



The
**BANKRUPTCY
OF CHRISTIAN
SUPERNATURALISM**

From the Viewpoint of Other
Heretics in the Episcopal Church



**BISHOP
BROWNS
DEFENSE**

VOL. VII





"BISHOP BROWN'S" CHALLENGES

To the House of Bishops, Greeting:

According to the Arkansas Gazette, the movement looking towards my trial and deposition has failed, and according to the Oregonian its failure is due to your belief that my mental condition is such as to prevent me from being held responsible for the heretical representations of the booklet, Communism and Christianity.

You cannot blame me, human nature being what it is, for feeling that the real reason for stopping the movement is your inability to frame charges from the booklet and to proceed against me with them without discrediting your own orthodoxy more than my heterodoxy.

But to make sure that I am not in error as to this feeling, I will offer, and hereby do offer, myself to the House of Bishops for a thorough-going, mental examination by the Professors of Psychology in Yale, Columbia and Johns Hopkins Universities. They are not personally known to me, but I am willing to trust them.

If, however, the members of the House of Bishops prefer to place themselves on record as believing the representations of the Bible, literally interpreted, concerning the creation of Adam and Eve; the planting of the Garden of Eden; the fall of Adam and Eve and its effects; the birth of Jesus; his death and descent into hell; his resurrection and ascension into heaven, and his second coming to raise all deceased men, women and children from the dead and to judge and send them to heaven or hell, I will resign, and do hereby agree to resign, my seat in the House of Bishops.

WILLIAM MONTGOMERY BROWN

SALVATION

THERE are two rival gospels concerning the salvation of man: (1) the Gospel of orthodox Christianity, and (2) the Gospel of orthodox Communism.

1. According to the supernatural, "divinely revealed" Gospel of orthodox Christianity which Communists call, "superstition," the chief aim of a man should be to save himself and his generation after death from a hell of misery below the earth to a heaven of happiness above it by means of believing and teaching that the blood of Jesus has redeemed him and will redeem all believers from Jehovah's doom of the world on account of the fall by disobedience of the first man and woman.

2. According to the natural, humanly discovered Gospel of orthodox Communism which Christians call, "science falsely so-called," the chief aim of a man should be to save himself and his generation while living on earth from a hell of misery to a heaven of happiness by the means of an economical and cultural revolution promoted by the rank and file of the working class which will banish not only the Christian gods but all gods from the skies, and the whole owning class from the earth—banishments which would issue in a new classless, povertyless, warless, cooperative civilization governed by the real Golden Rule of the working class: From all according to their abilities to all according to their needs, not by the unreal Golden Rule of the owning class: Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so to them.—W.M.B.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The seven little volumes in the series of books, entitled, *The Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism*, are so many appeals by me to the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church for restoration to its House of Bishops. They are made from the important view-points of the trial, the sciences, history, philosophy, the Bible, sociology and of Heretics in the Episcopal Church.

These appeals are based chiefly upon science, for history and sociology are now as really sciences as geology and biology, and no professor of philosophy in any great university can hold his chair unless he is a scientific philosopher. Even a theologian must be well acquainted with the field of science in which the phenomena of religion have been carefully investigated and compared, if he would command the attention of educated people by his sermons and books on Biblical subjects.

But while founding each one of my appeals on some rock of science, I realized that its effectiveness in the church as a plea for restoration to the house would be in proportion to its value to the world as an educator; and, therefore, I have done all that in me lieth to make the books of the series primers for high school boys and girls and post graduate text books for collegians.

Let me call attention especially to the first volume of this series, because its Memorials to the Court of Review, to the House of Bishops and to the House of Deputies give a bird's-eye view of the whole field of scientific culture, and also constitute a most thorough-going introduction to the succeeding six volumes, throwing much light upon many of their representations.

The appeal of these little books is primarily to the General Convention; but, nevertheless, they will be found to be of equal or even greater interest to the rank and file of our church; also, to all orthodox and unorthodox Christians of every ecclesiastical name; indeed, to all the votaries of every supernaturalistic interpretation of religion, and even to infidels and atheists. I would not have sustained the trial with its labor, expense and turmoil, if I had not seen that the issue involved in it is of universal and momentous concern.

Every article of the whole arch of Christian doctrine is involved in that issue. But I will mention only its two basic doctrines, the Fall of Adam and the Blood of Jesus. Do these doctrines stand for literal realities, as the Courts and House of Bishops contended at my trial, or are they symbols of realities, as I contended?

Any man or woman who reads the first of the *Bankruptcy Series* will perceive with me the immenseness of this issue, at least vaguely; and, if he goes on through the other six, he will see it as clearly as he ever saw anything by the light of the sun on a cloudless noonday.

Brownella Cottage,
Galion, Ohio,
September 4th, 1930.

WILLIAM MONTGOMERY BROWN.

**Bishop William Montgomery Brown's
Seventh Appeal for Restoration
To the House of Bishops
First edition, 1934, 10,000**

THE CHURCH'S DOCTRINE

WHOSOEVER will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith. Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

First, it is to be noted, that all and singular the twelve Articles, contained in this Apostles' Creed, be so necessary to be believed for man's salvation, that whosoever being once taught will not constantly believe them, or will obstinately affirm the contrary of them, he or they cannot be the very members of Christ and His Spouse the Church, but be very infidels or heretics, and members of the Devil, with whom they shall perpetually be damned.

Second, it is to be noted, that all true Christian men ought and must most constantly believe, maintain, and defend all those things to be true, not only which be comprehended in this Apostles' Creed, and in the other two symbols or Creeds, whereof the one was approved by the ancient General Councils, and the other was made by that holy man Athanasius; but also all other things which be comprehended in the whole body and Canon of the Bible.

Thirdly, that all true Christian men ought and must not only repute, take, and hold all the said things for the most holy, most sure, and most certain and infallible words of God, and such as neither ought or can be altered or convell'd by any contrary opinion or authority; but also must take and interpret all the same things according to the selfsame sense and interpretation which the words of Scripture do purport and signify, and the holy approved doctors of the Church do agreeably entreat and defend.—The Doctrine of the Church of England.

I meet all of these requirements of the church as to faith; but, without exception, the supernaturalistic representations of the Christian Bible, Catholic Creeds, Anglican Prayer Book and Articles are believed symbolically, not literally. For me God is a symbol of nature. Christ is a symbol of humanity. The Holy Ghost is a symbol of civilization. Heaven is a symbol of happiness on earth. Hell is a symbol of misery on earth. Immortality is a symbol of the influence of the representatives of passed generations upon the representatives of future generations.

Even the basic Christian doctrines (the Fall, the Doom, the Redemption and the Immortality of Man) are not literally true. See my combination Christmas and Easter sermon, entitled, *The Human Meaning of Christian Doctrine*.—W.M.B.

William Montgomery Brown
Fifth Bishop of Arkansas, Resigned.
Deposed because I reject the Super-
naturalism of Orthodox Christi-
anity. Seeking Restoration because
I accept it as Symbolism and many
Bishops, Rectors and Professors
reject much of it as Literalism...
First Bishop of the Regions
of the Bolsheviks and Infidels
into which most of the world
has entered and the rest
is rapidly following..



RT. REV. WILLIAM MONTGOMERY BROWN, D. D.
"Episcopus in partibus Bolshevikiium et Infidelium"

THE BANKRUPTCY OF CHRISTIAN SUPERNATURALISM

FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF OTHER
HERETICS IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BY

WILLIAM MONTGOMERY BROWN

VOLUME VII

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DEDICATION

THIS book is dedicated to the Nicodemus who came to me in the night of the interim between my appearance before the Trial and Review Courts saying (as nearly as I can remember) Bishop Brown, I have made a pilgrimage to you for the purpose of becoming acquainted and confessing that if the trial ultimately issues in depriving you of the right to exercise your ministry in our churches, I should be deprived of mine, and I am convinced that this is true of two-thirds of the bishops, rectors and professors of the Anglican Communion of National Churches throughout the world. My uplifting visitor is an influential bishop; and, this being the case, I am hoping that he will try to set on foot a movement looking towards the restoration of me to the House of Bishops at the 1934 General Convention. Such an effort, if successful, would not only right the wrong which the House did in singling me out from other heretics for trial, condemnation and punishment, but it would also open the doors of a great church to every one who cares to enter for what inspiration and help he can get in his effort to make the most of the life which is here and now for self and help others to do this for themselves, without reference to a life that may be elsewhere and elsewhen or any of the supernaturalistic doctrines which go with orthodox Christianity.

WILLIAM MONTGOMERY BROWN.

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THE MARXIAN DOCTRINE

THE "Manifesto" being our joint production, I consider myself bound to state that the fundamental proposition which forms its nucleus, belongs to Marx. That proposition is: that in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that, consequently, the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggle, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolution in which, now-a-days, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class—the bourgeoisie—without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles.

This proposition which, in my opinion, is destined to do for history what Darwin's theory has done for biology, we, both of us, had been gradually approaching for some years before 1845. How far I had independently progressed towards it, is best shown by my "Condition of the Working Class in England." But when I again met Marx at Brussels, in spring, 1845, he had it ready worked out, and put it before me, in terms almost as clear as those in which I have stated it here.

From our joint preface to the German edition of 1872, I quote the following:

"However much the state of things may have altered during the last 25 years, the general principles laid down in this Manifesto, are, on the whole as correct today as ever."

—Frederick Engels.

THE MAN OF GALILEE AND THE MAN OF GALION

ON the theory that there is a conscious, personal God in the sky who brings things to pass on earth, and that the Man of Galilee was his Son, the world will never cease to wonder why the verdict of the Sanhedrim of the Jews meant so much in the way of defeat, loss, depression and misery to him in the first century, while the verdict of the Sanhedrim of the Episcopalians means so much in the way of victory, gain, inspiration and happiness to the Man of Galion in the twentieth century.

Nothing about the first of these trials was favorable to the divine defendant: the people went with the court; even his disciples fled, leaving him alone, helpless; and all was over soon.

Everything about the second of these trials was favorable to the human defendant: he was not left alone, far from it; able lawyers and learned men of science defended him; comrades thronged the hall; he had the sympathy of the journalists so completely that most of the millions who read their accounts of the proceedings in the daily press condemned the House of Bishops for ordering the trial, and even in the Episcopal Church itself their action was widely and deeply regretted.

All this contrast in favor of the Man of Galion! What is the explanation? It is not his natural endowments and cultural acquirements, for as to them he is barely mediocre. What, then, would be the contrast if he were a genius of wit and a prodigy of learning—a Voltaire, a Paine, a Bradlaugh or an Ingersoll?

Is this the explanation: the strong Man of Galilee, standing before the Sanhedrim of the Jews, had what the world then regarded as a weak cause, and the weak Man of Galion, standing before the Sanhedrim of the Episcopalians, has what the world now regards as a strong cause? Increasing millions outside of the churches, and rapidly multiplying thousands inside think that this is the explanation.—W. M. B.

PREFACE

When my book, *Communism and Christianity*, appeared the first answer of the church was a shriek of pain; and an appeal to the House of Bishops to take proper measures with this awful heretic. But the committee of bishops appointed by the General Convention of 1922 to investigate my case decided against a heresy trial; and, in order to excuse themselves, they said that I was crazy.

I made no argument against either charge—heresy or insanity. Not being an intellectual leader, I did not have to argue. Being a simple old man, I could just find out.

When they said that I was a heretic, I asked why they did not try me. "Because you are crazy," they answered. "What makes you think I am crazy?" I asked. "Your heresies," they explained.

They decided, it seems, to examine me as to my sanity, but sent a committee of three bishops and I insisted upon having three alienists instead. For some reason or other, that did not appeal to them, and it was decided at a meeting of the House of Bishops at Dallas in 1923 that after all I should be tried for heresy.

Even then, I did not argue, I did not know whether I was a heretic or not. I was as anxious as anybody to find out. So, as soon as the trial opened, I asked the question: "What is heresy?"

Nobody had ever thought of that. The court ruled out the question as "irrelevant and immaterial." But somehow, it would not stay ruled out. The trial was to last an hour or two but it continued through five days, and that question kept coming up at almost every

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session. The twenty-five or more newspaper men from many cities got to asking it; and, when newspaper men get to asking questions, things begin to move.

The question, what is heresy, has not been answered. The first court of nine bishops, the Trial Court, would not have anything to do with it and ruled it out as irrelevant and immaterial as often as it was asked. The second court of nine bishops, the Review Court, also ruled it out as far as its proceedings were concerned; but, to my great relief, promised a written opinion later. It took them eight months to formulate that opinion; but very many Episcopalians are not at all satisfied that it is the final answer.

According to the opinion of the Review Court, whose findings were later ratified by the House of Bishops, thus making it the ruling of our Anglo-American Episcopate, a person is a heretic if he does not believe literally all the articles of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. That established my guilt beyond question—the only trouble with such an answer being that it also established the guilt of every bishop, priest and deacon, and of every educated Episcopalian in the land.

The Review Court finally issued a lengthy printed report of its opinion as to what my heresy is. Of its twenty-four printed pages about twenty were superfluous. They were occupied with relatively trivial matters, and the issue is too grave to waste time in quibbles concerning the meaning of my words or those of the creeds or points of canonical procedure.

These twenty pages, therefore, distracted attention from the main issue because, as all who have followed the case will remember, I never claimed that my doc-

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trinal views were in harmony with the dogmatic statements of the creeds literally interpreted. I had, on the contrary, repeatedly offered voluntarily to resign my seat in the House of Bishops if my brethren of that house would declare that they themselves accepted the standards of belief contained in the Bible, Creeds, Articles and Prayer Book in their literal meaning, and if the General Convention would enforce this literal adherence upon all members and ministers of the church.

This offer was originally made in a letter to the House of Bishops while the 1922 General Convention was in session at Portland, Oregon, the important paragraphs of which letter were:

According to the Arkansas Gazette, the movement looking towards my trial and deposition has failed, and according to the Oregonian its failure is due to your belief that my mental condition is such as to prevent me from being held responsible for the heretical representations of the booklet, Communism and Christianism.

You cannot blame me, human nature being what it is, for feeling that the real reason for stopping the movement is your inability to frame charges from the booklet and to proceed against me with them without discrediting your own orthodoxy more than my heterodoxy.

But to make sure that I am not in error as to this feeling, I will offer and hereby do offer myself to the House of Bishops for a thorough-going mental examination by the Professors of Psychology in Yale, Columbia and Johns Hopkins Universities. They are not personally known to me, but I am willing to trust them.

If, however, the members of the House of Bishops prefer to place themselves on record as believing the representations of the Bible, literally interpreted, concerning the creation of Adam and Eve; the planting of

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the Garden of Eden; the fall of Adam and Eve and its effects; the birth of Jesus; his death and descent into hell, his resurrection and ascension into heaven, and his second coming to raise all deceased men, women and children from the dead and to judge and send them to heaven or hell, I will resign, and do hereby agree to resign, my seat in the House of Bishops.

In this letter I offered my brethren of the House of Bishops two easy ways out:

1. They questioned my sanity, and I offered to let them have it tested. If the result justified their suspicion the sale and influence of my book, *Communism and Christianity*, would automatically cease.

2. My brethren of the House of Bishops questioned my orthodoxy, and I offered to resign my seat in that house if they would prove that they themselves were orthodox by avowing their belief in a few of the most fundamental doctrines of the church, literally interpreted. I stipulated a literal interpretation of the doctrines mentioned in my offer, because I myself believe all of them if they may be symbolically interpreted.

Every educated Episcopalian puts a symbolical or allegorical interpretation upon some of these teachings. Several of the most esteemed bishops of the church during the last twenty years have openly claimed and exercised that right. Professors and priests rightfully held in honor in the church to-day claim and exercise it, without protest from the bishops.

Therefore, unless the bishops were to incur the charge of unjustly and even meanly discriminating against me, unless they were to fall under the odious suspicion that they felt it safe to depose one old man from the ministry but had not the courage to condemn

others, it was their obvious duty to formulate a standard of belief which would make their action equally just in condemning me and leaving others uncondemned.

From the first day of my trial I firmly but courteously pressed for such a statement. It brought no small discredit upon the church that this claim was painfully evaded at the trial. The essential part of the ruling of the court is given in these paragraphs which are found on pages twenty to twenty-three of the printed opinion:

What is the doctrine held and taught advisedly by the accused that is contrary to that held and taught by this Church?

The presenters charged that certain quotations from the defendant's book "Communism and Christianity," as set forth in the presentment and introduced in evidence, express his denial of the doctrine:

(a)—That God is a personal God, the Creator of all things, thus controverting the first Article of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds wherein each explicitly sets forth the personal, objective reality of God as the Creator of all things. One of these quotations, numbered 15, in the presentment, reads as follows: "There is no reason for believing that anyone among the gods of the four old supernaturalistic interpretations of religion (Jehovah, Jesus, Allah, Buddha), or that either of the gods of the new interpretations by the renowned physicist, Sir Oliver Lodge, and the distinguished sociologist, Mr. H. G. Wells, has more to do in creating, sustaining, and governing this world than another, that is to say, there is no ground for believing that the personal, conscious gods in the skies, either individually or collectively, have anything at all to do with it." To the same effect and purpose are quotations 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 13, 17, 19 and 20, as set forth in the presentment, and introduced in evidence.

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(b)—The doctrine of the Triune Being of God. Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as set forth in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, also in the Collect and Proper Preface for Trinity Sunday, the opening invocations of the Litany, the Gloria Patri, and innumerable doxologies at the end of Prayers and Collects, is clearly contravened by quotations numbered 10, 13 and 18, as set forth in the presentment and introduced in evidence. Quotation number 10 is as follows: "The one God of the Jews, and the triune God of the Christians, if taken seriously, are superstitions." To the same purpose and effect are quotations numbered 13 and 18.

(c)—The doctrine of the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ and His present existence in glory, and His work for us men and for our salvation as held by this Church is set forth in the Nicene Creed as follows: "I believe * * * in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; Begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God; Begotten not made; Being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made * * * And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end." This doctrine is expressly controverted in quotations numbered 4, 5, 6, 16, 21, 22 and 23, as set forth in the presentment and introduced in evidence. Said quotation numbered 4 as follows: "Do you not now see with me that the Christ of the world is not a conscious, personal God, but an unconscious, impersonal machine. It is the machine of man, not a lamb of God, to which we may hopefully look for the taking away of the sins of the world." Said quotation 5 is as follows: "The world's saviour-god is knowledge. There is no other Christ on earth or in heaven above it, and this one lives, moves and has his being in the fear of ignorance." Said quotation 16 is as follows: "There is no rational doubt about the fictitious character of the divine Jesus." To the same effect and purpose are quotations 6, 21, 22 and 23.

(d)—The doctrine of the historicity of Jesus Christ, as held by this Church, is set forth in the Apostles' Creed in the following words: "I believe * * * in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." And in the Nicene Creed as follows: "I believe * * * in one Lord Jesus Christ * * * who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man: and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried: And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures: And ascended into heaven." It is also set forth in the Collects for the First Sunday in Advent, Christmas-day, the Feast of the Circumcision, the Epiphany, the First Sunday in Lent, the Sunday before Easter, Good Friday, Easter Day, and the Ascension. This doctrine of the Church, which is so clearly and explicitly set forth as indicated, is expressly controverted by quotations 3, 8, 11, 12, 14, 16, 21, 22 and 23, as set forth in the presentment and introduced in evidence. Said quotation 14 is as follows: "There is no rational doubt about the fictitious character of the divine Jesus." Said quotation 22 is as follows: "From the viewpoint of the self-styled one hundred per cent Christians, I am a betrayer of Brother Jesus, because I do not believe that he ever existed as a god, and that, if he was at any time a man, the world does not now and never can know of one thing that he ever did or any word that he said." To the same effect and purpose are quotations 3, 8, 11, 12, 16, 21 and 23.

These quotations from the defendant's book "Communism and Christianity," as set forth in the presentment and introduced in evidence are, each and all of them, contrary to the doctrine held by this Church.

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From these paragraphs it is clear that the Court either timorously evaded my entirely just claim for a common standard of faith and sought to distract attention from my natural and rightful demand for it by a lengthy and irrelevant dissertation, or else its members are singularly ignorant both of modern knowledge and of the extent to which it is accepted in our church only at the price of putting ingenious interpretations upon the words of the creeds.

By an amazing indiscretion, my judges have selected as especially important standards of orthodoxy four points of our ancient doctrine which are, in their literal sense regarded in the educated world generally, within and without the church, as particularly vulnerable in the light of modern science and history: (1) creation; (2) the trinity; (3) the incarnation, and (4) the historicity of the gospels.

What science, history, philosophy and sociology have to say that has a bearing on those doctrines I have now fully explained in the seven volumes of my Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism. I beg every member of the church who has not read these volumes, yet feels his share of responsibility for any grave injustice that may be done in the name of the church, to read that defense of my position.

The Bishops of the Review Court have only made the issue plainer than ever. This issue is: are we, or are we not, to accept these doctrines in their literal sense?

