

PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

BY LESLIE A. WHITE

THERE have been, in general, three kinds of theories advanced by sociologists in the past to account for the motives and mechanisms of human association. These have dealt with race, psychology and environment. None, however, has proved entirely adequate. In recent years, a group of students of Man, the American anthropologists, have attacked and seriously threatened these older sociological concepts. By their investigations of exotic peoples, they have shown quite clearly that these theories fall far short of the universality of application to which they aspire. The neglect of sociologists to appropriate anthropological data has been pointed out by H. E. Barnes¹ and C. A. Ellwood.² In a recent article in the *American Journal of Sociology*,³ Messrs. Herskovits and Willey have developed this theme to considerable length. They also state (p. 189) that certain anthropologists have become quite dissatisfied with the older sociological theories and have begun to advance, in their stead, theories of their own. Such men as Kroeber and Wissler are examples of this tendency.

It has been maintained by Ogburn⁴ that man's biological equipment is practically a constant, both among the several races now and among those of the past for many thousands of years. Culture, however is an actively varying factor. When we say that man's biological equipment is a constant, we admit that it varies between certain limits, both in the life of an individual, and over a long period of time, but we maintain that these limits are comparatively narrow, and that they remain practically equal, both from the point of view of the several races now, and of a perspective of many thousand years.

As Professor Dewey observes in his *Human Nature and Conduct* (p. 14), "Breathing is an affair of the air as truly as of the lungs;

¹ "Development of Historical Sociology," *Pub. Am. Socio. Soc.*, Vol. XVI, pp. 26-34.

² "Theories of Cultural Evolution," *Am. Jour. Sociol.*, 1918, pp. 799ff.

³ "Cultural Approach to Sociology," *Am. Jour. Sociol.*, Vol. XXIX, pp 188ff.

⁴ *Social Change* (Huebsch), pp. 130-142.

digesting an affair of food as truly as of tissues of the stomach. Walking implicates the ground as well as the legs." These significant facts are often ignored. Similarly, there is action and reaction between culture and biological equipment in any human situation. Since of these two factors, the biological is the constant, and the cultural is the variable, an understanding of civilization is practically a knowledge of cultural history. This conclusion which is warmly defended by Mr. Kroeber, is, no doubt, a trifle extreme and not in strict accord with logic, but nevertheless it affords a very efficient working hypothesis from which to approach sociological problems.

Since the civilization that a people will have is a matter of cultural history rather than of instinctive equipment or organic superiority, may we not translate this concept into psychology and assume here that the kind of personality one will have depends more upon his cultural or situational setting than upon his nervous system or his digestion? Just as any race or people has potentially the biological capacity for any type of culture, so does the individual have an undifferentiated physiological capacity for personality, the form and shape it will have when developed depending upon the environmental situations under which he is reared. Just as we are beginning now to attack collective problems from the standpoint of cultural history and not of biology and psychology, so we must shift our emphasis from the physiological side of the individual to the cultural or situational phases which condition the development of personality and shape its final form. Of course, it is well known that many psychiatrists recognize the existence of these non-physiological factors, but none give it a place of prime importance, and among the orthodox, academic psychologists, it is ignored almost entirely.

None of the older psychologists gave an account of personality, as such, at all in their books, though they did, of course, give an account of such things as habit, etc., which are involved in personality make-up. We find no chapter on personality in the books of James, Titchener, Pillsbury, nor others of their day, despite the fact that psychology is supposed to deal with the organism as a whole which in human beings is essentially the personality. Professor Woodworth, in his *Psychology, A Study of Mental Life*, is about the first of the academic psychologists to include a chapter on personality among the usual ones on will, emotions, etc. In this chapter, he refers to personality as an "intangible something" and gives as the factors in its make-up (1) physique, (2) chemique, (3) in-

instincts, and (4) intelligence—all physiological factors. McDougall would describe personality in terms of instincts and emotions. Watson has a chapter entitled "Personality and Its Disturbance" in his book, *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist*. He thinks of personality as the functioning of the organism as a whole in its environment (p. 392), but his attention is primarily on the physiological organism and only incidentally concerned with the conditioning effect of the environment. In a section, "A Possible Hint from Mechanics," he compares the human organism to a machine, to illustrate how the parts function together and how they act as a whole. This is indicative of his attention and emphasis on the physiological basis rather than upon the cultural factors.

