fine arts is transforming the waste places of Christian and of heathen lands. All of this gives substance and vitality to the spiritual life. It makes objective and commanding the kingdom of brotherhood and of mutual love and service which Christianity has proclaimed. It brings a new unity and an unprecedented assurance and hope into the message and the ideals of Christianity.

The passing order was negative, it was a reaction against the old, while the new is positive and is constructively moving forward to new achievements and creations. The old despised human nature; the new trusts it and labors for its development. The old relied upon external authority and was in bondage to the past and to the Scriptures; the new is free from all authority of that kind and is controlled from within by conscience and reason and the law of love. The old viewed this world as a desert and foreign land to the soul; the new regards human society as the developing kingdom of God, in which the spirit of Jesus reigns more powerfully and more completely.

This religion of the spirit has not emerged in any one organization or party. It is not identical with any of the liberal groups such as the Unitarians, Ethical Culture Society, or rationalistic societies. Much less is it particularly represented by Christian Science or Theosophy or any of the archaic Oriental cults which are sporadic in a mixed and restless population like our own. Rather this coming development of Christianity is that which is already represented in the progressive parties of all the great evangelical bodies. These parties are constituted of those who are possessed of the modern mind either through their education in the schools or by their reading and practical contacts with life. This modern mind is characterized by understanding sympathy with modern natural and social science and with the history of religious and social institutions. Men of this type together with those who are sympathetic and responsive toward their leadership, constitute today a large company in all denominations, and these people have more in common with those of the same temper in the various religious bodies than they have with the traditionalists of their own communions.

But this characterization of the new tendency would be misleading if it gave the impression that we are entering upon a revival

of the older intellectualism or rationalism. While it has of necessity an intellectual aspect, it is something far richer and more human than that term suggests. This new movement has the fervor and piety of evangelical orthodoxy, but it is a social and not merely an individualistic enthusiasm. It is as serious as Puritanism but it is more artistic and cultivates a nobler ritual and liturgy. It has missionary zeal and courage, but it is not merely blind and ruthless toward other faiths, nor does it restrict itself to evangelism alone. It cultivates educational missions and medical missions and industrial missions, and seeks to transmit to the less fortunate of the earth the full cubic contents of our Christian civilization.

This form of Christianity, which promises to identify itself with the twentieth century, is already revitalizing the churches, enlisting devout laymen and eager college youth. It proclaims its message in the language of the time and it meets a response from the soul of the people, which proves that men are beginning to rejoice again in religion as a natural possession and a transforming power.

PRAYER.

BY JOHN DENMARK.

I PRAY every Sunday with my people. As we pray together for fellowship, peace, and faith, there comes upon me the joy of yearning with them for something beyond the pain of to-day. I feel that their hearts respond with mine in a great longing. When I have in my prayer much of tenderness and sympathy, I know that they are better satisfied with the morning's worship. But as I pray for ideals, I know that they are often begging for to-morrow's selfish victory. They believe that God will change the course of the universe to satisfy their wants. Because of my prayer they are failing to look reality in the face. I am a beggar leading beggars.

So I have stopped praying except when I must. I sit in my chair sometimes and try to think to God but I no longer try to find Him upon my knees. I seem to find more of God in the world when I am standing erect.

There is a tender mood that comes upon men when they think of the passing of their lives like a shadow. We have learned to call the mood reverence, and prayer has become its accepted form among nearly all races. It is the formal tribute of man to the Great Unknown that grips the destiny of us all. It is our common way