And, since it is clear that a literal adhesion to all of the church's doctrine is not required, only the plain declaration of what now is the standard of orthodoxy

or heresy will save the bishops from the odious charge of having unjustly and cruelly discriminated against me.

There remains only one step for me to take to complete the defense of my position. Probably very many members of the church do not know to what extent the bishops have for twenty years overlooked the exercise by other bishops and priests of that right which they refuse to me. Therefore, in this volume, I show that those rejections of doctrines in their literal sense which are called my heresies are freely and publicly put forward by eminent spokesmen of the church from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and especially in the large cities where the bishops usually dwell, that men and women are now, with the tacit sanction of the bishops, invited to join our church on the express ground that it does not demand literal acceptance of our traditional doctrines.

No one will suspect me of even the least tinge of malice or peevishness in compiling this list of heretics who rightly are honored in the church. I do but make plain by it the fact that there is no heresy in the Protestant Episcopal Church to-day; and, therefore, that the heavy and cruel injustice that was inflicted upon me must, for the honor of the church and the peace of my declining years, be righted.

Both because I want justice and because I do not believe that the opinion of the Review Court is the answer to the question, "what is heresy," which the church really wants to consider final, I am publishing this book, *Heretics in the Episcopal Church*. It is not against the church but for it—to save it from a decision

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which I believe will make it impossible for it to function in this scientific age.

According to the canons of the church, I was entitled to a Court of Appeal, but I did not get it. The Review Court assured me, and it is on the record, that I would be given my ultimate hearing before the full House of Bishops, acting in place of the Court of Appeal, inasmuch as that had not yet been established; but the House of Bishops decided not to give me such a hearing.

I do not blame any among my colleagues or judges or prosecutors. Had this happened to someone else while I was Bishop of Arkansas, I would have been as intolerant as any of them. And had I been sitting in the House of Bishops, in the holy work of passing judgment on a heretic, I should not have wanted anyone to ask me to define what heresy is.

As I see it now, however, the question must be asked, no matter how much it annoys the members of the House of Bishops and General Convention who do not want to answer it. For the world has entered into a new age—an age which will not tolerate any restriction whatever upon human thought. The church must enter into that age, and throw off the last vestige of such restriction, if it is to be of any further use to humanity. The ultimate answer to the question: "what is heresy," is already clearly in sight. It is the answer we gave some time ago to the question: "what is witchcraft?" The answer is: there is no such thing.

Brownella Cottage,
Galion, Ohio,
June 24th, 1934.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. M. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the right of the typed address. Below the signature is a long, horizontal, wavy line that extends across the width of the signature.

INTRODUCTION

In the seven volumes of my Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism I have given a complete vindication of the position I have taken up in regard to traditional theology. From the start I have warned my readers that the literature circulating in the church, the works and periodicals to which its members are urged to confine their attention, gravely mislead them. It is hardly necessary to criticize here the frivolous type of literature which assures them that "the conflict of science with religion" means only that for a long time theologians opposed the scientific truth of evolution. My warning is deeper and more serious. It is that any man who would persuade you that it is merely a question of evolution or that science alone raises difficulties in regard to traditional religious beliefs renders a grave disservice to the church.

Every single branch of our modern knowledge (history, philosophy, bibliology and sociology as well as science) yields facts or truths which are inconsistent with both the orthodox creeds and all the liberal reinterpretations of them. In my seven volumes I have covered the entire field of modern scholarship and shown this to be the truth. It is unnecessary here to summarize once more the new philosophy of life which makes it imperative to abandon any and every doctrinal test in the church, but I would stress two points.

The first is (and the blunders which are ruining the church will be prolonged unless this is clearly apprehended) that in these volumes I have given, not the opinions of a few scientists, sociologists or historians, but the received teaching of them all. The facts upon

which I base what will be called my most advanced opinions are not disputed by any serious authority in science, history or sociology, and in my theological opinions or conclusions themselves I have the support of at least three-fourths of the masters in each field. They agree that the facts and truths established in their respective fields are inconsistent with the Christian scheme of doctrine in either the literalist or the modernist sense. But I do not count on this authority, except in so far as it explains the hostile or indifferent attitude of the general educated public. The important point is that my facts are the received teaching of science.

One of the most painful and most foolish characteristics of recent religious literature is the practice of snapping up some isolated opinion of a scientist or an historian and representing this to our people as "the new teaching" of science or history. It is as dishonest as is the fundamentalist practice of representing that men of science are not agreed about evolution. Yet this vice, which still further alienates from the church the leaders of modern culture and their pupils, has in the last few years infected religious literature more deeply than ever. I have proved over and over again that those eccentric opinions or personal assurances of a few men of science (Lodge, Osborn, Jeans, Millikan, Eddington and Thomson) are untruthfully represented as the teaching of science and that their eccentricities are disdainfully rejected by the majority of scientists and are not consistently held even by the dozen men of science (out of many thousands) whose names are so improperly used. Every writer who tries to defend

his faith in this manner sinks to the lowest practices of the fundamentalists, the spiritualists and the Roman Catholics.

I claim my reader's clear and firm recognition that I have never followed this practice. In science I have built entirely upon the accredited teaching, bringing it right up to date in my successive publications! For my study of the origin and authority of the creeds and the Bible I have not consulted a single opponent of theology but quoted entirely from theological literature. The facts of history and sociology I have similarly taken from the recognized body of teaching. My economic creed alone does not appeal to academic authorities, but this has nothing to do with the bishops or with the question of heresy from the church point of view.

The second point on which I confidently claim that my works must be more seriously considered than those which are current in the church is that I take into account with equal care every branch of culture that bears upon theology. We have had many books and articles in recent years on the help to religion and the destructive effect to materialism of the "new physics," the "new biology" and the "new psychology." They are almost on a level with the works of that Seventh Day Adventist who claims that he has founded a "new geology." We do not seem to have a single writer in the Protestant Episcopal Church who has made serious study of either physics, biology or psychology. Even those who talk glibly about the psychology of religious and moral experiences do not seem to be aware that few professors of either psychology or

ethics would sanction their arguments; while those who write on social questions generally repeat, in defiance of all modern history, the old discredited version of the work of Christianity in the Roman world and until modern times.

It was my growing appreciation of this fact that led me years ago to see that the formularies of the church cannot be accepted in any other than a symbolical sense. Now I have covered the entire ground under the guidance of the greatest living authorities, not selecting one or two men who might chance to favor my own opinions, and the soundness of my position is clear. I smile when I recall the silly things that were said about me when my heresies first became known. Men who are notoriously ignorant of modern science, philosophy and history told each other that I had superficially misunderstood the truths we have discovered. Bishops whispered to each other a stupid and offensive insinuation that perhaps my mind was failing.

I can now afford to smile. My seven volumes contain a more solid and comprehensive vindication than any other modern heretic has made for his opinions: a survey of modern culture in its relation to theology which any candid reader must find far more impressive than the half-informed stuff about science which he generally finds in apologetic literature of theologians or eccentric scientists, historians and philosophers. Give any single volume of this series to an expert on the branch of culture with which it deals and ask him whether it is not sounder than the innumerable works

that profess to reconcile modern science, history and philosophy with orthodoxy.

And if my work is sound, it follows that there is not a single supernaturalistic doctrine of Christian orthodoxy which can now be taken literally.

It is therefore quite useless to imagine that the church can escape the pressure of modern knowledge by a distinction between essentials and non-essentials. This is the popular cry of the hour in the church. Even bishops who find it possible to be orthodox because they know nothing of the new knowledge which makes Christian orthodoxy utterly impossible feel that they must accept this distinction. Some doctrines are essential to the faith of the church in their literal sense, others are not essential. It seems a most plausible method or principle or pretext for selecting one heretic for condemnation and ignoring a hundred others.

But it is as futile as all the other temporary devices by means of which slow-moving bishops have, to the ruin of the church, postponed the inevitable day of genuine reconstruction. It is really amazing how people can close their eyes to the most obvious facts of life; and then go on, perhaps to say that the man who does perceive the facts must be feeble-minded!

If there are such things as non-essentials in the formularies, how do you explain that, in spite of all this generous concession that one may reject the non-essentials, scientific men and historians and the educated folk who follow them are not attracted to the church?

You know perfectly well that two-thirds of them do not even believe in God, and of the minority who do believe in God not one in ten will join any church.

You know perfectly well that there is not an orthodox Christian among the professors who occupy the chairs of science, history, philosophy and sociology in our universities, or even of bibliology in an Anglican theological seminary.

Moreover, who gave the bishops or anybody else in the church the right to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials? Who has the right or power to say which doctrines are essentials for membership in the church and which are not?

Professor Norman B. Nash, of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, ought to know something about these matters, and he states emphatically, as we shall see more fully later, that "the determination of what these minimum doctrinal essentials may be is committed in our church neither to a single bishop nor a quorum of the House of Bishops." That is sound church law, and any bishop who, as so many now do, attempts to say what is or is not essential to believe literally is exceeding his power and making a law for himself.

Even if we suppose that in view of the grave position of the church, the bishops may play fast and loose with church law (may appeal to its most medieval clauses when they want to condemn me, and may the next day completely ignore it and say that a member of the church need not believe some of its formularies) who is going to decide what is essential? The House of Bishops would be hopelessly incapable of coming to an agreement on the doctrines that must be taken literally and the doctrines that a member of the church need not accept. Bishop Manning, whose large capac-

ity for belief is not restrained by profane knowledge, has publicly stated that the virgin birth is one of the essentials. On what principle of church law, for which he has so rigorous a respect, he is acting when he says that it is necessary to believe in the virgin birth but not necessary to believe in hell, I am not clear; but Bishop Lawrence and other bishops have just as publicly stated (as we shall see) that belief in the virgin birth is not an essential. And the associated professors of the Cambridge Episcopal Theological School have shown that it is not only not essential but is one of the weakest of Christian formularies.

I will return in the last chapter to such subterfuges as putting new interpretations on the creeds when one recites them or repeating the words with a mental reserve. These things, perhaps, shock outsiders more than any other of these desperate expedients by which our ministers try to meet the utterly impossible situation which the bishops have created and maintain. There are only two ways, consistent with the dignity of the church and its message of integrity, of ending this intolerable and harmful confusion: (1) to abolish the creeds, which few desire, and it would be futile because the same problems would arise in connection with the Prayer Book and the Bible, or (2) to declare that a member of the church may take any or all of its formularies in a symbolical sense.

The conservative-minded who resist the granting of this freedom seem to be no better acquainted with the prevalence of heresy in the church itself than with the modern knowledge which presses upon the consciences of church members who are more broadly educated

than themselves. They confine their reading, if they are not too engrossed with practical matters to read at all, to theological writers and periodicals of their own cast of mind. They are therefore often quite unaware of the extent to which "heresy" is already openly taught in the Episcopal Church.

At the General Convention of 1922 the bishop of Southern Ohio proposed that henceforward the only profession of faith demanded at baptism should be, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God." He was outvoted, but Bishop Lawrence tells us that the bishop turned to him and whispered, "We have started a movement which will continue after we have gone."

It must have startled many to find that heresy had already gone so far in the church that well-informed bishops wanted to cut the creed down to this one clause. It would have startled them still further if they had been told that, as we shall see, very many preachers and professors in the church would not take even this one clause in the literal sense of the Prayer Book, but would rely on a new "interpretation" of the doctrine of the incarnation.

One of the worst effects of the medieval zeal of a few for heresy-hunters and the power of the bishops, as exhibited in my own case, to meet their mischievous demands, is that many are driven into the plainly dishonest practice (it is actually recommended by some writers) of reciting the creeds with a mental reserve that they do not believe them; while those who do openly preach or write their departure from literalism often express themselves in such evasive, cloudy or loose language that they entirely fail to meet the intel-

lectual difficulties they profess to meet. The outside public, if it reads them, is convinced that they are merely constructing forms of words which will justify them in their own consciences without drawing upon them the green eyes of zealots and the croziers of the bishops.

It is time that all members of the church faced the facts of contemporary life and thought. This counsel that we ought not to speak too openly lest we trouble what are called simpler minds, has led to very grave strain, confusion and dishonesty in the church. The "simple mind" or "simple believer" that we are asked to spare is very apt to be merely a mind that is ignorant of most matters except orthodox theology and devotional literature. I am not, I need hardly say, speaking necessarily of a lower grade of intelligence. Your "simple believer" may be a bishop whose mind was set in a groove by a narrowly orthodox training (you remember how disdainfully Bishop Spalding describes the training at the General Theological Seminary) and whose administrative duties leave little time for wide reading. He may be a priest with a temperamental dislike of reading anything that might tend to cloud his strict orthodoxy. It may be a lay man or woman with neither training nor leisure to master the facts.

But of whatever type your "simple believers" are, it is profoundly injurious to the church that its destinies should be controlled by men who are ignorant of matters of the gravest importance. Therefore, as I have already put before them the truths of science, history and sociology which make a literal adhesion to

our creeds quite impossible, I now give them a volume on the extent to which heresy is already spread in the Episcopal Church. And, still adhering to the conscientious method of true education, I pay no attention to casual expression by persons of no influence. I take, especially, the works of important preachers, learned professors and bishops whose attainments and high character have given them influence in the church.

Since the rejection of even one point of doctrine which the tradition of the church has held to be important shows the collapse of the traditional principle of authority, I include a few writers who confine their liberty to so few points that they may resent inclusion here, but on the whole I quote writers who go so far in "interpreting" or "reconstructing" formularies of faith that my proposal to take all symbolically will now be seen to be imperative, if the dignity of the church is to be preserved and the respect of outsiders conciliated.

Four points out of every five of the traditional scheme of doctrine are already, with the tacit consent of the bishops, challenged in the church itself.

So notorious is this that bishops of ample education and vigilant mind propose to reduce the profession of faith to two short clauses or only one. But I shall show that even these clauses, in the literal sense of the creeds, are challenged; and that, if there remain one or two points on which I seem to have no outspoken comrades in my heresies, I merely take candidly into account, and these other heretics do not, the full pressure of modern scholarship on those points. Finally I shall show that in their official formulation of the

Christian faith at Lambeth the collective bishops of the United States and the British Empire, the highest authority that our church could get together, have admitted such a volume of notable heresy that the creeds must now either be abandoned, as Dean Inge and others propose, or left, as I propose, to the symbolizing of the individual conscience.

ALL bishops and preachers shall instruct and teach the people committed unto their spiritual charge, that they ought and must constantly believe, that under the form and figure of bread and wine, which we there presently do see and perceive by outward senses, is verily, substantially, and really contained and comprehended the very selfsame Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which was born of the Virgin Mary, and suffered upon the cross for our redemption. And that under the same form and figure of bread and wine, the very selfsame Body and Blood of Christ is corporally, really, and in the very same substance exhibited, distributed, and received unto and of all them which receive the said Sacrament.—The Doctrine of the Church of England.

CHAPTER I.

Ten Years of Chaos

Before I open this gallery of uncondemned heretics it will be useful to describe the recent development of heresy in the church. Twenty-five years ago Bishop Williams, of Michigan, carrying on the spirit of Phillips Brooks, published this solemn warning:

Never was the Church in greater danger. And that danger, it seems to me, is chiefly from within. Her mission and her future are jeopardized most seriously by her most blatant champions, the self-constituted guardians of her faith and order on the one side and the shallow sciolists of a new philosophy and science on the other. Both parties seem to have identified the essence of the Christian religion with certain transitory and ever-changing forms of ecclesiastical machinery and theological dogma . . . We even drive some of our brethren out-of-doors into the cold and dark. And we also, saddest to say, shut out the multitude who really long to come in and share our fireside with us.—*A Valid Christianity for Today*, pp. 16-17.

In his very natural indignation that the future of the church should be endangered by internal quarrels Bishop Williams loses for a moment his sense of justice and proportion. Clearly what he calls the sciolists of a new philosophy (which at that time meant only men who pleaded that evolution and its consequences must be admitted) could not in the least be put on a footing with their opponents, the "blatant and self-constituted champions of the church." It was not the former but the zealots who would make theological dogma the essence of the Christian religion. The progressives held exactly the opposite. Like Bishop Williams himself

they urged that ecclesiastical machinery and theological dogma are not at all essential, and that they may and must change. It was not they who wanted to drive men into the dark and cold or shut out the multitudes. They sought exactly the opposite: to bring to an end this medieval practice of condemning for heresy and to make our fireside attractive to all men.

But in so far as the bishop's robust language applied to the "blatant champions" who did identify faith and dogma, did want men driven into the cold, and did shut out multitudes from the church by cactus-hedges of orthodoxy, his warning was timely and prophetic. The church was assuredly in danger, and it has suffered, probably more than he anticipated. There is a shallow type of speaker at our conferences and writer in our periodicals who rolls out our figures of membership or communicants and asks us to rejoice at the annual increase. He is too careless even to work out whether the increase is as great as it ought to be on a natural growth of population. He would find that the rising figures conceal a steady loss since the days when Bishop Williams issued his warning. And the figures themselves are, as every bishop knows, not correct statements of actual membership.

Chiefly, however, the disaster is one that statistics do not disclose. It is the loss of intellectual prestige. Scholars in the ecclesiastical sense the church assuredly has: men who can read the Bible in Greek and Hebrew, men who can write learned books on a hundred subjects in which the modern world takes not the least interest. But how many learned men, as the world respects learning to-day, appear at our conven-

tions and congresses or in any way associate themselves with the church? The exclusion, by the blatant champions of orthodoxy, of these men and the college-trained men and women who look to them, even of the crowds of workers who now read their books, has reduced the Protestant Episcopal Church to the status of a slowly dwindling sect.

This is not the place to survey the entire development of the last thirty years, to say nothing of the earlier phase since the appearance of Darwinism, but it will be profitable to recall the main features of the struggle during the last ten years or so. Most people have fragmentary recollections of what has happened. Let us set things down, briefly, in their proper order and see if they contain any lesson for us.

I

Ten years after my theological classmate, Bishop Williams, had uttered his warning even the most obtuse and most resolute fanatics for conservatism received a shock. The enlistment of the young men of the country in the savagery of war had brought millions into close personal relation with the chaplains. The clergy of all denominations, many of whom had doubtless been in the habit of repeating the smooth assurance that the world is still "Christian at heart," now learned the real thoughts and sentiments of the majority of men in the prime of life. They were appalled, and a number of them published the truth in a pamphlet. The bishops fairly represented the situation by admitting that nine out of ten American men between the ages of

twenty and thirty were completely or even disdainfully indifferent to Christianity.

The papers read at the next congress of the church, in 1919, are published under the collective heading of *The Church and Its American Opportunity*. I shall occasionally quote from it in the following chapters and will here anticipate only a few sentences. The first speaker, a layman, editor of the *Churchman* (in other words, a journalist and a fervent Christian, or one who was in a better position than the bishops, to know the truth) struck the general note of the conference. I have not space for more than a few sentences from the burning pages in which this expert explained the true situation to the bishops:

Concerning sixty percent of the things which the Churches are discussing, is it not true that the plain man in the street can not for the life of him see what they have to do with Jesus Christ? This is how the Church has again and again proved a blundering custodian of the faith once delivered to the saints. We are carrying too much luggage. What we call our deposit of truth has grown too bulky. The world can be saved by about one-fifth of the bulk of religious truth which we apply to its problems The question is not whether all the things we teach are true. The point is that it does not matter much whether some of them (four-fifths, apparently) are true or not . . . Never since Christianity started its course has there been the slightest danger from heresy. The tragic danger has been that we have let the Pharisee speak for Christ (pp. 8-9).

The tragic waste of organized religion from the beginning has been that it has so often been administered by souls prematurely gray, incapable of risk and greatness. The Churches produce pharisaism more natur-

ally than they produce heresy. The time will come when laymen will discuss what shall be the entrance conditions to the Church of Christ and who shall have the right to approach the table of Our Lord (p. 11).

One speaker after another repeated this appeal for an abandonment of the stress on creeds and formularies. Dr. Lewis, rector of St. John's Church, Waterbury, said that so many millions remained outside because they think of Churches as places in which man-made theories about God and Christ and religion are taught. He said:

Some of our old formularies are relics of a dead past . . . Can we not with profit ask ourselves the question whether or not we may have set forth an utterly wrong idea of what a Church is and what church membership means and what religion really is? . . . Whoever we are, whatever we are, if we hear a call to the principles of life as Jesus set them forth and resolve to follow them as best we can, we then become churchmen and churchwomen. The Church is composed of people — not things or dogmas or ritual. A man cannot read himself out of a Church because he has not embraced these and adopted them (pp. 14-18).

Even the secretary of the Commission on the Revision and Enrichment of the Prayer Book, Dr. J. W. Suter, insisted that there is an irresistible demand for restatements as far as certain doctrines and beliefs are concerned; and the learned Professor Drown, head of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, made a weighty appeal for release from bondage to the creeds. Here are a few of his remarks as he explained on what terms the church would find an opportunity in America:

We need the most searching readjustment and restatement of Christian theology in the terms of life today. To make such restatement is the task of theology in every age. Every great period of theology has been a progressive one, for every true theology has spoken for its own time. Theology must be ever new, as it is not content with results that are laid unto the fathers but seeks the living seed that shall ever bring forth fresh and living fruit (p. 200).