Kempf thinks of personality in terms of autonomic segmental cravings. He has presented this view admirably in his *Autonomic Functions and the Personality*. Cannon is considered as having made a great contribution to psychology by his physiological researches set forth in *Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear and Rage*. Postural tonus and muscular tension which Sherrington discusses in his *Integrative Action of the Nervous System* are also considered as being important factors in personality make-up. Perhaps this physiological interpretation of personality has been carried to the most extreme degree by some of the endocrinologists, for example, Berman, in his *Glands Regulating Personality*. He would have us believe that the world needs merely to await further investigation by the endocrinologist in order to control human nature and direct the destiny of man!

Any equation in which the product is the result of two or more factors can not be understood by considering only one of these factors. We could not understand water, steam and ice by merely analyzing them into their chemical components hydrogen and oxygen; temperature and pressure must be taken into account. The future of a cell, or group of cells, in a developing egg is not only a matter of bio-chemistry, but of position relative to the other cells. Thus a group of cells in an egg may be shifted into another position (before the differentiating process spreads from the blastospore) so that cells which originally would have formed the eyes, will now form a segment in the spine; cells that would formerly have gone to form skin will instead form brain tissue, etc.⁵ It is the environmental forces and situations that produce and condition the final differentiated form.

Just as psycho-biological explanations have been found inade-

quate to explain the difference between the Mongolians, the Bantus, the Nordics, and the Italians, so are interpretations of personality differences in terms of neurones, ductless glands, etc., inadequate. As it has been found necessary to introduce the methods of the culture historian into problems of collective human behavior, so should the psychologist turn his attention to the cultural and situational factors of personality rather than the physiological. This is logically reasonable since the latter is relatively a constant whereas the former is a variable of wide range.

Why do one people have a mother-in-law avoidance rule and not another? Why do some tribes care tenderly for their aged, while other tribes kill those approaching senility? Psycho-biological explanations of these questions as well as of the practice of head-hunting, the ghost dance, etc., have not sufficed to account for these traits, while cultural history has done much to supply a solution.

Why does one boy grow up thinking it wrong to steal while another does not? Why does one person bow before authority all his life whereas another asserts aggressively his independence? Why does one and not another possess a castration complex? These questions have been answered in terms of the endocrine glands, but in practically the same way that differences in civilization were explained in terms of biological superiority.

Can any difference be found in the glandular make-up of a homosexual and a heterosexual? Can the fact that one boy grows up with an ungovernable temper while another controls his be explained in terms of physiology? Can the fact that a boy never succeeds in transferring his affectional attachment from his mother to another woman, and hence never marries, be explained in glandular or neurological terms?

Our contention is that the average normal human being is practically a physiological constant, that he presents from the fertilization of the egg a great degree of physiological undifferentiation. The environmental and situational factors condition the process of development and final end. The average individual has the potential capacity for any of many different types of personality, just as a people, race or group possess relatively undifferentiated capacity for any one of several different kinds of culture.

The situation in psychology has been much the same as in sociology. Thinkers have failed to take account of the cultural factors,

⁵ H. S. Jennings, Lecture at New School for Social Research, April 21, 1924.

and have sought to explain race, group and civilization differences in terms of psycho-biology. In almost every instance they have erred or their treatment has been inadequate, as Boas, Lowie and Ogburn have pointed out. In psychology the emphasis has been, and still is, upon the physiological side. This is justifiable insofar as man is an animal, but he is more than this. He is a unique animal. He alone uses tools and he alone possesses an articulate language⁶—in short, possesses a culture. Man has a *personality* in addition to an *animality*. This personality is something that is built-up; a process of complex habit functioning of *both the organism and the cultural environment*. Analyzing the organism into nerves, glands and organs will no more tell you what kind of a personality will be developed than a knowledge of metals and mechanics will tell you, of given material, whether an automobile or a rotary press will be manufactured. A personality is the result of a process, a growth and development, just as a culture or a civilization is the result of a process which is not simply biological. In this process the physiological organism is only one of the factors which go to make up personality. The other is a complex set of environmental situations. Just as in a collective study we regarded the biological factor as a relative constant and the historic-cultural process as the variable, so in studying the individual (generic term) we may regard the physiological factor as a constant, within comparatively narrow limits, while the other, the environmental situations vary widely indeed. For example, the glandular, nervous and digestive systems of individuals differ within comparatively narrow limits, while the environmental situations under which they are born and reared vary extremely. The multitude of ways and instances in which a child's or youth's emotions may be conditioned or fixed in this way or that, and the many and diverse habit formations and combinations which situational expedience may occasion is astounding.