Anyone who is in a panic on account of the unsettled condition of the Church is raising bogies out of his own fears or his own lack of faith. We need to be unsettled. The Church will not capsize, but it is in serious danger of slow progress . . . We need that in various centers of the Church's thought there should be honest, fearless, searching scholarship, a resolute desire to know the truth, a resolute will to carry that truth into life (p. 204).

Whether it is or is not heresy to demand that the clauses of the creeds be either reinterpreted or curtailed, to say that the church need not and ought not to concern itself with heresy, to urge the abandonment of doctrinal tests, I need not consider here. It is enough for the moment that these things have been freely and emphatically urged in church congresses and are, as we shall see in the next chapter, repeated by influential church writers everywhere. But the bishops, or the less learned and more conservative of them, were alarmed, and Bishop Irving P. Johnson rose to make the familiar and sonorous plea for doing nothing. He spoke contemptuously of this modern scholarship which was supposed to require a revision of the creeds. The business of the bishops was to preserve "God's word" from any change, and scholars who

said anything that was not consistent with it were "liars" he said.

A previous speaker has said of what Bishop Johnson called God's word:

Practically, if not officially, the Church has adopted the modern critical view of the Old Testament: it is taught in our seminaries and accepted by most of our clergy (p. 49).

This does not seem to have intimidated Bishop Johnson, but he must have blushed if he listened to the speaker who succeeded him, the Rev. Dr. J. H. Melish, rector of Holy Trinity, Brooklyn. The bishop had based his valorous declaration on the doctrine of "the apostolic succession." What must he and his reactionary friends have felt when, in the same hall and in the same hour, the audience was told by Dr. Melish that "none but the ecclesiastical caveman believed any longer in the apostolic succession" (p. 220)! Even scholarly High Churchmen, he said, "now admit that the episcopate was evolved in the Church not imposed upon it;" and, like several other speakers, he reminded the bishops and the church, in very forceful language, how this rejection of a medieval dogma deprived them of the powers that they pretended still to possess. He said:

The day is coming when we must abolish or define our House of Lords (Bishops) . . . No democracy in the world retains a senate sitting like a Curia or a Star Chamber (p. 224).

But I will quote later the violent language in which he criticized the bishops for their subservience to the wealthy and warned them that, unless they altered,

“the axe of democracy would be laid at the root of the Church.”

I am not here making a summary of the speeches delivered at the church congress of 1919. Passages from others of them which approach very closely the language of my propositions that were condemned by the bishops will be quoted in later chapters. For the moment it is enough to note that as early as 1919 there was a very widespread perception in the church that the day of creeds was over, or at least that the church, consisting of bishops, clergy and laity together, had the power to alter our formularies. On every side books and articles by Episcopalian writers were appearing making this same demand for the abolition of doctrinal tests and heresy-hunts.

There was, of course, not the least agreement either among the reformers or the conservatives. At least, if there was one point on which all agreed it was that literal belief in all the doctrines of the creeds and the Prayer Book could not be asked of anybody. If a caucus of the bishops had got together, as they did later at Dallas, and decided that every minister or professor must be expelled who did not believe in the creation of man, original sin, eternal torment and blood-atonement for sin (all of which were regarded by the compilers of the Prayer Book as just as essential and fundamental as the incarnation) the church would have been ruined. But neither bishops nor professors, neither fundamentalists, nor modernists, nor catholics, were agreed which doctrines of the Prayer Book might be interpreted and which must be taken literally; in plain English which might and which might not be rejected.

Everybody was a heretic, if heresy is a disbelief in some doctrinal formularies, but some were five per cent, some ten per cent, some twenty, thirty, forty, fifty and up to eighty per cent heretics. The state of the church had already become chaotic, and it did not seem possible that there would ever be another trial for heresy.

II

It was in these circumstances that I published *Communism and Christianity*. I have been amazed at the petty, frivolous, stupid way in which that book has been discussed and treated. It pointed to the only way to relieve the distress of the church and of individuals and to face the world with a consistent message was to leave the creeds in the ritual, so that the conservative would not be deprived of anything, but permit individual members of the church who appreciated modern culture to take them in a symbolic sense.

This would leave the church a distinctive institution with all its advantages, would completely reconcile it with modern or any future discoveries, and would remove every doctrinal bar to membership. Theologians might still dispute, but all the sourness and bitterness would leave such disputes, as the word heresy would now drop out of the ecclesiastical dictionary. My plan would provide a basis of sound and honest principle for the church and put an end to the popular jibe that half the ministers did not believe what they preached. And, since there were writers who, as we shall see, already refused literal belief in eight doctrinal formularies out of ten, and others who were permitted to demand the abolition of all doctrinal tests, my plan went only a

little further yet it would infallibly clear up the whole confusion at one stroke.

This piece of statesmanship never even got a hearing. No one, in fact, truthfully represented it to the members of the church, who were intimidated from reading my book by insinuations that it contained a tissue of atheism and bolshevism that could not even be discussed in a church congress. While it was clear to me that I had found the one way in which to secure peace with honor in the church, I found myself represented as a wrecker whose wish to remain in the episcopate and church could only be understood as a symptom of mild insanity. As will be seen in a letter now printed on the inside of the front cover page of *Communism and Christianity*, it was stated in the public press that the bishops at first evaded the demands of the zealots against me by saying that my mind was disordered. The fact that it was not possible in a small popular book to give the scientific and historical grounds of my position was perverted into a representation that I had no such grounds, and my economic views were used to inflame the large wealthy element in the church.

So the chaos continued. At the congress of 1922 there was the usual violent clash of statements and proposals. Mrs. Trowbridge, of Princeton, opened a discussion on the revolt of youth with a firm declaration, based upon her large and intimate knowledge of the young, that the great obstacle was that they disdained the churches and looked to the universities today for the truth. She quoted with approval the words of Canon Streeter:

The great tragedy of Christianity in modern times has been, not its failure to attract or retain the allegiance of the vain, the frivolous, the materially minded, but its failure to appeal to the idealists to-day.

The church she said, must be ready for "a sacrifice of tradition or prejudice or predilection." The congress must have felt that the confusion was worse than ever when the Rev. Dr. Bell, head of St. Stephen's College, followed on, as I will quote later, with a plea that the church might take a more lenient view of the sexual liberties of modern youth.

The debate continued futilely from day to day. Bishop Fiske boasted of the church's "unfailing amiability" (at a time when the bishops were discussing the idea of degrading me) and "our liberality in what we deem non-essential." But what the non-essentials were he was not prepared to say. Presumably they are just those doctrines which Bishop Fiske personally rejects and no others.

The Rev. Dr. Johnston made an earnest plea for retaining the Apostles' Creed alone as a standard of doctrine and "leaving belief in detail to the individual conscience and intelligence, provided the Church's own summary of the spiritual and intellectual value of the Creed be not departed from in the end" (*The Influence of the Church*, p. 62).

But the church has no such summary and the bishops have no power to make one. Dr. Johnston recommends this as the sole necessary confession of faith:

First, I learn to believe in God who made me (by evolution).

Second, I learn to believe in God who redeemed me (not in the old sense).

Third, I learn to believe in God who sanctified me (in some sense).

And the beauty of it is that, while Dr. Johnston says that his proposal involves no departure from our principle and our practice, I, the terrible heretic, could conscientiously subscribe to this new creed! He says that this is sound protestantism because we are not asked to admit anything that is not in Scripture, but "this does not mean Scripture interpreted officially, but it does mean that the individual has, as his final Court of Appeal, Holy Scripture plus conscience." As Dr. Johnston goes on flatly to reject the atonement as expounded by St. Paul in the Scripture, how far does he fall short in principle of my proposals? Yet the congress, which already regarded me as an outcast or a lunatic, listened respectfully.

A day was wasted on the Second Coming of Christ, and four out of five professors declined to take it literally. A few hours were wasted on psycho-analysis, and about the same amount of time was thought sufficient for social questions. Then Bishop Slattery returned to the creeds and said that "the credal requirements make a distinction between essentials and non-essentials." Where? "All essential principles stand out boldly," he said. Yet he must have known that the bishops themselves were hopelessly disagreed as to whether the trinity, the incarnation, the virgin birth, the atonement and the resurrection of the flesh are, in their literal meaning, essentials; for in most of the eastern dioceses modernist writers and preachers and professors reject them with impunity in that literal and traditional meaning.

The Congress closed, as usual, without having advanced one single step in the direction of getting order into chaos. Bishop Lawrence, of Massachusetts, then published a little work, *Fifty Years*, in which he brought to bear upon the subject his ripe scholarship as a professor of theology and his experience with men. This book has in its English edition a Foreword by Bishop Barnes, who frankly describes it as "a plea for constructive Modernism." This is what one of the most respected of the bishops said (at the very time when the bishops were being pressed to condemn me for heresy) about the creeds and the Prayer Book:

The form of expression of the faith in the formal Creeds or formularies or ritual—is an imperfect medium. It can never be an exact or full expression, and must be framed in changing forms to meet changing moods; or, if the form remains and the wording of the creed stands for generations, it must be interpreted and reinterpreted as the generations pass (p. 52).

Do we not make a mistake in thinking that the creeds are our chief instruments in binding us together in unity? Surely thinking alike has no such unifying power as common prayer, common association in worship, and a common loyalty to the great traditions of a common faith and a supreme loyalty to the Personal Christ (p. 59).

I cannot but feel that the Church is today placing undue confidence in her emphasis on formal creeds and their recital (p. 74).

If the Apostles Creed (the only one he would retain) is to be interpreted in the free way which I have already suggested that the creeds should be interpreted, as the free expression of faith in Christ, very good . . . What right has any Church, branch of the Catholic Church, to set up a bar of entrance to the Church

which is higher than that used by the apostles themselves? (p. 75).

Bishop Lawrence was already an old man, and decades of active work had prevented him from learning the full force of the pressure of modern science and history. I am not representing that he would go as far as I do. But the substance of his plea is that membership of the church must be tested by good works not opinions, and the "blatant champions" of orthodoxy, as Bishop Williams called them, congregated at Dallas, a month after Bishop Lawrence spoke. They acridly decided that there should be no change and appointed a committee to frame charges of heresy against me.

As Professor Lake tells us in his learned and contemptuous reply to them, only sixty-four out of the hundred and forty-four American bishops were present at this "robbers Council" (to borrow a name from early ecclesiastical history) no notice had been sent out that the question was to be raised; and many, even of the sixty-four did not sanction the action of the zealots. It was a veritable Star Chamber, as Dr. Melish calls, in some respects, the House of Bishops. It was, to use the words of another church speaker, a gathering of "souls prematurely gray." Or shall I apply to them this description from a work (*Common-Sense Religion*) published in the same year by Dr. Frank E. Wilson now the Bishop of Eau Claire and obviously aimed at them:

There are literalists and bigots with a single-track mentality who welcome the opportunity of casting a creed like a noose round their intellectual necks and fastening it like blinders on their spiritual eyes. The

narrower their outlook, and the more restricted their habits of thought, the more pleased they are with themselves. They practise a stilted relentless intolerance which they insist on calling religion, but which everyone else calls an infliction. They make creeds serve their purposes as fetters and barriers and inquisitorial probes (p. 31).

You see, I have no monopoly of strong language about the reactionary bishops! But, instead of using strong language, I want to say this, and say it very earnestly. How does the average educated member of the church like this situation that enables a handful of zealots to bring discredit upon the whole church? For the outside world, and every educated member of the church, knows that one thing alone moved these bishops to insist on literalism — sheer ignorance of modern science, history or philosophy. I have learned charity in the materialistic school which traces men's ideas to their environment, and these good bishops had spent all their lives in a world of medieval thought and medieval repression of wiser men than themselves and aristocratic formalism. But how long is the prestige of the church in the eyes of America going to depend upon these Rip Van Winkles of the theological world?

III

The immediate effect was, as everybody will remember, disastrous. Modernism, which had up to that time not been a recognizable body in America, as Professor Sterrett had said in the previous year, got together and poured out a bold literature. The outside world and the press scoffed. People said: Why you have at least

three churches angrily denouncing each other's opinions!

The worst blow of all was that the most learned body in the church, the faculty of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, issued a work which painfully exposed the ignorance of the reactionary bishops. All seven professors contributed, and Professor Drown, who was away in Europe, used even stronger language after his return.

In this book, *Creeeds and Loyalties*, the Dallas bishops were patiently taught the truth about the evolution of their "sacred and inviolable" creeds. They were, as I have shown in my work,* made by bishops with all the ignorance of their time, and it is folly to insist on them to-day. In particular these learned professors, the most highly educated among the ministers in the Episcopal Church, took two doctrines of the Apostles' Creed, the virgin birth and the resurrection of the flesh, and proved that they are not even warranted by Scripture. I will return to those points later, and also to the question of the incarnation. If, the professors said, you mean by the incarnation "the entrance of pre-existent divine personality into an impersonal human nature" (which, of course, the creeds and the Dallas bishops and many others do mean) they rejected even this. "Primarily," said Professor Nash, "creeds must be taken as professions of personal loyalty, of ideals rather than ideas," and the church must put them "in a subordinate position" and only ask of men: "Is the Church now, or do you believe she will prove to be, the mother of your faith, the school of your

* See the *Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism*, Vol. IV.

discipleship?" (p. 128). "Let the creed," said Professor Addison, "never stand between a follower of Christ and the fellowship of his Church."

It is a pity that some among these professors proposed, as in the case of the incarnation, to "interpret" the creed in a modernist sense. "What a pity Arius did not know that was what the creed meant," said Professor Lake, ironically, "or he would have signed it." Seriously, he added, these things "only disgust those who are without." Let us cling to the sound and sober element of the manifesto: the creeds are expressions of religious thought which the world has outgrown; and, while they should be retained, they have no right to demand literal adhesion from any man who finds the church "the school of his discipleship," or from any man who would join and embrace the moral ideals for which the church stands.

But the reactionary bishops are as deaf to learning in the church as to learning outside of it. Perhaps they were stung by the naughty epigram that was going about: that the coat-of-arms of our age is "an interrogation-point rampant, above three bishops dormant." At all events three bishops set out to prove that they were very much awake. They took my poor little Communism and Christianity and scanned it microscopically from beginning to end. Some one has facetiously said that the four marks of the Episcopal Church were, not that it was One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, but that it had bishops without authority, religion without mystery, an open Bible and a closed hell. They would show the scoundrel that the Middle Ages were not over.

So my twenty-three articles of heresy (they hesitate to make the list "forty stripes save one") were drawn up and presented to the bishops and me. While America was still asking itself whether its historic church of the English speaking people was really on the level of Dayton, while the church itself was hearing from its more learned members impassioned appeals to abandon doctrinal tests, the "souls prematurely gray" permitted themselves to be rushed by the "blatant champions of the faith" and announced a heresy-trial.

Oh, of course, it was to be a very brief hole-and-corner business, not like that stupid affair at Dayton. Bishop Brown was old and ill and feeble-minded. They would just get him in a quiet corner and tell him that his teaching was opposed to the (undefined) teaching of the church and shut his mouth. A little risk, perhaps. But they took care to include in his heresies that he was an enemy of capitalism, and so most members of the church would smell the sulphur at once. The press need not be notified, and Bishop Brown would not be permitted to defend himself, to draw out the trial and attract the journalists.

When will people learn that medievalism in religious thought means medievalism in a good many other things? With all the cleverness of their legal advisers behind them, the bishops found that their plan of condemning a heretic in the twentieth century without any fuss hopelessly miscarried. The American press made fully as much of it as it would if some bunch of farmers in Kentucky had burned a woman as a witch.

Relentlessly, as I had every right to do, I brought out the fact that they were determined to prevent me

from defending myself and that, instead of proceeding openly on a straight law of the church, however ancient, they proceeded on no principle at all. All America was shocked to see how the court wriggled when I pressed to know if I must subscribe to the *formularies in their literal sense or, when they vaguely spoke of a "reasonable liberty of interpretation," I asked them either to define the limits of this liberty or state on what recognized principles they granted it so that I could work out the limits for myself.* These men who were accustomed to speak of "the world" as something inferior or tainted did not dispense justice with the regularity of a normal secular court.

Well, I need not return to all this. I set out to publish that full vindication of my position that is contained in the volumes of my Bankruptcy series. If those volumes have "troubled the Church" and "encouraged its critics," you know whom to blame. Not only had I an elementary right to justify my position and claim real justice (not only was that right made stronger than ever by insinuations that I had superficially misunderstood scraps of science and history or that my mind was failing) but I saw that the greatest ultimate service I could do to the church was to force its members to realize the full pressure of modern knowledge and so override the hesitations of bishops who were ignorant of that knowledge.

Up to the present the bishops have succeeded in preventing me from getting a hearing before the representatives of the church assembled in the General Convention. There has been in the church a conspiracy of silence about my plan. Most members of

the church do not at all realize that I am advocating a serious, statesmanlike and indispensable scheme for putting an end to all this sort of trouble and enabling men and women trained in the full range of modern knowledge to enter and remain in the church when they will.

But surely, you may say, modernism is just such a plan, and it is permitted in the church! Then how do you explain that cultural (in the modern sense) poverty of the church to which I have referred? And how do you explain that the contradictions and confusion of modernist literature are just as intimidating to the outsider as is the confusion of the various Christian sects? The obvious answer is that modernists no more agree on the new meanings or interpretations of the old formularies than theologians of different sects agree on the old meanings. The very idea of finding new meanings in what the church has for fifteen hundred years declared to be "truth finally and divinely revealed" is repugnant to the modern mind. And the idea, which academic modernists put forward, of the church officially endorsing these new meanings and "reinterpreting" the creeds and theology is a sure road to disaster.

This will all become clear if I pass in review the vast amount of heresy that is contained in current Episcopalian literature. I shall confine myself to significant statements and influential writers, and the reader will not forget that behind each of them are tens of thousands of ordinary church members who read their books and agree with them. Not for a moment am I advocating that these writers ought to be tried for heresy. It is one of the plainest lessons of

this volume that a heresy-trial is now a blunder, an anachronism, a piece of folly.

But I am going to complete the justification of my doctrinal position by making three things clear: (1) that there is enormously more heresy in the church than most of its members imagine and the distinction between essentials and non-essentials is already meaningless; (2) that if the most advanced of these heretics fall short of me on one or two points, it is because, as their works prove, they have never candidly studied the science, history and philosophy which make my departures from literalism just as necessary as theirs, and (3) that their principle of reinterpretation leads to as great a confusion as ever, while my principle of symbolism will enable the church to turn all its energy from doctrinal quarrels to the work of the world.

I SEE

HE said, "I see." And they said: "He's crazy: crucify him". He still said: "I see." And they said: "He's an extremist." And they tolerated him. And he continued to say: "I see." And they rather liked him, but smiled at him. And they said; "There's something in what he says." And they gave him half an ear. But he said as if he'd never said it before: "I see." And at last they were awake; and they gathered about him and built a temple in his name. And yet he only said: "I see." And they wanted to do something for him. "What can we do to express to you our regret?" He only smiled. He touched them with the ends of his fingers and kissed them. What could they do for him? "Nothing more than you have done," he answered. And what was that? they wanted to know. "You see," he said, "that's reward enough; you see, you see."—Horace Traubel.

CHAPTER II.

The Revolt Against the Creeds

I was accused of "holding and publishing views contrary to the doctrines of the Protestant Episcopal Church." That is, if you mean to play fair, a very dangerous form in which to draw up to-day the indictment of a heretic. Of course, if you intend simply to get rid of a particular man, it is good enough. Your tribunal has merely to confront him with his published views, ask him to identify them and say, on its own responsibility: Those views are opposed to the teaching of the church, so out you go.

That was justice in the medieval church, but it is not the idea of justice in this "degenerate and materialistic age." The very first question in a secular court would be: What is the teaching of the church? The answer to this question would be a very real, very serious, very difficult question to-day.

If the bishops had been compelled, seeing that, after all, they made a grave attempt to lower my prestige in the civic community, to bring their case before a secular judge, he would have read through any set of formularies that were produced, and he would then have put this question: Do the doctrines of the fall of man, original sin, of atonement by blood for sin, of eternal torment, of three persons in one God, of the virgin birth of Jesus, of the incarnation, of the miracles of the New Testament, of the bodily resurrection of Christ, of the resurrection of the flesh and the second coming of Christ at the end of the world constitute so many articles of the teaching of this church?

The answer would have to be, no, since, as we shall see, if the reader does not already know, every single one of these doctrines is rejected, in the obvious sense of the formularies, by influential priests in the church and their followers. I say nothing here of clauses like "the descent into hell," and "sitteth at the right hand."

Let us be frank and serious. Bishop Fiske in his later works makes merry over the difficulties which, he says that he finds, keep young men out of the church. People generally are so ignorant as to what the church teaches that these young college-men talk to him about such obstacles as Adam and Eve and Jonah and the whale present. How marvellously easy the work of the church would be if that were all. But the difficulties of educated people everywhere are far deeper; and, to meet them, the church permits its apologists to reject, in their official and traditional sense, at least eight out of ten of its formularies.

Let me give at once an illustration from a work of a theologian, one of the leading teachers of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Professor Drown—a man whom even a bishop could not describe as "a shallow sciolist of a new philosophy" and who is not one of the most advanced liberals. Some years ago he published a work called *The Apostles Creed Today*. Of the fourteen clauses of that creed he rejects ten in the sense in which the compilers of the creed meant them to be understood. I will quote his words on each of these points in later chapters. Moreover, in the life of Dean Hodges by Julia Hodges there is a letter (p. 220) from the dean to Bishop Slattery highly commending Drown's book as "clear, interesting, and informing,

a good combination of conservative and liberal ideas."

Now certainly any person who wanted us to find the teaching of the church to-day in the creeds would refer us to the Apostles' Creed, yet one of our leading theologians and instructors of ministers declines to take, or says that it is not necessary to take, ten out of fourteen clauses in their obvious meaning, and the Dean of the school warmly recommends his work and evidently considers that one of the leading bishops agrees with him! Our bewildered secular judge would then ask: Does your church at least enforce the literal acceptance of the other four clauses as a condition of membership? That is the only sense in which they can be said to be the teaching of the church.

And the answer must be that it does not, for all of them except one are interpreted in different ways by different writers; and the one which all take literally is theologically the least important. It is the statement that Jesus "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried." One might almost say that even this is "interpreted," for the compilers of the creed certainly meant that Jesus died on the cross to save men from hell. Read that meaning out of it, and it becomes just an historical statement the evidence of which most historians would declare very unsafe. So not one entire clause of the Apostles' Creed is the teaching of the church in the sense that the obvious or any other particular meaning of it is enforced upon all its members by the church.

I

This will be proved by ample quotations in the

special chapters of this book. First let me show how far that revolt against the creeds, of which I have already given many illustrations, has spread among both clergy and laity. There are four forms in which this revolt may be expressed. It may be demanded that the creeds be abolished or omitted from the ritual and all public professions, or that they be altered in their wording, or that they be reinterpreted by the church under the guidance of its theologians, or simply that they shall remain as historic forms in the liturgy or worship yet the reciter shall not be understood to make any profession of personal belief in reciting them.

There are not very many who expressly demand that the creeds be abolished, and I have already given a very sound reason. The Prayer Book is saturated with the doctrinal formularies of the creeds, and the kind of revision of that book which many desire would still leave it on almost every page using the language of the ancient creeds. However, I will take here just those who in general terms resent the imposing of doctrinal tests for membership in the church and demand that there shall be no insistence on literal adherence to any formularies. Then we will take those who would have the creeds "reinterpreted" under the guidance of theologians and finally those who would retain at least the Apostles' Creed as a part of the ritual without involving the individual in any literal profession of faith.

Dean Hodges tells us in his life of Bishop Potter how that wise old prelate, in the closing year of the last century, ordained a man, Dr. Briggs, who had been expelled from the Presbyterian ministry for heresy and

was loudly denounced as unfit to be received into our church. Bishop Huntingdon, of Central New York, had described Dr. Briggs' criticism of the Bible as "offensive by its impertinence and amazing by its audacity," yet Bishop Potter ignored all the heresy-hunters and ordained Dr. Briggs. Hodges tells us that Bishop Potter was interested all his life "in the Gospel of Jesus rather than in the Gospel about Jesus, in faith rather than in the faith." (p. 119).

Much more outspoken was Bishop Williams, whose eloquent plea against driving brethren "into the dark and cold" and "shutting out multitudes" by insisting on "ever-changing forms of theological dogma" and "by-products of creed and dogma" I have already quoted. Let me give a few out of scores of relevant passages in his *Valid Christianity for Today*:

I have my vision of the ideal Cathedral Church. It shall be a great and free Church, a Church for the people, all the people, where every wayfarer shall find welcome, not by the chance graciousness of some hospitable pew-holder, but because the House of God is the rightful house of all his children (p. 122).

Faith means primarily and essentially, not the accepting of dogmas but trust in a Person (p. 126).

If Jesus could tolerate and cherish among his dearest friends and among the highest officers of his kingdom an agnostic Apostle, surely the Church can afford to keep in the hospitality of her fold today the earnest-minded—indeed devoted—men who love Jesus and all he stands for but may not yet be able to say any creed, even the simplest. At present the Church is apt to shut them out by dogmatic requirements which they are too honest to comply with (136).

There ought to be a welcome at the Lord's Table for all who in sincerity and faith love the Christian ideal

as realized in Jesus Christ, whatever be their present doctrinal opinions (138).

All creeds are only symbols . . . they are not fences to keep our straying feet within the narrow paddocks of orthodoxy; they are rather flags to follow (151).

I want no new creed, particularly no modern creeds. The man who refuses to take literally the ascent into heaven must in all reason allow others equal liberty to interpret other articles more in accordance with modern knowledge (152).

You may remind me that Bishop Williams did insist on one essential, "the Personal Christ and his teaching," but read that in the light of his bold and explicit declaration that, as Jesus admitted an agnostic Apostle, the church "ought to admit such modern Agnostics as Professor T. H. Huxley" (p. 136). Over and over again he pleads for a church that is open to all men who can subscribe to its moral requirements, though they may not accept a single doctrine.

Almost in the same year Bishop Brent gave the W. Bolden Lectures at Harvard, mainly to our students of theology, and he was hardly less liberal. In the published lectures (*Leadership*) we read repeated passages like these:

Our worriment today is too much over the intellectual and ecclesiastical forms of Christianity when it ought to be chiefly over what the life should be in modern conditions (226).

The Church has laid an over-emphasis on the importance of theological assent (237).

When we review the past and see the number of dead theologies which once traded under the name of Christianity and compelled assent, it is enough to move us to theological caution and generous considerateness (238).

The Church of the future can only be one which

makes the life and faith (as distinguished from theological assent) of its Leaders (the bishops) its first care and its conspicuous feature (239).

In that attitude Bishop Brent persevered to the end "There is no reason whatever" he says in his recently published Duff Lectures, *The Commonwealth*, "why a united church should not revise or change its doctrines." We shall see as we proceed that he himself rejected, in their literal sense many doctrines which other bishops regarded as essential.

A few years later (1912) Professor Du Bose, an expert theologian and a very prudent and cautious writer, published his autobiographical work, *Turning Points in My Life*. Over and over again we find in the book such passages as these:

The articles of the Creed may properly be required to be repeated for entrance into the Church, but only so as they are outwardly confessed and accepted as being the historic, organic, and developed faith of the Church, and assuredly not as all digested, assimilated and converted into the actual life of the incipient member . . . There is a great deal which we may outwardly confess as to the faith which nevertheless to be compelled to profess as in its totality our personal, subjective, actual and attained faith would simply involve us in either self-deception or hypocrisy (23).

By all means let the Church guard and preserve her faith, order, and discipline, her creeds, her ministry, and her worship. But let her neither indulge the weak fear that these are really endangered or compromised by the fullest freedom conceded to and exercised by her ministers nor imagine that danger of heresy can be averted by the suppression or by the expulsion of that freedom (140).

Bishop Fiske has taken in later years to using severe

or ironical language about his earlier associates, but he has not changed his mind about the need to drop the insistence on literal adhesion to the creeds, "Most of us," he says in his *Confessions of a Puzzled Parson* (p. 77) "place our whole emphasis on the fact of Christ's own life and teaching. The core of Christianity is the belief that the heart of God is as the heart of Jesus." We must insist only on essentials, he says; but his idea of essentials would, as we shall see when I tell his heresies in later chapters, make the hair of orthodox bishops stand on end. He speaks with surprise of people who "seem to think that acceptance of a creed gives precisely the same importance to the fact of the Resurrection as to certain theories about it" (p. 76) and by the "theory about it" he means the statement of the creeds and the belief of most of the church that the body laid in the tomb was restored to life! But let us leave particular heresies until later.

How Bishop Lawrence, in his *Fifty Years*, repeated the bold plea for intellectual liberty of Bishop Williams I told in the first chapter. He would retain only the Apostles' Creed "interpreted in a free way." But he did not insist even on keeping that, and he did insist that, if it were retained, "it must be interpreted and re-interpreted." He did not he said, believe in "thinking alike" as a bond of unity. We shall take up his own extensive heresies later.

Bishop F. Spalding, again, was a notable, one would almost say notorious, heretic. His biographer, the Rev. Dr. Melish reproduces letters from which we now learn that he fully informed his father, the elder Bishop Spalding, before he was ordained that he refused to

subscribe literally to the creeds. He already rejected the beliefs in the inspiration of Scripture, miracles, the vicarious atonement, the resurrection of the flesh and other doctrines. In the seminary itself he had learned these heresies, yet no one advised him that this disqualified him for the ministry. "I should think," he wrote to his father, the Bishop of Colorado, "that it is not fixity of interpretation that is the essence of creeds but rather that the essence of truth, variously interpreted, is that for which creeds stand" (77). His father described his views as "pure rationalism" but made no objection to his ordination; and, though his views were so well known that zealots protested, Frank was consecrated bishop before he was forty years old.

There are still many who remember the sensation that was created when, in 1913, Bishop Spalding wrote an article on Christian Unity in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Here are a few sentences from it which show how thoroughly he agreed with Bishop Williams and Bishop Lawrence:

Writers of creeds are rarely able to see clearly when their task is done, and the attempts of the theologians to substitute for the religion of Jesus their various theological speculations have caused more disunion than peace.

We are not interested in preserving dogma but in saving life.

Christian unity will never come until the followers of Jesus Christ realize that his religion depends, not upon exact thinking, but upon Christ-like living.

His sister, a prominent church worker, was, says Dr. Melish, "as rationalistic as himself," and she never wavered in his belief to the time when he was killed.

Bishop Slattery was what one might call a diplomatic liberal, but his attitude is not obscure in such passages as these:

No form of words can ever mean quite the same to succeeding ages. The Scripture and the Creeds are in constant need of interpretation (The Master of the World, p. 41).

With our fuller knowledge of the natural world, with the centuries of Christian experience, with the memory of saints and clear thinkers, the Creeds are richer, stored with larger, more definite meaning than they had for the Christians of the first few centuries (42).

That is the full principle of modernism, and we shall see later to what heresies it led Bishop Slattery. "A fear of heresy," he said, his biographer tells us, "and a fear of contamination are foreign to the spirit of Christ." (p. 245). "Whatever men say," he says again, "is overshadowed by what men do and are." (p. 246).

When we turn to the scholars and divinity professors of the church, we naturally find as much heresy as among the bishops. This will appear later, and here I must give a few general expressions of attitude toward the creeds. I have already spoken of the professors of the Harvard School who published a work expressly to show how the creeds are under the control of the church not the church under the control of the creeds.

Professor Nash takes up the point that at least the essentials in the creeds must be accepted literally "by those who wish to stay within the fold," and he replies, as I said, that the bishops have no power to lay it down that certain clauses are essential and others not essential. "As for the individual's own decision," he adds (Creeds and Loyalties, p. 137) "it is bound to vary

widely." I wonder how many of our bishops took up this challenge of one among the most learned professors at a leading seminary when he told them that they have to leave it to the individual conscience to decide what can be taken literally and what not.

Professor Addison, in the same work, says emphatically (p. 166): "Let the creed never stand between a follower of Christ and the fellowship of his Church." Dean Hodges, for years head of the same school, says (*The Episcopal Church*): "Faith, not the faith, is necessary to salvation. To follow Christ is Christian faith: to define him is theology." Canon McComb, professor of the same seminary, says in his *Christianity and the Modern Mind*:

The crowning need of the hour is for men who will do for religious truth what Socrates did for theology: bring it down from the clouds and make it minister to the commonplace needs of plain men and women (p. XIV).

It is in the Christian consciousness of the individual and the age that the court of appeal (as to dogma) is to be found (10).

II

It is not possible to draw a sharp line between those who would drop the creeds and those who would retain them and leave it to the individual conscience to decide what the reciting of them means. Some who resent the enforcement of doctrinal tests do not say which alternative they prefer, while many are not very firmly fixed as to whether they would or would not retain even the Apostles' Creed. Laymen, like Professor R. M. Wenley (professor of philosophy at Michigan Uni-

versity but so loyal a member of the Episcopal Church that he gave the Baldwin Lectures in 1909) would abolish all the creeds. "Let us drop the creeds frankly," he says in the lectures (*Modern Thought and the Crisis in Belief*, p. 193). In fact, there is so much in these lectures that shows what our scholars think when they have no theological chair or ecclesiastical office of which they can be deprived that I may quote a few sentences.

Professor Wenley takes as the text of his book a saying of one of the most zealous lay members of the Church of England, Lord Hugh Cecil: "The evidence is overwhelming that the doctrines of Christianity have passed into the region of doubt." Here there is no distinction of essentials and non-essentials; and, as we shall see in a moment, none was meant, but to any man who finds it strange I would quote a curiously candid admission of Bishop Fiske at the Congress of 1922. He cites this passage from Dr. Waterman:

To what end is Protestantism moving? It has moved from certainty to uncertainty. It must go on from uncertainty to unbelief . . . It is an end inevitable. Unbelief must come.

And Bishop Fiske says that this is "true enough of the general tendency of Protestantism, both outside our own communion and within it, to make us chary of broad schemes of unity."

Professor Wenley recognizes this situation and wants every doctrinal condition of membership abandoned:

If it be true, as many tell us, that the collapse of dogmatic Christianity forms the most significant among contemporary movements, we need not lose our heads

and give way to panic . . . Traditional ideas, like present opinions, are no more than essays to prefigure (symbolize) religious truth more completely. For the truth of religion cannot be brought into question any more than the truth of nature, no matter how much or how often we may be led to revise our manner of formulating both to our meagre understandings (35).

Whatever religion may be, it is not a set of formulated doctrines . . . The central and dominant fact in religion is its imperious call for a new way of life, and this seeks freedom as its indispensable condition . . . The human soul chains itself at each succeeding sunset, and, with the glow of the next dawn, it would fain strike off the shackles (37-38).

The old elevation of doctrinal and intellectual assent above life and moral worth must go by the board. Festooned with sacred memories as the old propositions are, a worse thing than this glimpse of historical truth may well befall us if we persist in blindness to their real nature (186).

He says, in fine, that the church must make up its mind "whether the permanent elements of religion are to remain fettered, perhaps stultified, by hypotheses relevant to the fourth century," and, to avoid this, doctrines must be treated as "of historical interest only" and we must "drop the creeds frankly."

I commend this work of Professor Wenley to the notice of those imperfectly informed, superficial churchmen who fancy that all the trouble is due to a conflict with science. He speaks in the name of philosophy and biblical history not science, yet he would not have a single doctrine imposed upon any good man or woman. And almost equally drastic, and far more disrespectful, is a churchman who was even better known in philosophy than Professor Wenley. I mean

the Rev. Professor J. M. Sterrett, professor of philosophy at George Washington University and rector of All Souls Memorial Church, Washington. It was, by the way, Bishop Williams who consecrated this expressly modernist church, and in doing so he said, Professor Sterrett tells us:

When I say the Apostles Creed, for example, I may believe something differently about God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, than the Christian father of the fourth century or my Christian brother in the next pew. Creeds are symbols in the double sense of the word, not scientific statements. They are flags to follow, not fences to keep our straying feet within the safe path of orthodoxy. As such they are constantly to be reinterpreted with the expanding enlightenment of the ages and the growing experience of the individual believer (*Modernism in Religion*, p. 12).

I wonder whether any bishop ventured to say to Bishop Williams that at least the belief in Father, Son and Holy Ghost was an essential with only one possible meaning?

Dr. Sterrett, as professor, preacher and writer, was for twenty years violently outspoken about the creeds and doctrinal probes. In a work he wrote in 1905, *The Freedom of Authority*, he scornfully rebutted the claims of the bishops:

The critical and historical studies concerning the Church have doubtless disclosed a vast amount of real ecclesiastical rubbish, trash, decayed branches from the growing tree, suckers that are needlessly and criminally draining its strength, fungoid growths, parasitic vines, superfluous clothing on the racer and armor on the warrior—things that do not make for edification or the propagation of the Church, and which, never-

theless, the Church holds to as essential (225).

This (conservative) temper has often led the Church's champions to commit the most glaring crimes against the very fundamental principles of morality and humanity, in order to maintain the old as the true and defeat the new as the false (225).

The whole method of the appeal to the individual assent to the literal form of untransmuted provincial confessions of faith (the Creeds) is false and vicious . . . It has had its day and is reaping its natural harvest of dissent and heterodoxy and wholesale agnosticism . . . Its modern straight-jacket confessions of faith can no longer be laid upon the back of recalcitrant Christians . . . The requiring such literal assent to novel and provincial formularies as a condition of membership is a modern barbarism that seems to be nearly outgrown (243-4).

How little it was outgrown Dr. Sterrett painfully realized in the course of time, and seventeen years later he returned to the attack in his *Modernism in Religion*:

The Church should have room for all those who are steeped in modern thought. But she cannot get them if she insists upon assent to belated conceptions (11).

The mass of the creeds and formularies is too antique and bulky and indigestible. Modernists within the Church can only swallow the creed whole by giving a symbolical interpretation to some of its clauses which were formerly taken literally (12).

Thank God I am not orthodox . . . I heartily thank my Heavenly Father that he hath called me out of this state of damnation (13).

The Episcopalians still print the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion in the back part of their Prayer Book, while many of all parties in that Church hope that they will soon be printed only outside the Prayer Book . . . They have already gone out of authoritative belief (Exclu-

sion from the Church for heresy is the murder of the new-born Holy Innocents 25).

Better let the fire burn up the rotten and decadent parts of the Church (36).

The largest part of Church doctrine has no official authority . . . All such doctrine has only relative worth and authority and so is changeable (47).

But quotation would be endless, and I will just string together a few gems from later pages of the book:

Dogma primarily means a plausible opinion Jesus did not encourage heresy-hunters . . . Finality means sterility . . . The clerical mind is monocular, biased and partisan . . . The most deadening of all heresies is that which restricts truth to the exclusive clerical mind . . . Give the laity more voice. Let the Church hear their desire for a new dialect in doctrinal conceptions . . . Creeds should be preserved in church services as works of religious art, but put them in the background when you come to the office of admitting new members . . . Is orthodoxy of intellect worth the trouble?

Dr. Sterrett, whose many heresies we shall see later, first suggests that the Nicene Creed alone should be retained, as it says nothing about creation and other inadmissible beliefs; but he yields to the feeling of some modernists, that it is simply part of what Hatch and many scholars call "the damnable heritage from the Greek Church," and in the end he would restrict the necessary beliefs (with modernist interpretations) to "God the Father, Jesus the revealer of God and Saviour of men, and the life giving Spirit." That, in the sense in which he reads it, puts out of court nine out of every ten among the traditional Christian doctrines.

Professor Loring Batten, of the General Theological

Seminary, reveals his hope that doctrinal tests will one day be abandoned in these words:

If the time shall ever come when there shall be but one fold and one shepherd, there will not then necessarily be a perfect Church; but one great element in her power will be that all the forces which make for Christian progress and moral purity will come from within (The Hebrew Prophet, p. 316).

I have already shown the attitude of Professor Drown and need add, until we come to particular heresies, only this from his Religion or God:

Theology is always changing because life changes, and therefore life must constantly be reinterpreted (15).

Of Professor Kirsopp Lake, the distinguished Anglo-American scholar whose years of teaching in America and great learning have given him a wide influence in our church, it is hardly necessary to speak.

For him "a creed is the petrification of opinion" and creeds ought "either to be dropped or preserved merely as a monument of the history of the Church." In his Religion of Yesterday and Tomorrow this professor of Christian History at Harvard makes a devastating attack on the reactionaries. He says in the Preface:

I have been unable to disguise my fear lest the Churches leave their intellectual house-cleaning too late, so that the generation now growing up will turn its back upon all organized forms of Christianity.

Two further citations from the book will suffice to show the attitude of one of the most distinguished scholars of the Church:

That the new world will have a religion of its own no one who is constantly brought into contact with the rising generation can doubt for a moment . . . I have myself sometimes wondered whether it would not be simpler to say that the creed is wrong and to cease affirming it, but the result reached is much the same, for very often in life, as in chess, bishops move obliquely (65).

Dean Hodges is hardly less drastic. He says (*Everyman's Religion*) that "the orthodox intellectual acceptance of a creed has no religious value whatever" (120) and that the church is merely "the ecclesiastical name of the organized good neighborhood" (250).