Of course, a knowledge of physiology is both commendable and justifiable, but in view of the fact that about eighty per cent of the neuroses and psychoses are of a functional—non-physiological—nature,⁷ and in consideration of the relative efficiency of physiological and environmental situational factors in producing personality, it would seem expedient for the psychologist to make the shift of emphasis from the physiological to the cultural or *situational* factors as the more dynamic sociologists are trying to do.

⁶ Boas, *Mind of Primitive Man*, p. 96.

⁷ *Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the State Hospital Commission, State of New York*, p. 129.

BELOVED TRUTHS AND HATED TRUTH

BY B. H. SOMERVILLE

IS THE world's civilization one-tenth as safe from destruction as it is complex? Are we certain that there are sufficient forces of authority and discipline in the world to insure civilization from any of the many forms of decay and death which may come upon it? Do we feel sufficiently sure of civilization to leave its very greatest problems to be faced by the mere handful of men who alone now face them? Will the next dark age be permanent?

Let us remember that those who seem most willing that civilization be risked are generally those who are quickest to abandon all hope for civilization, when the fullness of its dangers becomes apparent. We do not have to go far to find men who take it for granted that the rapid strides of science bear positive proof that the present civilization is in the best of health. These men say that the present spread of education insures against there ever again being a dark age. How can there be darkness when the world is aglow with knowledge, when every man has his daily papers and his magazines? They tell us again and again that the curve of scientific progress resembles a parabola, that science progresses at a cumulative rate. And when we question the safety of civilization they think it is because we have overlooked this curve of scientific progress.

But remind these men that life is primarily a struggle of will. Show them that the scientific and intellectual struggle is but the peak of humanity's mountain of struggle. Then it becomes easier to tell them that a vast wealth of knowledge, of science, may well accumulate while men do yet decay. For have not mountains collapsed and peaks been lost?

And, if their faith in science has not grown into what psychologists call a compulsion, these men can perhaps be persuaded to come down to fundamentals, to confine their arguments as to civilization's

safety to the moral aspect. Many men will retain their faith in science. For faith in science is very pleasant. In fact, it is very exhilarating. And when a man is pleased and exhilarated he is pleasing to others. Hence he draws many others to him and to his faith.

But more important is the fact that the man becomes habituated to his faith with its exhilaration, just as men become habituated to coffee and to alcoholic drinks. Though he be advised that his faith is a fool's paradise, yet does he feel great pain at losing it.

Having been brought to see that the value of science is nil when morality is ebbing, these men are, of course, anxious to discover that morality is not ebbing. Their interest in morality's actual advance is not nearly so great, however. Thus their ideas of sustained human welfare seem still to be centered about scientific progress, and not about moral progress. As long as the world can be shown to be growing no worse morally they are satisfied. They do not like the idea that when morality is not actually moving forward it is, somewhere within itself, slipping backward.

And it is not difficult to believe that morality is even growing. Do we not see more written about morality now than ever before? And do we find it necessary to remind ourselves that more is written on practically every subject now than ever before?

From the idea of decay and death the mind tends to shrink and turn aside. Only minds in fine discipline remain unaffected when they contemplate the return to dust. Mankind as a whole in like manner shrinks and turns from the idea of a possible future decay and death. And as long as the world allows itself to swallow intoxicating doctrines of universal freedom it is especially certain to believe itself far better than it is. Blind to its own steady decay, it will ever laugh at the past and ignore the future.

Nor should we be surprised to find that those who have had such overflowing hope have now no hope at all. For the same pleasure that was realized in the ease accompanying overflowing hope can be realized in some measure in the complete abandonment of all hope, with all the great effort that hope incites men to make in the face of great danger. Hope is not pleasant when it makes men put forth painful effort. And men not accustomed to painful effort cannot easily bear such hope. Instead they cry, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry."

After all, the great dark age that seems to be coming upon us is absolutely different from the dark ages of the past. In the past it was the intellect that was darkened. It was knowledge that was

destroyed. Life became more difficult in the sense of becoming more strenuous and bare. Necessities became luxuries, and luxuries things of a past paradise. For this very reason the will of humanity was kept brightly polished in good exercise. There were indeed few pleasures, few temptations to take life easy.

But the dark age now threatening us is a dark age of the will. Intellectual achievement may attain to untold brilliancy, and science may shine forth on all sides. Science may mirror to man vast dominions awaiting his conquest—awaiting his conquest if he but maintains his strength of will, his deep strength called morality.

But the flashing of man's intellect, his science, tends to obscure the great "if." And man accepts as promised and guaranteed to him that land which is even now slipping from his hand. His expectation runs high, his strength runs low.

Let us see where man is failing, where his will is going down. We will see two phases of this failing, both of them exceedingly important. One phase is the inverse selection of the mediocre and the unfit for survival. Every increase in this so-called civilization tends to intensify this phase, to take a greater and yet greater toll of the fittest and noblest specimens of the race. In the selection of the fittest physical specimens for war, and the destruction that tends to come most surely to men according as they are brave, we see the general tendency of our civilization writ large.

Moral fitness makes also for physical and mental fitness, as may easily be understood. Probably long before Socrates, did men observe that wisdom leads to goodness and goodness to wisdom. And virtues, since they demand a certain exertion, tend in general to make men strong of body. Evil and laziness have always been intimately associated.

Therefore, when the most morally fit men are destroyed the race is weakened not only morally, but as well mentally and physically. When men die in their self-sacrifices the race tends to lose in three distinct ways.

If it happens that sacrifices are in any way *imposed* upon the morally fittest minority, the effect is quite the same. The fact that the majority does not like being accused of imposing upon a minority does not at all change things. The rule of the majority has long been noted for ingratitude.

Besides, is not the world learning to accept that the will of the majority is always right? Does not the majority believe that its very *desire* to do a thing gives it the right to do that thing? Does

not the majority do just what it condemned in Louis the Fourteenth—does it not call itself “the state,” “the people,” “the world”? This is indeed an age of the majority—an age of the majority, the flesh and the devil.

How does the majority impose sacrifices upon the most morally fit minority? It is by urging this minority on with *unfair urges*, by broadcasting appeals to motives which it is the morally fittest who possess in greatest degree. It is by appealing to the great storehouses of courage, of pain-enduring, of deep effort-making. Furthermore, the majority often destroys its benefactors with little hesitation. More than one Caesar has been destroyed by a multitude of inferiors.

Not only this, but the sacrifices of the morally fittest are not made good, either to them or to their groups. There is almost no true reward. Many hidden guns of resentment are pointed at the men who are ostentatiously given a chance to accept the full reward that is their right and desert. And if the deserving sense such to be the case and refuse reward, the refusal is readily interpreted as being the true will of the deserving men, rather than the reflection of the will of the world which owes reward.

If the deserving men happen to be consumed in their self-sacrifices, it is regarded as being rather unnecessary to reward their *groups*. “No man should be rewarded merely because his *ancestors* were great,” says the world, and why, indeed, should any man be rewarded merely because of his brothers and associates?” And we are left to infer that great men have no desire that reward come to their descendants, their kindred, or their associates—that when great men are lost there is no possible way in which to reward them through rewarding other people in whom they had interest.

Rewards are nothing in reality save attempts to make losses good to the losers. And rewards by right cover not only actual losses, but also risks that have been borne. For risks are, in broad terms, losses. When we run risks, do we not lose just so much from our *safety*? And if we continue such risks will we not eventually be great actual losers? What, then, is withholding reward, save a shrewd way of imposing sacrifice?