III

After these weighty pronouncements it is superfluous to quote the scores of modernist and liberal, lay and clerical, protests against the enforcement of literal belief or the retention of creeds that I could give here. I gave many in the first chapter. Read the strong language of the brilliant Rev. Dr. W. N. Cuthrie in the Foreword to his *Offices of Mystical Religion* (1927):

Doctrines petrify intuitions and pious imagination: Dogmas change them into awful duties, irrational and immoral . . . We attempt to become automata: mere mannikins of creed and canon: until religion appears to the alive and aware slavish weak-mindedness and a human disgrace. This is about where we find ourselves today in Christianity . . . Clearly the only hope is to ignore dogma — strategically. It was once an honest precipitate of a spontaneous process. It became obsolete, unintelligible, inoperative (XIII-XVI).

Read the appeal at the various congresses of dozens of ministers and church members. A representative

of the lay university world, Dr. Adelaide Case, of the Teacher's College, Columbia, and a loyal church-woman, pleads in her *Liberal Christianity and Religious Education* for a "reconstruction of the whole plan and process of religious education," a "radical revision" of the contents, "a better education of the terribly ignorant teachers." "Much of the present material," she says, "will be discarded and replaced by discussions of the great issues of our time."

It seems superfluous to quote Dr. W. R. Bowie and Dr. Leighton Parks, but I should like some of my readers to compare the language of Dr. Bowie with some of my own on the subject of creeds and heresies. I take the sentences from his *Inescapable Christ*:

Let those false constructions of religion which are built upon the sand go down—our formalities, our wanton little snobbishness of inherited possession which we mistake for congregational loyalty, our somnolent recitation of forms which we do not deeply mean (p. 11).

Does anyone suppose that Jesus holds in high importance the precise definitions which bishops set forth in pastoral letters and is disturbed that other men who love him find there an impossible framework for their minds? (73).

You are half bewildered half disgusted, at the attempts of many churchmen to lift into importance theological refinements and ecclesiastical pronouncements which you know have no vital consequence for our present time (175).

Or listen to this, which might be called the comment of the church on the condemnation of me by the bishops in 1924. Next year the congress opened with a discussion, Heresy, What it is and What we shall do with

it. Surely that was inviting a comment on what the bishops had done. Well, I was not mentioned. The bishops had labelled me bolshevist, atheist, a man of superficial learning and feeble understanding, not respectable enough to be discussed in congress, and not likely to trouble the church further in any case. But I should like to reproduce at some length (from the published report, *Problems of Faith and Worship*) what Dr. L. M. White, the chief spokesman, said on the matter of principle:

If departure from the standards of orthodoxy be heresy, who can be called without sin amongst us? (25).

When the Church sets herself against change as such, she is setting herself against the law of God (27).

The record of humanity is one long series of heresies and heretics. Every generation has produced its heresies, but where is our sense of humour, our gift of imagination, our sense of proportion, when we fail to recognize that what was called heresy yesterday is today a part of our orthodoxy? . . . Jesus did everything in his power to remain in the (Jewish) Church and to be obedient to its standards of orthodoxy (29).

The Protestant Church is today dying from a wasting disease due to the heresy of disunity . . . The Protestant Churches, our own included, have been builded on rubble . . . I suppose our standard of worship is the Book of Common Prayer, but how many of us could stand that test and not be found guilty of heresy? (32).

If the articles of the Christian faith, as contained in the Apostles Creed, are to be taken literally, and we are to say what we mean and mean what we say, could there be anything more in conflict with the facts according to science? I could not accept the creeds literally . . . Is it possible for any group of intelligent people who have studied the origin of the creeds to be

satisfied to make the creeds the test of Christian religion and of our Church's orthodoxy? What are these creeds? They are compilations of what theologians said during the first few centuries about Jesus . . . There is scarcely a hint in any of the creeds as to what the Christian religion really is (3405).

Do trials for heresy tend to purge the Church of hurtful influence? No, they only tend to increase the trouble (37).

To this vigorous attack on the action of the bishops a feeble defence was opposed by the editor of the *Living Church*. Oh, yes, he said, one felt that the Church ought to "do penance for its crimes" when one looked back over the history of persecution for heresy. But there were "extreme" cases that must be punished. Fortunately the speaker, Mr. Morehouse, cut the ground from under his own feet by imputing to modern heretics mean and dishonorable motives which everybody must have known to be poisonously untrue; and his own followers must have smiled when he said that recent physics had made the dogma of the resurrection of the flesh more acceptable, and recent biology was tending to vindicate the dogma of the virgin birth!

Of the four distinguished speakers who followed not one defended the prosecution of heretics. Even Dr. Delany, who is so very "orthodox" that, in the same congress, he held that the contents of the chalice do not come under the Volstead Act because it is not wine but blood.

The extent to which the delusion that recent science affords a basis for the supernaturalistic doctrines of orthodox Christianity is astonishing. Not long ago I listened to a sermon by a dear young man, delivered

in connection with a celebration of the Lord's Supper, in which he stated that the latest developments in the sciences of physics and chemistry suggest that the real presence of the body and blood of Jesus in this sacrament is now seen from the view-point of science to be possible, and that the miracle performed by the priest when he by consecration converts the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus is better explained by the doctrines of transubstantiation than by consubstantiation.

The truth is that no serious attention is paid by any physicist or chemist to either of these explanations of that alleged miracle. If any man of science receives the communion at all he feels that he is taking part in the oldest and greatest of dramas, the drama of human redemption which is true and helpful as symbolism but false and hurtful as literalism.

The preacher to whom I have referred probably meant that since matter is transformed in the stars, it may very well be converted in the eucharist. People will smile at his simplicity when they reflect that atoms of matter are transformed in the stars only because they are exposed to a temperature of hundreds of millions of degrees and a pressure of hundreds of trillions of tons. I am afraid it is typical of this new movement to make science square with theology to say that, if it is natural for atoms to be annihilated in such extraordinary conditions in the interior of stars, it is equally natural for them to be transformed in a piece of bread and in a chalice of wine on the altar! If the atoms of the bread and wine were annihilated as atoms are in the stars, the phenomenon would cause a terrific

explosion that would destroy the miracle-working priest with his church and congregation.

To return to what Dr. Delany said at the congress; he "welcomed heresy" and would merely set learned churchmen to argue with the heretic. And speakers in later phases of the congress returned to the point and complained that the intellectual class in America are alienated by "the tyrannies of an authoritative hierarchy." The Rev. Dr. G. C. Norton said:

The individual must, it seems to me, be guaranteed full right of freedom of an interpretation of any and every article of the faith. We must agree to this by virtue of the fact that even words and names are symbolical. In no other way can the Church enrich its life and evolve toward true Catholicity (288).

And after this general declaration we read that it does not apply to difficulties which involve "major issues." Was Dr. Norton induced to add that afterwards? And who, in church law, has the right to decide which are major issues?

But it is enough. There is, as even the secretary of the Commission on the Revision of the Prayer Book said, "an irresistible demand for restatement as far as certain documentary beliefs are concerned." There is a greater demand than that. There is a very widespread and weighty demand that no doctrinal formula shall be binding in its literal sense, and no member of the church shall be asked to say in what sense he accepts them, and official compliance to this demand is the only way out for the church.

Let me, in conclusion, say a word on this subject of restatement or reinterpretation. One scholar after

another who is in touch with the world of culture and the world of youth has warned the church that this is not only a useless, but a pernicious, proposal. Professor Lake charges with "intellectual dishonesty" ministers who "interpret" the creeds they recite, and he says that the practice "makes the ministry of the Church impossible for many thinking and instructed men."

It would be difficult to exaggerate the seriousness of the step should the church be induced to enter upon this policy of restatement or reinterpretation. The change itself would be a confession that the language of all the formularies is a purely human attempt to state religious truth, and the world would ask derisively what we mean by a "revelation" which the church continued to misunderstand for eighteen centuries and express in false propositions, or what we mean by all our modern eulogies of the simplicity of the teaching of Jesus when the entire church goes astray about the meaning of it for nearly two thousand years. To admit these things is necessary. To call solemn attention to them by officially publishing an interpretation of the formularies would be folly.

The old creed-writers were logical in the sense that they only meant, when they drew up the clauses, to say: "This is the genuine meaning of the words of Scripture, and these were literally inspired by God." The world regards that as an understandable mistake. But what is the world likely to say to a body of bishops, or of bishops, ministers and laity in the General Convention if it puts official "interpretations" on the old clauses? How much do you think it will impress

modern America to declare that not only the compilers of the creeds and Prayer Book were mistaken, but the writers of the Bible were equally mistaken (Genesis on the creation and fall of man, for instance, the Gospels on the virgin birth and the resurrection, or St. Paul on the atonement and original sin) yet the creeds are "true" in some artificial new sense? For if one thing is clear and certain, it is that any attempt to persuade the world that the writer of Genesis did not mean what he said, that St. Luke did not mean literally the virgin birth and the resurrection of Christ's body, or that St. Paul did not literally mean that Christ atoned by his death for an inherited sin, will be received derisively. And it will be the same with all the other "reinterpretations" that are proposed. Far better to leave them alone and let the individual find in them a symbolic expression of great truths that were not known two thousand years ago, just as we still say that the sun rises and sets or appeal to a man's heart.

Further, if the church were in the next year or two to set about this work of reinterpretation, as it is clumsily called, everybody knows that agreement would be possible only on a few minor points: just those points which keep no one out of the church, since it is already understood that no one need take them literally. Does any person seriously imagine that there could be an agreement to publish, officially, a new meaning or interpretation of the incarnation, the virgin birth, the resurrection, the trinity, the gospel miracles, inspiration or the atonement? Surely not. It follows strictly that there would still be an heretical modernist body far ahead of the main body of believers, and they

would, after an official declaration, be more likely than ever to be persecuted for heresy. And most people will acknowledge that by the time when, two or three decades hence, the whole church has got to the full modernist program of to-day, there will be new liberals, men who have absorbed the whole of modern thought (as our modernists have not done) clamoring for still more reinterpretations.

It is a useless and ill-conceived plan. It would neither give peace to the church nor conciliate outsiders. And since, on the other hand, there is not the least hope at present of securing an agreement to drop all creeds and doctrinal formularies, my plan is the only one with the character of sound ecclesiastical statesmanship. This restless, irritating, wasteful quarrel about creeds and heresy, which in its modern form has tortured the church and lowered its influence for two generations, must cease. There is only one way to end it; but it is, so to speak, a two-fold way: (1) the way of letting the supernaturalism of the Christian Bible, the Anglican Prayer Book, the Catholic Creeds and the Protestant Articles stand as it is without official interpretation; and (2) the way of allowing those who are in the church and want to remain or those who are outside but want to come in, to do so whether they accept the supernaturalistic teachings of these standards literally or symbolically or not at all, if only they desire and are determined to make the most of their lives by having them as long, useful and happy as possible and to help all others with whom they come into contact to have their lives so.

CHAPTER III.

Heresies Which the Bishops Overlooked

Someone seems to have warned or reminded the bishops, when they set out to try me for heresy, that there is, as I have shown, a mighty revolt against the creeds in the church. It would not therefore be advisable, if I demanded a standard of teaching by which my own teaching should be measured, to say that the creeds were such a standard. It would be a strange reply to all the bishops, professors and other writers I have quoted for a handful of bishops to declare automatically that the creeds are the official and binding standard of doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

So, especially as the one creed that anybody seriously wishes to retain to-day, the Apostles' Creed, is contained in the Prayer Book, somebody had what he seems to have thought the brilliant idea of saying that the standard of our teaching is the Prayer Book. Into what amazing blunders this obstinate conservative attitude betrays its victims! Not only had the bishops no right to say that a book of worship is a standard of doctrine, but in doing so they bound once more upon the minds of members of the church, not only all the dogmas of the ancient creeds, but large numbers of other ancient beliefs which the modern world had ceased even to discuss.

Let us imagine some religious but creedless and churchless man or woman reading one of the many very full accounts in the press of my trial in 1924. Since the bishops must take full responsibility for the statement that the teaching of the church (in the year

1924) is to be sought in the Prayer Book (for on that principle they found my teaching heretical) my imaginary inquirer would conclude that he must examine the Prayer Book if he wanted to know whether he could or could not join the church.

Imagine him turning over its pages casually. He reads on one page that the sea is going some day to "give up its dead" and "the corruptible bodies" of those drowned in it will be restored to life. He reads on another that a criminal has been worked upon "by the fraud and malice of the devil." He learns that "all men are conceived and born in sin" and that "none can enter into the kingdom of God" without baptism. He learns that God sends "immoderate rain and waters" and can prevent anybody from being drowned at sea or developing cancer. He finds he must admit that there are "three persons in one God;" that Christ literally rose out of the tomb and ascended to the sky: that he redeemed the world from hell by his death: that, in short, the whole medieval story from Adam and the Flood to the eternal torment of the wicked (who are represented as the majority of the race) is the teaching of the Prayer Book, which is now declared to be the teaching of the church.

But perhaps the inquirer feels that something must be wrong and he consults a few New York clergymen. The first he visits is a modernist who says: Take no notice of those old fools at Cleveland: if you are prepared to say that in some sense you see a revelation of God in the virtues of Jesus the church is open to you. The second minister tells him that perhaps it was a mistake to set up the Prayer Book as a standard, as there is a strong movement in the church in favor of

revising it, but the bishops really did not mean to do more than use it as a handy weapon against Bishop Brown: all the inquirer need take literally in it are such fundamental doctrines as the trinity, atonement, virgin birth and resurrection. The third minister rejects three out of four of the second minister's "fundamentals;" the fourth clergyman adds two or three (the second coming, heaven and hell) to them; the fifth . . .

Need I continue? You see into what a ghastly confusion this setting up of the Prayer Book as a standard has caused. No one in the church takes all the Prayer Book literally, and there is not the least agreement as to what doctrines in it ought to be taken literally. Does it matter? Yes, it matters very seriously, for it proves that whatever reasons the bishops had for prosecuting me they did not proceed on any principle or any recognized law of the church. I will make this clearer by showing that the bishops overlook numbers of what the church has always called deadly heresies. They could easily have found thirty-nine, instead of twenty-three articles of heresy in my book. But they overlooked sixteen because these were too openly and generally taught in the church. Whether any bishop was ignorant that nearly all the others also are openly taught in the church I do not know, but in the successive chapters of this book I will show that at the very time when they condemned me for writing these things dozens of other writers and preachers were saying most of them in the church and were regarded as honorable workers in its service.

I

First let me return to this question of essentials and

non-essentials. I am going to show in this book that there is not one single distinctively Christian dogma that is not with the full connivance of the bishops called into question by priests, professors or dignitaries of the church. I have already shown and will further show that well-known bishops openly shared or fostered these heresies. Heresy is no longer timid. I am not going to quote ambiguous words of one or two writers and ingeniously prove that they contain a hidden heresy. I am going to quote scores of rejections by well-known ministers of the teaching of the church in regard to the birth, miracles, divinity, atoning death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, as well as the doctrines of creation, fall, trinity, heaven and hell. That is a list, not of "essentials" only, but of the full range of distinctively Christian doctrines.

Let me quote a statement of "the real, authoritative doctrine of the Church of England." That is the professed aim of a work published as late as the year 1868 as the official code of doctrine: *The Doctrine of the Church of England, as stated in Ecclesiastical Documents Set Forth by Authority of Church and State in the Reformation Period between 1536 and 1662*. This is the common teaching of the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Church of England. And it assuredly gives no non-essentials and does not dream of reasonable interpretations. It says, after giving the Apostles' Creed:

Whosoever will be saved before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith. Which Faith except every one keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly . . . First be it noted that all and singular the twelve articles contained in

this Creed be so necessary to be believed for man's salvation that whosoever being once taught will not constantly believe them, or will obstinately affirm the contrary of them, he or they cannot be the very members of Christ and His Spouse the Church, but be very infidels or heretics and members of the Devil, with whom they shall perpetually be damned.

We are ordered to accept every word of the Creed as "infallible verity" and "perfect doctrine apostolic," and we must not "seek help at the devil's hands by any means of witchcraft or sorcery."

In this medieval strain the work covers the whole ground of the Creed. We incur hell if we do not believe that God is "three persons in one substance;" and that the First Person "did beget the Second of His own substance by eternal generation" and "did create, form, and make of nought heaven and earth;" and that "all bodily sickness and adversity which do fortune unto me in this world be sent unto me by His hand."

We are, under pain of damnation, to believe of Jesus Christ that he was "eternally pre-ordained and appointed by the decree of the whole Trinity to be our Lord," and that he "suffered His natural body to be slain and His blood to be shed for remission of sin." We have to believe that the devils got power over men "by fraud and deceit;" that we were "born in sin condemned to everlasting death, subject and thrall to the power of the devil," and all our powers of body and soul were "so blinded and corrupted and poisoned with error, ignorance, and carnal concupiscence," that men could do nothing good until Christ came to deliver them. A dozen pages make this the most cardinal of all doctrines of the Christian religion and leave no am-

biguity about it. The race was "cursed" for "the sin of man and his disobedience." If man had not sinned, it insists, "he should never have died but should be immortal." For Adam's sin all men are born under condemnation to hell, from which the atoning death of Christ saves them.

Naturally all other doctrines about Christ are represented as equally essential. He was literally and physically "born of a Virgin." He literally went down into hell to "triumph over the devil" (there are three pages of this) and his soul then returned from hell and entered his body again. That he physically and literally rose from the dead is the foundation of "the greatest part of all the mysteries of our Catholick Faith." He literally ascended to heaven, and his human nature is "inseparably and indissolubly conjoined and united to the Deity." Unless this had taken place we have "no hope of everlasting life." "We shall rise again in the selfsame bodies and souls that we have now."

On the last day Christ will "in the very visible form of his natural body appear unto the bodily eyes of all the people of the world," and "all the peoples of the world that ever were or ever shall be shall appear before him in their very bodies and souls." Christ will be accompanied by the angels and "shall sit openly in the clouds of the air." It will take men unawares, as they will not understand the "signs and tokens," and the wicked "shall be punished in body and soul eternally with fire that shall never end." This horrible fate, moreover, is calmly predicted for the great majority of the race:

Like as all the people and beasts, which at the time of Noah's flood were out of his ark or ship, were all

drowned and perished, even so all the people of the world, be they Jews, Turks, Saracens, or of any other nation, whatsoever it be, which either for their infidelity, heresy, or schism, or for their indurateness and obstinate persevering in mortal sin, be separated and divided from the members of the said Catholick Church, and so shall finally be found either to be out of the same Church or else to be as dead members thereof, shall utterly perish and be damned for ever.

It is said, repeatedly, that God "shall stir and raise up again the very flesh and bodies of all men, women and children that ever lived here in this world," and that neither man, woman nor child shall be saved without baptism into the church. We are all "born sinners, through the transgression of our father Adam . . . Wherefore, seeing that out of the Church neither infants nor no man else can be saved, they must needs be christened and cleansed by baptism."*

In many of the quotations I make in this book we shall find our writers impatiently or cheerfully talking about such doctrines as original sin and atonement as popular misconceptions, or perversions of the church's teaching at one or another period. It is hardly honest. What I have now quoted is the official authoritative teaching of the entire church until the nineteenth century. There has never been any official altering of that doctrine, never any official sanction of a new discrimination between essentials and non-essentials. Yet there has in practice been so mighty a revolution that a bishop who proposed to-day to try a man for heresy on the standard of doctrine I have

* For much more of all this see my *Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism*, Vol. IV, *Philosophy*, pages 102, 130, 156, 208, 246, 267.

quoted would be regarded as insane. What is more, and this I will now proceed to show, there is not a single line of that official statement of the church's teaching that the bishops do not permit to be rejected in our literature. They used the canonical machinery of the seventeenth century to condemn me, and they recklessly dropped an essential part of that machinery—the official standard of doctrine in defense of which it was constructed.

II

In the first place, the essential presupposition of all this teaching of the church (that it is a "revealed" story given in "inspired" writings) is quite generally ignored to-day. Let us have no quibbles about the meaning of the words. All the sophistical reasoning by which some have sought to prove that the Bible is "inspired" and "the Word of God"* yet full of errors has conciliated nobody but rather alienated large numbers. New meanings of the word inspiration are so many avowals that the church went astray for ages and that there is no such reality as the faith once for all delivered to the saints. In every theological seminary a theory of the compilation of the Old and New Testaments is taught to-day that a hundred years ago would have been condemned as crass heresy. It is far better to recognize candidly that the Bible itself nowhere claims to be inspired or to be the Word of God. Certainly the poetic language of a few Jewish prophets does not justify any man in saying that the whole book, of which they form a thousandth part, claims to

* See my *Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism*, Vol. V, *The Bible*.

be inspired or to be the Word of God. In fact any man who accepts the common theory that the Jewish leaders of the fifth century B. C. "revised" the Old Testament in the way they did cannot use the word inspiration in any sense whatever.