Leaders seem not even to expect that the greatest rewards will come to those deserving them. Reward is indeed withheld according as the virtue to be rewarded is great and high. Facing death, even in terrible form, in fighting for one's country, is thus called “one's first duty.” And a certain great amount of bitter scorn is heaped by at least a large number of men upon those who ask any-

thing worth while in return for such risks. It is forgotten that, "No greater love hath any man than that he shall lay down his life for another."

Leaders fight the idea of *absolute* equality of reward, as we all know. They endeavor to counterbalance the dangerous belief in any sort of equality with lengthy and constantly repeated explanations in the hope that such beliefs will not eventually undermine principles that they admit to be absolutely necessary. And they take it for granted that the ordinary run of men sees also the necessity for these principles. "Absolute equality is obviously impossible of approach," they say, "and a little equality is necessary in order to stimulate men and make them put forth effort. *Everyone* can see the truth of that."

But all sorts of equality are related. And a belief in any kind of equality leads mankind to believe in practically all kinds, and to insist upon forcing such belief into the life of society.

Even equality of opportunity is a stumbling-block. For equality is of two very different, almost opposing, sorts. There is opportunity to assist oneself. And there is opportunity to assist society. And if the opportunity to assist themselves that is allowed men is not governed by the past use they have made of opportunity to assist society, where will opportunity lead? And which will eventually lose all things, including all opportunity, in such case, the forces of virtue, of usefulness, or the forces of vice, of destruction? Yet even so important a thing for consideration as this is overlooked with ease by a world growing more and more freed from true ideals, more and more enslaved to appetites. And thus does the sacrifice of the morally fittest grow steadily greater.

The physically and mentally weak, and as well the morally weak, live in more or less of an asylum. They are shielded by their internal make-up as well as by their environment in a civilized world. Who would think of asking anything positive of the physically, mentally, or morally weak? Who expects them to make positive contributions to human welfare? We are satisfied if they do not destroy us.

Yes, even the morally weak are protected. They are protected from the vengeance that should have issue from their crimes. Revenge is considered as being far worse than actual crime. "We will teach men to respect law at all costs," say the jurists as soldiers are ordered to fire into crowds who feel a great urge to punish with effective swiftness those who break even that most respected of laws, "Thou shalt do no murder."

Is it remarkable, then, that the race decays steadily? The mere fact that there actually are eugenists and others who say that the race needs upbuilding makes the world think that it need not worry over that matter at all. It does not know how few and how powerless are those men. Nor does it grasp the fact that those men have no hope of positive racial up-building until a great period has passed, that those men hope only for arresting the present rapid decay.

And racial decay, racial weakening, cannot be thought of, save as causing decay of racial will, undermining of humanity's deeper strength.

The other phase of racial weakening of will is the phase of laziness. It includes, for one thing, the progress of science. For science is a bringer of rest and leisure. Every step of science forward allows men just so much more rest, just so much lying in nonuse of faculties. And as faculties are not used they tend to weaken and to disappear, slowly but steadily.

This phase includes also moral decay, since moral decay means moral laziness. As the morally fittest, the men who make greatest true struggle, in the deep sense, tend today toward destruction, and not toward survival, as in precivilized ages, morality itself suffers and disintegrates.

For morality is a frail flower, after all. It does not support itself, but depends upon a struggling minority of men to support it. Morals are high and morality as a whole is true only when the men who have high morals and true morality are maintained as a group and multiply. In their going down is the going down of morality, the going down of organized resistance to laziness, to inertia.

This age is indeed the twilight age of morality. The most god-like of men are passing, while the ape is breathing deeply in delight and his shadow is deepening upon mankind.

Shall mankind, the highest product of evolution, bear the seed of dissolution? Shall he spring the leak of unending weakening of will, and degenerate slowly and steadily until he is at last a degenerate brother to the worm? Nothing permanently hindered his ascent. Will nothing permanently hinder his descent? Shall we not admit that there is a radical something out of place, some misplacement that has brought about the ends of other civilizations, and has made dark man's intellect? Surely, the thing at fault is more than a mere detail.