And it is hardly necessary to adduce evidence to prove that the new view of the origin of the Bible is generally taught in our seminaries and openly advocated to educated congregations. At the 1910 congress the Rev. W. L. Caswell said (p. 49) and none contradicted him: "Practically, if not officially, the church has adopted the modern critical view of the Old Testament. It is taught in our seminaries and accepted by most of our clergy." It is more than twenty years since Professor R. M. Wenley was invited to deliver the Baldwin Lectures, endowed by Bishop Harris "for the establishment and defense of Christian truth." In the published lectures (*Modern Thought and the Crisis in Belief*) he rejects the Prayer Book view of the Old Testament very emphatically:

Prior to the Exodus we know nothing, and the actors mentioned (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Joseph) must be viewed as legendary figures . . . Moses must be taken, in great part as a legendary, in some part as a mythical, figure. David, a brigand sheik originally, is clothed upon imaginatively till he actually becomes a vicegerent of Jehovah . . . Nothing in the Old Testament has fallen so hopelessly upon the evil fate of false representations as the prophetic literature (pp. 127-8).

And he is not much more respectful to the inspirational theory of the New Testament:

If we start from quite critical premises, we must come to the conclusion that we have no absolute cer-

tainty that a single saying in the Gospels was uttered in that precise form by Jesus himself (161).

Conservative and radical critics are in agreement perforce on one point at least. The facts necessary for a life of Jesus in the objective or historical sense simply do not exist. We are dependent mainly upon conjecture and inference that involve us in constant uncertainty (163).

But Professor Wenley comes so near to my own condemned heresy about Jesus, which particularly offends the modernists, that I will reproduce further passages later.

We may take it with Bishop Spalding that "the majority of Anglican scholars accept the documentary hypothesis of the gospels" and still more emphatically the modern version of the origin of the Old Testament. That theory is at all events, accepted by every writer I quote in this volume, and some say bluntly, as Professor Lake does, that this modern research, by biblical divines, "shows very plainly that the Bible is not the revelation of God to men." As, however, almost the only part of the Old Testament that makes statements that some regard as fundamental to Christian belief is the first book, I will confine myself to a few quotations about this.

Professor Lake is as usual, the most outspoken:

The belief that God created the world has in fact been abandoned, but this is covered up by saying that evolution is the method of creation. That is not a fair use of language . . . Belief in the Fall and in Redemption has been abandoned . . . few educated men believe in the Fall and, without it, Redemption is meaningless (*The Religions of Yesterday and Tomorrow*).

Usually the form is more discreet, but the substance

is the same. Professor J. P. Peters, of the Philadelphia Divinity School, and one of our highest authorities on the Old Testament, says (The Religion of the Hebrews, p. 182) that "the original material of the Judean narrative (from creation to flood) is evidently the myths, legends, and traditions which the Israelites found among the Canaanites. These the Canaanites on their part had borrowed from the Babylonians."

This he proves in detail in his Bross Lectures, The Bible and the Spade, the general object of which series of lectures is, ironically enough, to prove the "divine origin and authority of the Christian Scriptures." He shows how the whole series of stories came indirectly from Babylonia, and he finds credit for the Hebrew version only in the way in which the writers worked up primitive myths into "so sanc, so lofty, so spiritual a system of cosmogony and theology." Unfortunately, he does not seem to have taken into account the ethical and monotheistic literature now discovered in Egyptian and Babylonian remains. However it is enough that the story of Eden and the Fall is borrowed from Babylonia, though Dr. Peters curiously gives it a sexual significance.

Bishop Brent says in his Duff Lectures (The Commonwealth, p. 68):

Science demonstrates that man has had no check in his development so great as to deserve the name of a fall . . . How or when sin entered the world we do not know.

Professor Loring Batten, of the General Theological Seminary equally accepts the modern version in his recent work, The Hebrew Prophet:

Taking the supernatural out of the Bible is a process much feared in modern days, but the prophet would scarcely have understood the alarm (4).

The Church finds much opposition from outside, but criticism is always more effective from inside. But those on the inside are so apt to become dead and blind like the lying prophets (315).

The hard facts so plainly told in the Bible have constrained men to abandon the unfortunate doctrine of mechanical (orthodox) inspiration (320).

Canon McComb says in his *Christianity and the Modern Mind*:

Today such doctrines as the inspiration and authorship of the Bible, the Fall of Man, and Original Sin, are calling aloud for reconstruction in view of the assured results of historical criticism and the science of anthropology (24).

Dean F. C. Grant suggests in his *Bishop Hale Lectures (New Horizons of the Christian Faith, p. 84)* how this reconstruction might be made:

The doctrine of the Fall is our human reading—back of moral experience into the story of human origins, a kind of superb myth.

But such things are neither interpretations nor reconstructions; and, when they are urged as such, the world impatiently rejects them. They are symbolical readings, on the line I recommend, of words which their authors meant in a totally different sense.

It is, however, superfluous to quote further opinions on the legend of the fall, which is rejected entirely by every writer I name in this book. Yet the compilers of the Prayer Book would at once have pronounced that the doctrine of the fall was quite cer-

tainly an essential, and any proposal to put it in the class of non-essentials would meet violent resistance even to-day. Dr. S. D. McConnell says in his *Christianity, an Interpretation* (p. 10).

It may be said that this doctrine of the Fall of Man is the substructure of every system of theology formulated within the last fifteen centuries. It is assumed even now that it accounts for the fact that the Word was made flesh. Nevertheless conscience repudiates it: science shows its impossibility.

That is one of the reasons why outsiders smile disdainfully at the glib assurances of so many of our writers that the conflict with science was a skirmish over outposts and has now ceased. The essential strain of Christian teaching in the Prayer Book, since the doctrine of God and Providence is not peculiarly Christian, is that men inherited the guilt of Adam and that heaven had to be reopened to them by the blood of Christ. When science in the last century proved that the Adam story was impossible, and theologians like Robertson and Bushnell began to "reinterpret" the atonement, there was a cry of anger throughout Christendom—a cry that the very foundations were assailed.

Indeed considerably more than three-fourths of Christendom still holds that the doctrine of original sin and atonement is fundamental. Bishop Lawrence lightly says that "we used to be taught that we were born in sin," but the ministers in the less educated parishes of his own diocese are still preaching it and defying the teaching of science. One is yet more amazed to find the secretary of the Commission on the Revision of the Prayer Book using, in a Church Congress (1919), such language as this:

There is also apparent readiness on the part of the whole Church, in all its parties or schools of thought, to repudiate the once current belief in original sin, as that doctrine was technically and exactly defined, wherever that doctrine is or appears to be (!) embedded in the Book of Common Prayer (The Church and its American Opportunity, p. 106).

But let us not cavil, or at all events let us take the word of Dr. Suter and Bishop Lawrence that even our fundamentalists now regard as non-essential the story of Adam and his fall, the inheritance of guilt, and the need for Christ to atone for that guilt. Even fifty years ago these things were deemed as essential as anything in the Christian faith. It therefore seems to follow that a doctrine ceases to be "essential" the moment it is found to conflict with modern science: a principle which will throw much light later on my own "heresies." Meantime it plainly follows from the passages I have quoted that one is free to reject entirely doctrines which the writers of the Prayer Book and the Articles and St. Paul himself very decidedly regarded as fundamental.

III

We shall see later how this light-hearted heresy about the fall has led to a complete revolution in regard to the atonement and I will here go on to quote other heresies which the bishops have overlooked. One such widespread heresy is the rejection of the miracles described in the Bible. Over those of the Old Testament I surely need not linger. The general acceptance of the evolutionary theory of the origin of the Hebrew books leaves every man free to reject any part as legend, rumor or myth borrowed from other nations.

But is belief in the miracles of Jesus essential or not essential? One can imagine the reply of the compilers of the Prayer Book and of the great majority of those who use it to-day. What would the bishops say? They dare not express an opinion. For more than half the members of the church belief in the divinity of Christ is essentially bound up with belief in miracles, yet I could quote fifty church writers of influence who explicitly or in cautious or vague language refuse to admit them.

Dean Grant says in his *New Horizon of the Christian Faith* (the Bishop Hale Lectures for 1928):

There is no general category of the miraculous save as a convenience of speech, or as a lumber-room of odds and ends, undisturbed remainders, and inexplicable in rational thinking. Its only significance is subjective (48).

Bishop Lawrence himself says in his *Fifty Years* (p. 27):

Modern science has convinced us that a just God would not and could not autocratically break through the laws of nature to work wonders . . . I have to say frankly that many events which I used to think miraculous, or what were called supernatural, I cannot so esteem now.

Bishop Spalding, his biographer tells us, rejected the miracle-stories even before he was consecrated, and Bishop Slattery says in his *Master of the World* that it is not essential to believe them. Professor DuBose repeatedly rejects miracles. "With the growth of observation and experience of the inviolability of natural law miracle has gradually disappeared" he says (*The Gospel in the Gospels*, p. 78) "I am no advocate

of miracles." Bishop Williams advises his readers, in his *Prophetic Ministry of Today* to abandon "old-fashioned orthodox conceptions of an immediate and magical omnipotence." Bishop Brent surely means much the same when he complains that "the followers of Jesus have persisted in separating him from the crowd and obscuring him under a veil of theological and ecclesiastical confusion." (*Leadership*, p. 218).

Bishop Fiske is, naturally, more discreet, but he admits, in the work he wrote in collaboration with Professor Easton, *The Real Jesus*, that "no one can deny the possibility in individual cases that events told in the New Testament as miracles were not really miracles at all" (p. 104). Who is going to say which these cases are or to fix a limit of them? And who is likely to be attracted to the church when Bishop Fiske explains away the miracle of the coin in the fish's mouth by suggesting that Jesus possibly meant his words as "a mere bantering bit of pleasantry."

Students of science will be even less edified to read that, not only is the natural order of cause and effect not rigid, but that "there are many signs that scientists to-day are themselves in revolt against such a conception" (108). How many scientists out of the first hundred in America could Bishop Fiske cite in support of that very misleading statement? What Sir Arthur Eddington says about electrons has no application to miracles.

The General Theological Seminary is not a citadel of radicalism, but Professor B. S. Easton, one of its foremost scholars and a particular authority on the historical value of New Testament literature, has to

support the liberals. In his *Christ in the Gospels* p. 146 he writes:

Our verdict on the miracle stories as a whole must be *non liquet*. We neither know that special miraculous forces were at work nor do we know that they were not at work.

Even a skeptic would hardly expect him to admit more than that there is in the Gospels no proof that Jesus worked miracles, which is what the above passage means, but he is more explicit in his *Gospels Before the Gospels*:

Even if we should find that the very earliest version of a story has all the contemporary characteristics, this fact tells us nothing at all about the truth or falsity of the facts related. The story may have omitted historical details in order to accord with the form (the supernaturalist theory of the writer) but such details as it gives may be meticulously accurate (134).

About the curse which Jesus wrought we do not know enough even to rationalize them (136).

We may be grateful that Professor Easton coldly rebukes the modernist attempts to "rationalize" the miracles. It is bad enough that dozens of writers, not necessarily modernists, explain the healing miracles as "faith-cures" or psycho-analytic performances, but attempts, such as are repeatedly made, to explain the miracle of the Gadarene swine by saying that the shrieks of a lunatic drove a herd of several thousand swine to such panic that they rushed over the cliff, make outsiders scoff. Dr. Bowie even attacks the miracle of the loaves and fishes on these lines: First (in defiance of the text of the gospels) he says that "we do not know precisely what happened." Then he

suggests (again in complete defiance of the text) that this is what happened:

Jesus first took all the food the disciples had—five loaves and two fishes—and blessed and used it; and then his contagious confidence drew forth from somewhere enough food to satisfy the hunger of the whole obedient group (193).

We may prefer the blunt candor of Professor Sterrett:

Jesus has been sacerdotalized into a magic worker . . . How can anyone appeal to an irruptionist, cataclysmic interference with nature unless he does not believe in the divine immanence in nature? (p. 126).

Canon McComb tells us that the so-called miracles were “extraordinary” but not “supernatural” events. Eighty per cent of them, he says, are “in harmony with known analogies” and on the rest of them “we await further light”—from science, of course (*The Future Life in the Light of Modern Inquiry*, p. 90).

The eighty per cent are the healing miracles. Modern developments in the way of faith-healing, Christian Science and hypnotism, are supposed to have shown that they may be taken as quite natural events. You must not, of course, press these things too closely. You must not notice that the instantaneousness with which Jesus is said to have cured fever, leprosy and other grave maladies has not the least analogy to anything in our modern experience or even our fairy-tales. You must not ask why Jesus seems to have left the whole of his followers in the belief that he wrought supernatural cures. Precision nowadays smacks of materialism.

The truths of the spirit need not have sharp outlines.

It is enough that there is such a thing in certain circumstances as the sudden removal of certain disorders by nerve-action, and so we need not boggle at all the extraordinary cures ascribed, in the fashion of the time, to Jesus; in documents, moreover, of such a nature that Professor Wenley, can say that they tell us almost nothing about Jesus "in the objective or historical sense."

Do members of the church really find that it is recovering the allegiance of educated men and women through permitting its scholars and preachers to "interpret" the story of the gospels in this way?

However, what concerns me here is that in all this we have a complete ignorance of the Prayer Book as a standard of doctrine. At the church congress of 1925, for instance, a large part of the time was devoted to the Place of Miracles in Religion. The first section of the congress was devoted, as I have already said, to Heresy: What it is and what we shall do with it. And not one of the dozen speakers on the two subjects had the least idea of appealing to the Prayer Book as a standard of doctrine, though every person in the room knew that in the previous year the bishops had imposed it upon me and in virtue of it declared my teaching to be heretical.

At this congress the chief speaker, the Rev. J. M. Groton, boldly took his definition of a miracle from a divine already condemned by his church as a heretic, Dr. Fosdick. A miracle is, he said, "God's use of his law-abiding powers to work out in ways surprising to us his will for our lives and for the world." Amazing! For nearly a century (to say nothing of the Prayer Book) theologians have contended against scientists

and philosophers that God can and does, in miracles, overrule or suspend the laws of nature. In all Christian history, through every phase of theology, the very essence of the miracle has been said to be that it transgresses or suspends the laws or operations of nature and therefore proves the presence of supernatural powers. Now we are placidly told that miracles are miracles but never supersede natural law.

And the way in which the Rev. Mr. Groton treated his subject, to the profound interest of the assembled delegates of the church, is still more remarkable. The healing miracles he fully accepts. "If I were a medical man" he said, "I should be greatly interested in the significance of these miracles for modern medicine." In other words, they were not supernatural or miraculous at all. But what does the speaker make of the nature-miracles, say, walking on the water, coin in fish's mouth, feeding five thousand and turning water into wine? Surely he sees the supernatural here. The Prayer Book certainly does.

These nature-miracles, the congress was blandly assured, "are of lesser significance!" But you soon see that this is only to prepare us to question the historical reliability of the narrative:

To hear these stories read as accounts of bald literal facts is a good deal of a strain upon the thinking people of the congregation . . . In dealing with the narratives of the raising of the dead faith again seems to be baffled . . . Taken literally, these groups of miracles are baffling. When treated symbolically, however, these miracles become religiously significant (*Problems of Faith and Worship*, p. 113).

You see the situation. In 1924 the bishops degrade

me for taking the supernaturalism of the Prayer Book symbolically. In the following year they applaud speakers at the congress who take it symbolically.

And Dean Grant, the other chief speaker, was no nearer to the orthodoxy of the Prayer Book. It was quite time, he said, for a change, as the general public's denial of miracles has now passed into "a silent pitying scorn for sheer thick-headedness and superstition." The teaching of science and the complete cessation of so-called miracles when the world became enlightened have changed the situation. Belief in the supernatural, Dean Grant says, is one of the essentials of faith (I have already quoted a dozen church writers denying this and shall quote a dozen more) but the miracles were not supernatural. The healing miracles were quite natural, and these "provide a clue to the others:"

They were extraordinary but not supernatural in the sense of opening gaps in the order and continuity of nature (138).

A Miracle is an unusual, unexplained, or inexplicable occurrence which awakens within us a realization of the divine power, wisdom, or beneficence (142).

Need I quote further? The doctrine that Christ wrought miracles, the New Testament claim that he wrought miracles, is rejected by three church writers out of six, at least, especially by the more learned and influential writers. The world is not in the least interested in "miracles" that do not prove the presence of supernatural power.

Very closely connected with this question of miracles is that of what are now called prayers of petition. The man who holds that a disease is cured, fine weather or rain secured, a battle won, or any material object

gained, as an answer to prayer really believes in a supernatural interference with the course of nature. The essential assumption is that, left to themselves, the agencies of nature would not have led to the result which prayer actually achieved.

Hence all those who deny miracles in the orthodox and only proper sense deny the efficacy of prayer for material benefits; and if there is one flouting of the Book of Common Prayer more flagrant than any other it is this for such prayer is the backbone of the book. Here I need not spend much time in quotation. Two years ago the *Christian Century* took the opinion of a large number of clergymen as to the advisability of prayers for rain, and the replies were almost unanimously in the negative.

It is rather amusing, or would be if it did not attract the disdain of outsiders, to see how this revolution in Christian belief and practice is explained away. Canon McComb says in his *Christianity and the Modern Mind* (p. 194).

The petitions of the child and of primitive man are for material goods. The prayers of the mature mind are for inward peace and spiritual uplift, for oneness with the divine, for power to do the work of life. The desire for these inner spiritual goods marks the death of the old type of prayer.

How placidly, again, the scholar ignores the actual belief and practice of nine-tenths of the Christian world! Why, there can be few churches even in New York and Boston and Washington in which hundreds do not pray constantly for material benefits and would be outraged if they were told that it is useless. How many out of the seven thousand Episcopal churches in

America would not at any time make public and official prayer for the health of an ailing President or for success in war?

Bishop Fiske and Professor Easton, in *The Real Jesus*, avoid that paradox but they run into others (p. 84):

The common conception of prayer is that it is an effort to bend God's purpose to our wish, and the sadness of the awakening is due to the discovery that the facts do not warrant the assumption. Thinking more of God, we find that he does rule the world by law, and that to grant our prayer sometimes would, it is true, be to break a link in the chain of cause and effect and throw the universe into ungoverned disorder.

The authors have thought that it helped the argument to use the anthropomorphic expression, "bend God's will," though that is certainly not the common conception, but the second sentence of the quotation is really monstrous. Scientists do not like the idea of a miracle, but they would surely smile at the picture of a universe "thrown into ungoverned disorder" because a cancer was cured or rain sent in answer to prayer. It were better to say shortly, with Professor Kirsopp Lake, that the only prayer a properly educated person can recognize to-day is "communion with God."

And here again we find a little irony in the discussion of the subject at a church congress. In 1922 Dr. J. W. Suter, secretary of the commission on the revision of the Prayer Book, addressed the congress on the work that was proposed. They were not going to touch "ultimate loyalties" (beautiful phrase) but they felt free to remove "a belief or pious opinion which has had currency in the Church at some given time."

More conservative delegates must have shuddered when they heard this description applied not only to original sin and the nature-miracles of Jesus, but to the orthodox conception of providence and prayer:

It is obvious, for instance, that a belief in regard to God's relation to sickness, suffering, and death which was at one time (!) prevalent and which has an altogether disproportionate expression in the Book of Common Prayer, is now no longer prevalent and requires elimination or at least modification (*The Church and its American Opportunity*, p. 106).

So the belief which pervades nearly every prayer in the Prayer Book is "no longer prevalent!" But the cream of the irony is that only two years after the secretary of an important Church Commission makes this comprehensive indictment of the Prayer Book in congress the bishops solemnly press it on me as the actual standard of the church's teaching.

Let me add one further reflection, and it ought to convince any candid person that my plan alone is fitted to save the church from its intolerable confusion. All this heresy (if heresy is divergence from the teaching of the Prayer Book) about miracles and prayer is a direct result of the pressure of science. It is a concession to the scientific doctrine of the uniformity of nature or the inexorableness of natural law. This concession, it is true, is couched in such terms that it does not show a very close acquaintance with science. Under pressure from philosophy men of science have explained for half a century that when they speak of cause and effect they must not be taken too literally, and every manual of science explains that a law of nature is not an "eternal law" (which is an expression

of the poet Goethe) but a statement of a fact, a reality, based solely upon observation, and realities do not owe their existence to laws or Gods but to matter-force-motion processes.

However the more important point is this. The new theory of miracle and prayer, based upon the rigorous determinism of natural processes, had just been generally accepted by the liberal writers I quote in this book and their followers, when Eddington and one or two others loudly proclaimed that we have found that there is no such determinism, no such inexorable rule of law, in the physical world. And, since Eddington is one of the small minority of "spiritual" scientists, his new attack on materialism was bound to be taken up by religious apologists. The result is piquant. The scores of writers and preachers who a few years ago insisted on new definitions of miracle and prayer, on the principle that the laws of nature are never broken, are now telling their followers, jubilantly, that "science" has discovered that there is no such thing in nature as an unbreakable chain of causes and effects!

The efforts of the ministerial "rationalisers" and "interpreters" to get out of this mess are pathetic, while ill-informed conservatives, picking up scraps of science from popular journalistic accounts, rush to tell their followers in their sermon for the next Sunday that science now lends support to miracles, virgin births, freedom of the will, resurrection of the flesh, and all sorts of ancient dogmas. No wonder the scientific men and their followers still hold aloof. There is, as I said, only one way out of the confusion. Have no doctrinal standards with an official and literal sense, but let members of the church individually place upon them

whatever symbolical significance they find most helpful.

IV

But I have not even yet exhausted the list of fundamental doctrines of the Prayer Book which, in their literal sense, I challenged, nevertheless the bishops would not stamp my challenge heresy because dozens of church writers freely reject the same doctrines. Such notable doctrines pervading the entire Prayer Book, most sternly regarded by its compilers as essential elements of the Christian faith, are the beliefs in eternal torment, devils, the resurrection of the body, and the second coming of Christ to judge the world.

It is hardly necessary to quote passages from church writers who reject what Professor Lake calls "the crude and horrible doctrine" of eternal torment. The finest instincts and sentiments of our generation have turned from it with such disgust that, cardinal as the doctrine is in the scheme of orthodox theology, the bishops ceased long ago to insist upon belief in it. Bishop Lawrence tells us in his *Fifty Years* (p. 57):

William P. Huntingdon, for instance, had been denied ordination for a time because he believed not in the eternal damnation of the wicked but in their annihilation; he stood his ground, and his bishop finally yielded.

Dr. Sterrett also tells us in his *Modernism in Religion* that before he was ordained, decades ago, he expressly told his professor that he rejected "the Anselmic theory of the Atonement, of sin and salvation, of heaven and hell, but it did not exclude him from

orders. Of one form in which the dogma is incorporated in the Prayer Book he says:

The Augustinian theology implied in the opening exhortation of the office of Baptism of children may choke in the mouth of the minister as he repeats it (p. 63).

That was the standard of doctrine which bishops presented to us in the year 1924. "Few men now believe in hell," says the Rev. Leighton Parks (*What is Modernism*, p. 130). But it not only remains in every set of church formularies; it is a cardinal doctrine in the oldest parts of the New Testament. There are ingenious folk who would prove that the fire that is never extinguished, in the Gospels, is not fire and is not eternal. But the Epistles of Paul are much older, and damnation and the devil are among their fundamental ideas. Paul's entire teaching is made void if one separates from it the idea of salvation from a place of torment, yet "few men now believe in hell."

The truth is that few educated religious writers now even glance at the ghastly old doctrine. They take it for granted that they have no need to put an interpretation upon this. It is a fundamental error of the early Christian faith and is now supposed to be confined to ill-educated Baptists and Roman Catholics.

It is the same with the devil. A church writer may, as Dean Hodges does, say that the devil is merely "the embodiment of the mystery of evil" or "a convenient symbol for the wickedness of the world" (p. 209). As a rule it is ignored as a belief that puzzles no serious person any longer. Listen to the surprising language

of Dean Grant in his Bishop Hale Lectures (New Horizons of the Christian Faith, p. 256):

It has been only in certain ages that Satan, or the devil, has been fully personalized and treated as a concrete individual.

One would like to hear from the learned Dean in which ages, from the time Jesus (according to the gospels) and Paul to the middle of the last century, Satan and the devils were not regarded as concrete individuals. The most learned theologians and the entire church in every age fully shared the belief, and it is shared by eighty per cent of the Christian world to-day. In some churches no scholar is permitted to question it now. You really will not conciliate people to the church by representations of that kind.

That even greater liberties are allowed with the Prayer Book doctrine of a future life I will show later. Let me conclude this list of doctrines which are most plainly contained, are in fact very prominent in the Prayer Book and the creeds, yet they are rejected by dozens of influential church writers, and no bishop dare move against them.

Take the resurrection of the body. Many liberal writers play upon the fact that in some formularies we read "resurrection of the body" and in others "resurrection of the flesh." Such quibbles are as futile as they are undignified. Not one single Christian writer or council throughout the whole history of Christendom ever recognized any distinction in meaning between the two phrases. The Apostles' Creed and the Prayer Book meant, and until modern thought gave rise to the liberal movement the entire church believed,

that this body or flesh in which a man spends his life will be miraculously restored to its organic completeness at the end of the world. It is not many decades since practically the whole Anglo-American church opposed cremation on that ground, and the doctrine is literally believed in that sense by the overwhelming majority of Christians to-day.

Professor Kirsopp Lake says that by resurrection of the body "probably the majority of educated Christians now mean personal immortality." He seems to have a very restricted idea of the number of educated Christians, but certainly the belief is rejected by nearly every one of the fifty or sixty church writers whom I quote in this book when they refer to it. It was one of the doctrines specially singled out by the professors of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge to show the Dallas bishops that the creeds cannot be enforced. In their book, *Creed and Loyalties*, Professor (Canon) McComb takes this subject, and he says:

We do not hesitate to reject the statements of the compilers of the creeds and the early Christian writers as quite irreconcilable with the teaching of the New Testament and with what we know of the order of the world . . . There is no resurrection of the flesh (p. 115).

He goes on even to ridicule this conspicuous element of the teaching of the Prayer Book and say that if it were literally true "we should rise again in such elephantine and grotesque proportions that the very angels might well gaze at us in deep perplexity, not unmingled with dread."

One likes this straightforward language, and the world respects it, more than the diplomatic language

of those who refuse to say that the formularies are wrong and the church has gone astray. Bishop Slattery, for instance, says in his *Master of the World*:

There have been periods when men have been more orthodox than the orthodox and have declared that the creed means, in the case of our resurrection, a revivifying of the exact particles of matter which have gone into the grave. I suppose no intelligent person believes that to-day (p. 42).

Did Bishop Slattery seriously believe that anything like half the forty million Christians of America have adopted the Modernist gloss on the creed? Or did he mean to say that the great majority of them are not intelligent? And is it not one of the plainest of facts that, instead of the belief in a literal resurrection of the body being confined to certain periods, it was the universal belief (apart from a very few allegorizing and suspected scholars) of every branch of the Christian church from the first century to the nineteenth?

Professor Drown is almost as bad in his reference to the belief in his *Apostles Creed Today*:

For many years it was contended that at the resurrection particles of the present body of flesh should in some mysterious way be brought together to form the body of the resurrection. We have outgrown this carnal conception (87).

"Many years" is a strange way of saying eighteen hundred years! It is an entirely modern theory, still confined to a minority of Christian believers, that on resurrection-day God will give a body (Canon McComb suggests an ether body) to each individual, but not restore his earthly body. Why, it has been the favorite theme of countless books and sermons all

through the ages that there was a sublime justice in the promise that this body which had suffered and fasted on earth should be enabled to share the joy of heaven!

I need not say that outsiders, instead of embracing the creeds now that this clause is "interpreted," find it a quite childish conception that in a world of pure spirits God should trouble to make bodies for some. They reflect even more disdainfully that in that case the word resurrection has lost every particle of meaning. It is the same when some writers point out that St. Paul speaks of a "spiritual" (or spiritualized) body. Unless this body is restored, nothing "rises" again. There is no resurrection in this liberal theology; for, on its own principles, the soul was never in the grave and the newly constructed bodies do not rise from anywhere.

But I am not concerned here with the weaknesses and absurdities of these new interpretations of old dogmas. I have to point out only that once more a cardinal doctrine of the Prayer Book is flatly rejected by liberal writers of all shades, even bishops.*

And it is just the same with the closely connected doctrine of the second coming of Christ to judge all men. "It seems hardly possible to-day to accept this belief in its original form," says Professor Drown (p. 85). But if we accept the new form that he would give it, that the phrase means "a divine judgment on the affairs of men" (that is to say, a continuous judgment throughout history) we are simply turning down as an error the teaching of all theologians from Paul onward, all church standards of doctrine, the teaching

* One of the bishops of the Review Court, openly rejected it before the Court, the audience and the defendant.

of the Prayer Book and the belief of all Christians until recent times.

I say nothing about such credal and Prayer Book expressions as "descended into hell" and "ascended into heaven" and "sitteth at the right hand of the Father." I do not waste time on these trivialities. Everybody now acknowledges that the first of these clauses is a hopelessly unintelligible myth of the first or second century, the second is (though, let us remember, vouched for by the same eye-witnesses as the resurrection) a blunder of people who believed in a flat earth, and the third a piece of poetry. I do not stress these things or dozens of phrases in the Prayer Book that could be criticized from the same point of view.

What I have done here is too serious and substantial to be sized up with these minor matters. My teaching, I was told, measured by the Prayer Book, the proper standard of doctrine is heretical. Well, I have now shown that eight out of ten cardinal doctrines of the Prayer Book (not isolated phrases or picturesque expressions, but doctrines which most Christians, to say nothing of the compilers of the Prayer Book, regard as fundamental to the Christian scheme) have been freely challenged in the church for the last twenty years and are rejected by many with impunity.

No one will suppose that I am maliciously or fanatically inviting the bishops to prosecute the writers and professors I quote; and on these points I have quoted only a few out of fifty that I could quote because the facts are known. The bishops dare not prosecute. They would deplete our best colleges of their best scholars and drive intelligence out of the church.

There is no fear of my words leading to these anachronistic heresy-hunts.

But I ask my church reader what he now thinks of the prosecution and punishment of me because my teachings did not agree with the supernaturalism of the Prayer Book literally interpreted. If others can peremptorily reject doctrines which are of outstanding importance in the Prayer Book and are assumed to be of first importance throughout, does it not seem like a trick of the Court of Bishops when I am bluntly told by it that I am a heretic and that, therefore, I must (in the interest of the faith once for all delivered to the saints of which every bishop must be a defender) be excluded from the House of Bishops? From the beginning to the end of the long drawn out trial the Court just insisted that my book, *Communism and Christianity*, deviated at twenty-three points from the teaching of the Prayer Book and stubbornly refused any closer explanation of the principle on which I was tried.

In this chapter I have given only heresies for which in detail I could not justly be condemned because the church is full of people who share them. Now we will go on to those heresies of mine which were condemned, and I shall prove by hundreds of quotations from books that circulate with impunity in the church that on most points and on a fair representation of my meaning, bishops, learned professors and popular writers are in varying degrees guilty of the same heresies.

UNDER the reign of Tiberius, the whole earth, or at least a celebrated province of the Roman empire, was involved in a perpetual darkness of three hours. Even this miraculous event, which ought to have excited the wonder, the curiosity, and the devotion of mankind, passed without notice in an age of science and history. It happened during the life-time of Seneca and the elder Pliny, who must have experienced the immediate effects, or received the earliest intelligence, of the prodigy. Each of these philosophers, in a laborious work, has recorded all the great phenomena of nature, earthquakes, meteors, comets and eclipses, which his indefatigable curiosity could collect. But the one and the other have omitted to mention the greatest phenomenon to which the mortal eye has been witness since the creation of the globe.—Gibbon.

CHAPTER IV.

Heresies About Salvation

Some of the readers who have not read my own condemned book or even the propositions extracted from it, but have been content to listen to hostile and offensive references to them, will begin to wonder what my heresies were. I have now shown conclusively that one is perfectly free in the Protestant Episcopal Church to maintain that no ancient creeds or formularies of faith ought to be binding on us to-day. If some among the bishops do not think so, they at least make no move when they see other bishops and dozens of influential and learned church writers proclaiming this freedom. So we have a plain issue. Either it is not heresy to question the compulsoriness of the ancient formularies of the faith as a condition of membership in the church or its ministry, or else heresy has a legitimate and honored place in the church to-day.

And, in case it be attempted to turn this dilemma by saying that the bishops of our time have (on what authority, or when, one does not know) altered the definition of a heretic so that it now means a man whose teaching differs from that of the church or Prayer Book on "essential" matters, we set out to find these essential matters.* I have shown, again with abundant evidence, which might be doubled if the point were questioned, that doctrines which until two generations ago

* Do see the section, pages 205-18, of the appendix to the first volume of this Bankruptcy series of seven books in which I fully vindicate all the alleged heresies for which I was condemned and punished. This section is entitled, An Ecclesiastical Comedy and was written by the famous Rev. Dr. Crapsey.

were certainly and universally regarded as essential, are so regarded by the bishops no longer. Such doctrines are the fall, the eternal punishment of the wicked, the miracles recorded in the Bible, the resurrection of the flesh, and the second coming of Christ; and to these we shall presently add the virgin birth and physical resurrection of Christ and other doctrines which only two generations ago it would have been deadly heresy to question.

A member of the church, a professor, priest or bishop, may to-day reject all these beliefs in the sense in which the church has always taught them and, since it has announced no change, teaches them to-day. The bishops intimate, by their silent approval of the circulation of an extensive literature which rejects them, that such a man need not fear being brought before a semi-criminal tribunal of reactionary judges who will solemnly rule that his teaching is not in accord with the teaching of the Prayer Book and he must be "degraded."

Under the circumstances one might expect a church that expresses a hope to recover some part of the better-educated section of the community to say, in plain English, what it is essential to believe if one would join it or remain in it. What would one think of a civilization that published no laws but just picked out an individual now and then and condemned him for "going too far in some of his disbeliefs?" It is hardly conceivable even of the comic-opera kingdoms of south-eastern Europe or the minor republics of South America.

Well, we must find out from what the bishops con-

demn and what they permit to be said what are, in their august esteem, the "essentials" of faith. Now the propositions of mine which they have condemned relate almost entirely to the nature of God and of Jesus Christ, and in the next five chapters I am going to tell what other church writers, who are not condemned, have to say on those points. I am surely permitted to go as far as other bishops or as professors in our seminaries. So I will give you a few hundred quotations from them, and then we shall be in a just position to say whether I go farther than they, and why, instead of merely listening to loose and slovenly assurances that "Bishop Brown goes too far."

And first I take the church doctrine about Christ that he was the redeemer of the world or the saviour of the human race. Quite a large number of those propositions of mine which the bishops found heretical refer to redemption and salvation, and it is clear that I was considered to be particularly heretical in this respect. In these propositions I said that poverty, exploitation, ignorance, war and cruelty are very real sins and miseries of the world from which there has yet been no redemption, and the only redeeming agencies are human. But I also, at least by implication, denied that Jesus redeemed or saved men from eternal punishment in another world.

Why I did this people would easily understand if they would trouble to read my books. To me the idea of redemption or salvation is a grand idea. I see a world still loaded with miseries that have come down through the whole history of civilization. I see, as I will prove later and will quote plenty of church writers

in support, that no serious effort to redeem the world of these miseries was made until modern times, and these efforts were made by men themselves. Therefore I see in the ancient idea of redemption a symbol of the great work of bettering the world which has at last begun, and I want the entire emotional power of the ritual used to encourage men in the real work of redemption from undisputed evils *instead of being* wasted in the service of an illusory salvation from what even church writers declare to be imaginary evils.

That is the real difference between me and the heretics who are as really heretical as I am but have not been condemned. I am not much concerned about intellectual propositions. Of course, where a dogma is discredited by the new truths we have discovered, as the doctrine of the fall (the chief foundation-stone of the doctrine of redemption) has in the opinion of all educated people been discredited, I must either reject its literal interpretation or accept a symbolic one instead. But academic truth is a secondary matter to the great work of ridding the world of poverty and war, cruelty and injustice. Therefore again and again in my Communism and Christianity I returned to the point that the world still awaits redemption, and that the redeeming agencies are science, including especially economic science and human idealism.

I

And that certainly puts me in opposition to the teaching of the Prayer Book, which says nothing about the redemption of the world from war and poverty but talks *from cover to cover* about the redemption of men by the blood of Jesus from eternal torment, the

penalty of sin. Since the days when Constantine is supposed to have raised the cross of Christ to a position of honor, it has been all over the world in every age the symbol of the Christian religion. To all the non-Christian nations of the world the gospel was essentially announced as the "good news" that the Son of God had died on a cross to save the race. Every line of the ritual led to the cross, for even Christmas was hailed only as the first step toward Good Friday. Ask eighty per cent of the Christians of the world to-day what their churches have taught them to regard as the very essence of the Christian message, and they will unanimously reply that it is the doctrine that Christ saved men from hell by his death.

Yet, my good simple-minded brother, it is no longer "essential" to believe this. The bishops permit church writers of great influence to call it a crude and barbaric idea. Bishops themselves call it a fire-insurance system. Apologists hasten to assure educated people whom they would induce to enter the church that this is a medieval theory that we have outgrown. For every word of mine which the bishops condemned because it was not in accord with the Prayer-Book doctrine of salvation I will now quote fifty words from other writers, including bishops, who are, or whose memory is, in great honor in the church. And in the end I will show that our bishops themselves, at the Lambeth Conference, solemnly endorsed the new theory of atonement which flatly contradicts the teaching of the Prayer Book on which they judged and condemned me and that if I am a heretic every member of the international Anglican episcopate is equally heretical.

Let me first show how this modern development was inevitable, yet it cuts at the very root of any scheme of Christian orthodoxy and makes a mockery of the distinction between essentials and non-essentials. For the beliefs from which this orthodox doctrine of salvation inexorably followed are no inventions of the Greek Father or of medieval theologians. They are, on the principles now accepted by all schools in the church, among the very oldest and most authoritative of Christian ideas.

The dogma is based upon two beliefs: the fall of man and the eternal punishment of the wicked. Even some of the Reformers of the sixteenth century had grave misgivings, as the language of the Thirty-Nine Articles shows, about the ghastly idea that the whole race was condemned for Adam's sin, but they could not exclude it without disowning St. Paul, and in any case they still had the doctrine that hell was the proper punishment of grave personal sins, and that Christ redeemed men from this.

I will not waste time here over the fall and original sin. Not a bishop on the bench would dare to call the Adam-story an "essential," or even a fact, though Wesley rightly said: "to deny the Fall saps the foundation of all revealed religion, whether Jewish or Christian." Our bishops and scholars toss it aside lightly as a myth that was found out forty or fifty years ago. And the belief in hell is just as extensively and light-heartedly rejected. These are precisely, and most particularly, two of the "unworthy conceptions of God" which the Lambeth bishops urged members of the church to abandon; but with the rejection of them orthodox Christianity goes too!

Let us realize what we are doing when we abandon the doctrines of the fall and hell. In the modern scientific study of the New Testament the earliest and most reliable documents are said to be the Epistles of St. Paul; and, next to these, the reports of the words of Jesus in which St. Mark and St. Matthew closely agree. We are told repeatedly and joyously that our scholars have at last shown how we can compile a reliable record of Christ's deeds and ideas. We shall see that other church writers flatly deny this, and that they are right. But for the moment let us listen to the claim. It is that in Paul and in the common source of Mark and Matthew we get very close to the actual teaching of Jesus; and the Epistles of Paul are said to be ten to twenty years earlier than the earliest Gospel.

Now, no one questions that St. Paul represents that the whole race died in Adam, or was condemned to eternal exclusion from heaven because of Adam's sin, and it was redeemed from that sentence by Christ. No theologian would now dream of building such a dogma on the few vague words of Genesis. St. Augustine and later theologians took it from Paul with whom it is the first line of Gospel message. So whoever rejects the fall to-day and tells us that it is just an ancient Babylonian myth that wandered through many lands until it reached the Jews and was developed by the school in which Paul was reared, is declaring that the very earliest Christian documents need not be followed.

I leave it to that extensive theological literature in which the world no longer takes any interest to discuss where St. Paul got the idea, whether he had a totally false idea of what Jesus taught or whether Jesus had

a false idea of the relations of God and man. It is enough that one is, apparently, quite free in the Episcopal Church to suggest that St. Paul, the supreme oracle of Christendom for fifteen centuries, did not know what he was talking about in the first principle of his message. I leave it to the same ingenious literature to find a subtler meaning in Paul's words or to explain why the earliest Christian documents are so emphatic about original sin and Christ's mission to redeem man from its consequences yet the later Christian documents, which are indirectly supposed to be traced to Christ's hearers, know nothing whatever about it or the alleged redemption. The books that have been written since the second century to explain the true meaning of "the simple message of Christ" would fill our Capitol Library.

But I must in the next place point out that, even if we accept the opinion of a few learned theologians that Paul got on to a totally false line of doctrine and "nearly strangled Christianity in its birth," as one theologian says, we are just as badly off. It is supposed that where the words ascribed to Jesus in Mark and Matthew agree closely we have a proof of an earlier document, a reliable compilation of the teaching of Jesus. Well, is there any passage which shows a closer agreement in the two gospels than that which we find in Matthew XVIII, 8-9 and Mark IX, 43-48? Mark is said to be the earlier gospel; and, the threat of eternal torment is in it more emphatic. But if Matthew is preferred as embodying an older document, the teaching is the same. People smile at the desperate efforts of a few theologians to persuade us that "everlasting fire" and "hell fire" do not mean, as the Jews meant, eternal

torture. Then there is Matthew XXV, 41-6, with its "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and all his angels," and Mark III, 29, with its even more horrible suggestion that for certain sins even repentance will not avert "eternal damnation."