May it not easily be that the thing at fault is our very idea of life? May it not easily be that we have not yet the proper *symbol* for

life? Such a thing might seem, indeed, to be a mere detail, harmlessly overlooked, while yet it is of exceeding and fundamental importance. There seems in truth little concern for a proper symbol for life. Yet we see many thousands of dollars offered for the most suitable name, the most suitable symbol, for one of the many newspapers.

Omar Khayyam pictured life as a succession of bubbles in a glass of wine. Others have pictured it as a bird that flies from darkness into a lighted room only to return again into darkness. And the chief thing common to such pictures is the temporal aspect of life. Life is shown to be with beginning and with end.

The Hindus have pictured life as a great wheel moving round unceasingly, and carrying the soul from one existence to another. And in many modifications and colors has this picture been painted.

Others have pictured life as a sea of moving logs, ships and icebergs, in which one has to make greatest effort, if one is to remain long without collision.

Now the important thing for emphasis in a symbol of life is not the obvious fact of struggle so much as the method of struggle, the direction in which struggle should be made. One may make the same degree of effort in any direction. But that effort will carry one at a running pace in some directions, and at next to no pace at all in other directions. Note how easy it is for champions of organized appetites, such as the desire for the many forms of freedom, equality, and rights, to go far with the effort they make. Note how, during practically every age, champions of some form of these desires are by the populace applauded constantly, and immortalized at their end. And note how the most important ideals as authority, justice, and duty, shrink and yet shrink. Note how unsung are the heroes who risk and give all that authority, for instance, remain as high and strong as possible.

The ideal symbol for life must be simple, even in its representativeness. It must be the simplest possible representation of centrifugal and centripetal forces, and the great struggle between these forces.

Now the simplest representation of these forces and the struggle between them is the spinning disc. For a spinning disc tends to throw off all things upon it. Place a marble, for illustration, upon a spinning phonograph disc, at the center. At first it is not appreciably affected. Then it is. Then it is sped off the disc. You are upon your individual spinning disc. And society is upon its own,

much greater, spinning disc. You and society are not marbles, however. You are given will, the centrifugal power to remain on your spinning discs by resisting, by controlling appetites, and remaining in safety on the centers of your discs. But when you cease to control your appetites, when you cease to resist, you are becoming indeed as marbles, and like marbles you then roll unresistingly.

And when your ideals have become pleasant and your effort spontaneous you have ceased to struggle. When your ideals bring your mouth to water they are not true ideals, but are idealized appetites. Not on such as these, but on true ideals alone should you focus your attention. For appetites are obscure, yet safe, in true ideals, while true ideals have no room in appetites.

Thus it is that freedom is obscure yet safe in authority, while authority is ever lost in freedom. For every degree of freedom invites and makes for, not authority, but a yet greater degree of freedom. All degrees of freedom are dovetailed together, to the very ultimate of anarchy.

Thus also it is that equality is obscure yet safe in justice while justice is ever lost in equality. For every degree of equality invites and makes for, not justice, but a yet greater degree of equality. All degrees of equality are dovetailed together to the very level of desolation and death.

And thus also it is that rights are allowed full being in duties, while duties are ever lost in rights. For all rights invite and make for, not duties, but yet greater rights, to the very limit of indifference and selfishness. Note how great is the extent in which men who clamor for rights neglect all duties. And note how men who perform their duties do not care to take advantage of the rights which are so universally exercised.

Is it not alone the spinning disc which pictures the great and unceasing pull which doctrines of freedom, equality and rights exert? And does not it alone picture the great and unceasing effort of the conscious, painful, sort which must be put forth in order to resist and overcome these great appetites? Does not the spinning disc alone remind one constantly of the direction in which struggle should be made—of the safe, central, position which is gained and maintained only when authority, justice and duties have full attention given them? Does not the spinning disc, identical in form with the bull's-eye target, alone keep effort focused?

But to focus effort is like forcing the world to awaken and arise on a morning of bitter cold. The world would lay warm and in com-

fort all day, even until the twilight, when it is too late for earning future bread. The world imagines itself to have headaches and many excusing pains. The world thinks its symbols for life are good enough. The world says, "We have come near enough to the things. Let us alone. We do not like extremists." And we are left to wonder whether all extremes are not harmful, whether even extreme goodness is not to be sought after, but is ever to be compromised with evil.

Woe to the nation that comes "near enough" to winning a war, and loses the last battle thereof! Woe to the world that comes "near enough" to Truth, and misses the important part thereof! Woe to the world that calls half truths "good enough," and follows the appetizing untruths suggested, into the very wilderness of confusion! Woe to the world that is led astray by such half-truths, by such truths that cannot be trusted alone!

Did you note how the marble rolled over and over as it sped off the spinning phonograph disc? Compare this with the recurring anarchy that was noted by even the ancients, the rolling under of anarchy as newly established authority rolls in the ascendancy, and the rolling under of newly established authority as anarchy rolls up again in the ascendancy. Then ask yourself, "Where is society rolling?"

Had authority been deep it would never have started rolling, or at least would have stopped rolling almost at once. Authority would have remained safe on the center of its spinning disc, on the center which represents the indefinite stretch of future ages. And in so remaining, authority would have guaranteed to these future ages life and strength. As things are now going, authority does not know which age will bring to it forever its end.

The Caesar who comes at intervals to restore order has ever bargained for showy, dynamic, discipline with obscure, yet exceedingly valuable, static discipline. That is, the deeper reverence for authority has been allowed to go, in order to be certain of obtaining that showy respect for authority which is manifest in beautiful oaths of allegiance, oaths which men never mean to keep. It is like a man's forcing himself to pray to a god whom he hates. His tongue is willing, but his soul is weak. In bargaining for such discipline, the Caesar has ever been bargaining with the devil—with the devil who never loses in a bargain, who never gives save to cover up a greater theft.

Men noticed at an early day that authority will always win, and truth crushed to earth will rise again, provided there are men fighting for authority and truth with full energy. But they forget that there must be men fighting for authority and truth with full energy. They forgot the part that man himself must play in the battle for authority and truth. They remembered merely that authority had won and truth risen. Men's faith in authority thus grew, and instead of fostering authority and truth, men became quite dependent upon them. They took great pleasure in the victory of authority and truth which they supposed to be assured and absolute. And they have not yet learned their mistake.

Instead, they have learned to think it blasphemous to say, "I shall make God's fight mine own. I shall invite God to work through mine agency." And they are glad to leave the most important, most frail, things to God, while turning aside to cultivate weeds, or to enjoy further release from effort.

As authority decays and the rod of discipline is increasingly spared, we can almost see the devil's smile as it widens in delight and in mockery. For crime increases in greater and yet greater extent, even in spite of immense increases in the world's economic wealth, immense advances in education, and immense advances toward equality, any one of which was thought to be a sure cure for crime. Especially does the devil's smile seem to widen as apparently unassailable excuses are found for preventing punishment from coming to criminals. That is, all crime tends nowadays to be blamed upon the criminal's environment, upon his composite group. Thus the criminal escapes with little pain. And, of course, it is taken as self-evident that no group should bear even a small fraction of the punishment which should issue from crime. Thus the group also escapes. And society, the group composed of the greatest number of men innocent of each crime, has to bear the pain of criminality that grows steadily greater. And yet the world thinks it is to be congratulated for having prevented in major extent the suffering of the innocent for the guilty!

On life's spinning disc there is but one safe point of direction. Yet there is an infinite number of points which carry to destruction. There is but one truth which should be accepted as most fundamental. This is the truth that the struggle to maintain morality, which allows freedom to things according as they deserve freedom, and calls the things of greatest deserved freedom things of authority—that this is the real, deep, significant, struggle of life.

Yet there is an infinitude of truths, any one of which, when accepted as fundamental, rolls one away into confusion. The arguments for authority are few and unchanging, while the arguments for freedom are a changing multitude without end. A unity is opposed to an infinite plurality.

The pull against authority will never end. The spinning disc will spin on through all time. But woe to the world that fails to recognize the spinning, and thus rolls over and away!