Again I say that few take any serious notice of apologists who suggest that, in spite of the supposed guidance of the church by the Holy Ghost during nineteen centuries, the entire church misunderstood these texts until half a century ago, that eternal does not mean eternal and fire does not mean fire or any punishment at all. One notices that in recent "lives" of Christ (they still issue every year or two) our scholars very neatly avoid this point. Their pages glow with the virtue and wisdom of Jesus, and they take their material from the very documents which, in their oldest parts ascribe to Jesus sentiments which outrage the modern world, yet they never notice these sentiments. And then, on another page, they placidly tell us that "few men now believe in hell" and that it is a "crude and horrible doctrine."

We will take up later this point about the belief of Jesus in hell and devils and its relation to his character, but it is well to realize here what we are doing. When Bishop Lawrence airily says (as I will quote) that "we used to be taught that men were born in sin," when Bishop Slattery says that the idea that Christ "appeased the wrath of an angry God" is a pernicious piece of "popular New England theology," when Professor Sterrett protests that the orthodox belief makes Christ "vindictive" and "inhuman," they are in effect telling us that both Jesus and Paul were wrong and we may appeal to our moral sense against them. As

to the Prayer Book, Professor Sterrett says, as I quoted, that it would not be surprising if its language, on these points, were soon to choke all the ministers who read it.

II

But some of my readers may feel that the denial of the orthodox doctrine of redemption is not really so widespread as I suggest: that perhaps I have just picked out an incautious or ambiguous phrase here and there and, detaching it from its context, dressed it in the garb of heresy. So let me introduce you to a few of my more distinguished fellow-heretics. As I have just said, some of our scholars write lives or studies of Jesus and never say a word about what the official teaching of the church and the belief of eighty per cent of the faithful regard as the essence of his mission on earth. You know why. On the one hand, they dare not let educated readers suppose that they believe in redemption from eternal torture for sin, personal or original; and, on the other hand, they do not care to rouse the heresy-hunters by saying that they do not.

But every scholar in the church knows that of the sixty or seventy Episcopalian writers whom I quote in this volume there are scarcely five who do not accept what is called the new theory of the atonement, which flatly contradicts St. Paul and the Prayer Book, and there are not even five who believe in eternal punishment, which is a flat contradiction of the teaching of Jesus if we have any record at all of that teaching.

The new theory is thus defined in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*:

The death of Jesus is effective for Atonement in that

the contemplation of it awakens human love and gratitude and so moves the sinner to repentance, thereby enabling God's forgiveness of sin to become effective by rendering men capable of forgiveness. There is no other way in which Christ can take away sin.

Variations of the theory need not be considered here. Some naturally ask why we should be "grateful" for the crucifixion of Christ if it did not avert the anger of God, or why an exhibition of "love" should take so ghastly a form. However, we need not go into the ingenious explanations of all these things. The liberal, not merely modernist, writers whom I quote in this volume are agreed in rejecting original sin, eternal punishment and vicarious atonement, or the redemption of the human race in the sense of the Prayer Book.

Bishops first of course. And we naturally turn to Bishop Lawrence's candid *Fifty Years* in which subservience to creeds is disavowed. There we read (p. 25):

We used to be taught that we were born in sin: that each one of us, through the taint of Adam's sin and the fact of our own personal guilt would be lost unless the innocent victim prepared from the foundation of the world had borne our sins and by his sufferings and death had appeased the anger of God and ransomed us.

You see, Bishop Lawrence formulates the doctrine almost in the words of St. Paul, and then he airily tells us that the church used to teach that sort of thing. Should I be wrong if I suggest that it was being taught in hundreds of churches in his own diocese at the time when he wrote this? I think not. Anyhow, he rejected it and invited every minister to reject it. He says,

of the theologians, such as Robertson and Bushnell, who began the revolt: "To be sure these men were heterodox, but their ring was true."

Bishop Williams is even more severe on the official teaching of his church. In the *Prophetic Ministry of Today* (p. 52) he says:

The phrase salvation of souls has two interpretations. One concerns security in the world beyond. It often degenerates simply into a system of life-assurance and perhaps fire-assurance for a future existence. A nobler interpretation makes salvation ethical and moral.

It is a popular jibe at the claim of the church that it can save men from hell through the merits of Christ that it is an offer of fire-insurance. Surely I would have been put down as a double-dyed heretic if I had dared to repeat that joke! Well, here is the learned Bishop Williams raising a laugh on the part of his Episcopal readers by quoting it. Does he also like Bishop Lawrence, mean that the theory that Christ saved us from fire in the next world by his blood is merely a doctrine that we learned in the nursery?

Professor Du Bose obviously belongs to the same school. In the *Reason of Life* (p. 171) he says:

The only real pardon of forgiveness or remission of sin is the putting away of itself; and the putting away of the sin itself is possible only through the sinner himself.

In different words, "there is no other way in which Christ can take away sin" than by disposing the sinner to abandon it. It is the usual theory of reconciliation not redemption from a penalty.

I have already told how Bishop Brent rejects the legend of the fall of man and says: "How or when sin entered the world we do not know." That is so emphatic a rejection of St. Paul's basis for his doctrine of redemption that we do not need further words on the doctrine itself. I have told also how Bishop F. Spalding refused even before he was ordained priest, to accept the doctrine in any other than the modernist sense, and he certainly never embraced it in later years. Bishop Fiske, as I said, evades the point in his various works on Jesus, but Bishop Slattery is explicit enough in his *Life Beyond Life* (p. 246). He not only says that it is merely popular New England theology that "the loving Son of God, by his sacrifice, was thought to have appeased the wrath of an angry Father," but he insists that this doctrine is "a denial of the love of God."

And if we find this sentiment so openly expressed by distinguished bishops in the last ten years, we know what to expect of the professors and scholars of the church. One almost wonders if, even on so fundamental a point of doctrine as blood atonement, there really are any orthodox bishops in the church. How otherwise would their colleagues be able in published and authoritative works to talk about the orthodox doctrine as something one learned in the nursery, something that you may call fire-insurance? However, let me show by a few quotations that the same heresy is widespread among Anglican professors.

Dean Hodges, to begin with, thinly veils his heresy with modernist verbiage. In *Everyman's Religion* (p. 276) he says:

The fact is that Christ died for our sins. The philosophy is the explanation of the effectiveness of his death to save us. The fact shines like the stars: the philosophy varies like the theories of astronomers. But the fact only is of essential importance.

In other words, what the church and the Prayer Book say about redemption is a philosophical speculation about its nature, just as in the modernist theory of it, and you may take your choice. You may, unless you happen to be Bishop Brown, interpret it as you please.

But most of the professors who have courage to speak openly on the point are explicit enough. Listen to the learned Professor Sterrett, a preacher as well as a professor, in his *Modernism in Religion*:

When one reads the Gospels, he realizes how petty and selfish is the idea of a personal salvation from punishment hereafter. Yet for how many centuries such a salvation has usurped the rightful place in Jesus's thought of the Kingdom. Such a readjustment of emphasis is needed in this matter, perhaps a restatement of belief as to salvation being a state of fitness for service in the Kingdom (p. 31).

The modern conception of salvation which has come from the modern study of the life and mission of the Master is that one is saved just so far as he is working in the Master's spirit and for his Kingdom on earth (32).

Let me point out that we must no more be swept off our feet by the new dogmatism than the old. Episcopal scholars who are far more distinguished in biblical research than Dr. Sterrett, such men as Professor Easton, emphatically deny that Jesus had any concern whatever to found a social kingdom on earth, and say

that what Dr. Sterrett calls a "petty and selfish idea," to induce men to concentrate on personal salvation, was expressly the genuine mission of Jesus.

Of that, however, we will speak later. It is enough that Professor Sterrett, whose works had great influence, rejects the Prayer Book doctrine of salvation as emphatically as I do. It, he says, makes Christ "vindictive" and "inhuman." It is merely "the pagan notion of propitiating an angry deity," yet "this repellent view still lingers in the formularies and symbols of many Churches that have outgrown literalism and take it all symbolically" (p. 86). And he quotes an English archbishop who calls it "a reversion to the worst ideas of pagan sacrifice, savouring of the heathen temple reeking with blood."

I do not care to use the word "trick" in connection with so high-minded a scholar as Dr. Sterrett, but I must point out how, like Bishop Lawrence, he misleads the intellectual folk to whom he is appealing by representing that the Episcopal Church has "outgrown literalism" on this point. Only two years after he published his book I was condemned, and four of my propositions were condemned solely because they contradict the Prayer-Book doctrine of salvation. We do not edify the outside world with these misstatements. More than forty-four bishops at Dallas declared for literalism, and apparently, in view of my proposed trial, the tail succeeded in wagging the dog.

The professors of the Cambridge Theological School are hardly less outspoken than Professor Sterrett. Professor Loring Batten says in his *Hebrew Prophets*, p. 292:

Those deluded people (the Jews) fancied they could wash out the deep stains in the blood of bullocks, even as many evangelical Christians have thought they could wash theirs out in the blood of the Lamb . . . No sacrifice, no blood-bath, can ever take the place of earnest moral endeavour.

Note again how a belief that was emphatically taught by every branch of the Christian church and is still officially taught (if the Prayer Book is our standard of doctrine) is represented as the obsolete belief of a party at some time or other in the church.

Professor Angus Dun has a small work, *The King's Cross*, which is entirely devoted to the crucifixion of Jesus. Not a word is said in it about salvation from hell or appeasing the wrath of God, and that the author rejects the orthodox doctrine and follows the new theory is clear from such passages as this:

There is nothing in heaven or on earth that can reconcile save love . . . Nothing can bring alienated spirits together except love. Christ reconciles by the power of love (p. 77).

Professor Drown (*The Creative Christ*) is just as heretical; and, like so many others, he represents his view as the teaching of the church to-day and the blood-and-wrath theory as the eccentric and disreputable views of some eccentric Christians at some time in the past. He says:

The Atonement is certainly not a Christian doctrine if it supposes that some transaction takes place in the divine life which is not in accord with the ethical principles of the Kingdom of God. Such theories have been set forth. God's righteous law has been represented as satisfied by the punishment of the innocent,

a transaction utterly out of accord with any morality that can stand the Christian ethical test (p. 34).

If the reader would understand the extraordinary words of these professors, who speak as if the language of the class-room were the real teaching of the church, and as if the belief of eighty to ninety per cent of the members of the churches counted for nothing, I may explain that they delve into ancient history in search of theologians who did not accept the blood-atonement doctrine and set these against the universal church. They have suddenly discovered that Peter Abelard of the twelfth century taught the truth about the atonement; but they do not clearly inform their readers that he would, at the order of St. Bernard and Pope Innocent, have been burned alive if he had not recanted. The blood-atonement, which is now "petty" and "barbaric," has been the teaching of the Christian Church in Europe, in all its branches, since the fourth century; and, if it is not the teaching of the Episcopal Church to-day, why was the Prayer Book officially presented to me as the standard of doctrine? The fall and doom of man because of the disobedience of Adam and his redemption by the blood of Jesus constitutes the doctrinal warp and woof of the Prayer Book. If that is so, and no one can question it, why did none of these other heretics protest when I was condemned?

III

I have neither space nor inclination here to follow theologians in their learned study of what St. Augustine or St. Anselm or any other ancient father said about redemption. Beyond question the orthodox version as we have it in the Prayer Book has been the

official teaching of the church for fifteen centuries. It remains so until the church changes it. This is the actual belief of more than three-fourths of the members of the church and is the doctrine preached on Good Friday in more than three-fourths of its churches. Listen to Dr. S. D. McConnell (Christianity, an Interpretation):

The common moral sense has reached a stage at which it turns away from that dogma which has so long been exhibited as the very foundation of Christianity and as the true and evident interpretation of the person and work of Christ—the dogma of Vicarious Atonement (p. 22).

Its intrinsic incoherence and its ethical monstrosity compel its rejection (25).

It remains an idol of the imagination before which generations have prostrated themselves and whose grim hideousness is hid from the devotees by the smoke of their own incense. Of all the conceptions actually existent within Christendom this is probably the most widely diffused (26).

Not unworthy Christians alone but an unworthy Christ is the stumbling block (37).

That is truer language. The universal church has (note the bearing on the doctrine of the Holy Ghost) taught and believed for ages this doctrine of vicarious blood-atonement and hell and it was no theological discovery about St. Anselm or Peter Abelard but the "common moral sense" of a generation which is mainly non-Christian that has caused the revolt against its "grim hideousness."

That moral repugnance has, apparently, not yet penetrated to the mind of thirty or forty bishops who rule the destinies of the Episcopal Church, and it is

futile for professors to say, as Professor Kirsopp Lake does, that "belief in the Fall and Redemption has been abandoned." More candid is Professor Wenley in his *Modern Thought and the Crisis in Religion*. Being an ordinary university professor, not a teacher of theology, he need not be so diplomatic, but the book in which he uses language not far removed from my own is a series of Baldwin Lectures, founded by Bishop Harris "for the establishment and defense of the Christian truth." On this particular point he is content to say:

You may conceive redemption in mechanical or juridical or domestic terms: all prove to have been no more than pictorial representations (p. 35).

The official Christian bases his hope of salvation upon some few obscure happenings of which we know almost nothing in an obscure corner of the Mediterranean world of which we know little (226).

To come back to theologians, read the words of Professor Stewart in another series of bishop-endowed lectures, the Bishop Paddock Lectures, 1925 (*God and Reality*):

It were a sort of theological insanity to hold that God the Son redeemed mankind from God the Father (p. 146).

Surely an ironic commentary on all the language that has been used in the churches of the world since, fifteen hundred years ago, Augustine preached it to his flock in Hippo.

After these quotations it is hardly necessary to cite the preachers who follow the professors and bishops or the laity who listen to them. There is no such thing

as an enforcement of the Prayer-Book standard of orthodoxy in the church. At the Church Congress of 1922, before Dallas, Dr. R. Johnston, rector of St. John's, Washington, said:

There is a great variety of opinion and thought in the Episcopal Church. We have no official theory of the Atonement. Once the fact of At-One-Ment is accepted, the Church leaves its children free. I submit that this represents the practice of our Church in matters of faith.

The modernists have, you see, actually made an atrocious pun on the venerable word; though there is no more connection between At-one and Atone than between a friendly conversation and a cannibal feast.

Need I quote Dr. Leighton Parks? He says (*What is Modernism*):

The very meaning of salvation has been largely lost. Few men believe in hell, and, because they have become skeptical of hell, salvation has no meaning for them . . . We need to return to the fundamental thought of salvation, that it is not negative but positive: that it is not deliverance from something but deliverance to God (p. 130).

One would think that for the fundamental thought of salvation one ought to go to St. Paul. But St. Paul has fallen on evil days. Here is a passage on our present subject from another series of sermons preached in a New York church, if by an English preacher, Dr. W. R. Matthews (*The Gospel and the Modern Mind*) in the very year in which the bishops degraded me for not following the Prayer Book:

It would have been strange if St. Paul had moved so

long in close contact with communities saturated with these (pagan) ideas without being consciously or unconsciously affected by them (p. 65).

The arguments and conceptions which St. Paul uses belong to a world of ideas which we have left behind. Probably we must find different modes of expression for our day (72).

Or take this version of Bishop F. E. Wilson (*Common Sense Religion*, p. 142):

The Atonement means that the cross of Jesus Christ is the means of reconciliation between God and man; that when men are estranged or have estranged themselves from God, they find their opportunity for the restoration of the broken friendship in his cross.

So said the brilliant heretic Abelard, until they lit the fires to burn him. And they would have burned a man long afterwards in New England, and would have "degraded" him in New York half a century ago. But I will close with one more quotation, from a lay member of the church and a distinguished representative of the laity. Dr. Vida Scudder says on this point in her *Socialism and Character* (p. 356).

Among all ideas patent in historical Christianity that of the Atonement is today the most unpopular. Ugly travesties and crude forms, long abandoned (!) by all thinking people, are still attacked as if they were living faiths, with a repugnance which measures the wholesome horror they have inspired . . . All thought of propitiating an angry God or buying off a malignant devil has passed.

But has it? The church has not changed one line of its doctrine, as set forth in Article II in the Prayer Book, that Christ came "to be a sacrifice, not only for original sin, but also for actual sins of men." That

doctrine pervades the entire Prayer Book and is regarded as, if not the first, certainly a basic essential truth of Christianity.

I have pointed out that most of these writers I have quoted say, not merely that they do not themselves believe in the fall, hell or blood-atonement, but that nobody or scarcely anybody does so believe in the Episcopal Church. That this is grossly untrue of the church as a whole is obvious. But, since we must credit the writers with a positive meaning, it must be that in the higher-educated world in which they move few, if any, members of the church now believe that all men died in Adam and were saved from the penalty and the wrath of God by the death of Christ.

Let us not play tricks with words. The modern world really does not admire this kind of ingenuity. Atonement, redemption and salvation have meant a definite thing since the days of St. Paul. If a few Greek theologians or medieval heretics put glosses on the words, it does not alter their meaning. And any man who to-day denies eternal punishment and says that the death of Jesus was not necessary to save men from it simply does not believe in the basic Christian doctrine of the atonement, redemption or salvation. He believes in something entirely different, and he has to turn the old words inside out to cover his meaning. The modern world smiles when it is told that a few theologians of a materialistic age, in which the guidance of the Holy Spirit is conspicuously lacking, have, after nineteen centuries (since Paul) just "discovered" the real meaning of a fundamental Christian formula.

They have not. They have rejected an essential

Christian doctrine and substituted for it a new interpretation of certain words of the New Testament—to the exclusion of other and older words which biblical scholars declare more reliable. And when they protest that these harsher words of Paul are inconsistent with a doctrine of love in the gospels, they are again wilfully excluding the oldest words in the gospels themselves, that Jesus believed in eternal torture.

Therefore the situation really is that, under pressure of modern science (as regards the story of the fall) and of modern humanitarian sentiment (as regards hell) the atonement, one of the most essential of Christian doctrines, has become a non-essential. All these "discoveries" of theologians occurred after science had disproved the fall and the modern world had revolted against the idea of hell. There I may leave the matter for the present, returning to it in the last chapter.

EARLY in the fifth century Faustus, a Christian Bishop, said: "It (The New Testament) is allowed not to have been written by the Son himself, nor by his apostles; but long after, by some unknown men . . . These writings are a compilation of rumors and beliefs, not in harmony even with one another, published by them under the names of the apostles, so as to give the appearance of apostolic authority to all these blunders and falsehoods."—
Charles B. Waite.

CHAPTER V.

Heresies About the Virgin Birth and Resurrection

One can admire the industry and scholarship of those liberal theologians who have unearthed some Greek Father or medieval heretic who revolted from the inhuman doctrine that God condemned the race to eternal torment and that his wrath had to be averted by the judicial murder of Jesus Christ. But how can any bishop attach any importance to their discovery? It merely throws into bolder relief the fact that the salvation of men from hell by the blood of Christ has been the settled, official, compulsory teaching of the whole Christian church from the fourth century to the nineteenth. It is a dogma that is regarded as of primary importance in the Prayer Book to which I am referred as the actual standard of its teaching, and it is taught in most churches to-day.

Moreover, even the few who sought to humanize the dogma which was so emphatically taught by St. Paul and in part confirmed by Jesus' teaching of eternal punishment dare not go further. Jesus, they very resolutely said, was God. In him a divine being who had existed from all eternity entered into personal union with a human body and soul. And the grand proofs were his virgin birth, the miracles he wrought during life, and his resurrection and ascension. Even the divines who in the last century led the modern revolt against the fall, hell and atonement would have suppressed as a deadly heretic the man who questioned the virgin birth, miracles and resurrection. What everybody regarded fifty years ago as most emphatically essential is already a non-essential.

As we have seen, hardly one of the scores of writers I quote in this volume believes in the miracles. Some of the acts attributed to Jesus were faith-cures which are, they say, quite in line with modern experience. As to the nature-miracles, well, the reports got inflated, as reports do, before they reached the men who wrote the gospels, or Jesus had a magnetic personality and was able to do mysterious things like a spiritualist medium. Anyhow, no bishop now dare say that it is essential to believe that Jesus walked on the surface of a lake, made a hundred loaves out of one, turned water into wine, or raised the dead.

There remained the two supreme miracles of the virgin birth and the resurrection. Standing out high above all other days in the Prayer-Book calendar, which gives the annual pageantry of the church's festivals, are Christmas Day and Easter Day. It seems odd to ask whether the doctrines which are glorified by those two most intense celebrations of the Christian year are or are not essential doctrines of the Christian faith. What an amazing revolution, striking to the very foundations of Christian life, it would be if the bishops now declared that we are quite free to regard the virgin birth and the resurrection, the two central facts of Christian devotion every year for seventeen centuries, as errors or myths!

Yet they have declared this by remaining silent while scores of influential church writers not merely reject the doctrines but try to attract educated men and women to the church by assuring them that it is not necessary to believe in those articles of the creed. I smiled when, among the deadly heresies which the bishops thought so outrageous that I alone must be

selected from the great body of heretics for condemnation, I found this:

The birth, death, descension, resurrection, and ascension of all the saviour gods, not excepting Jesus, are versions of the sun-myth.

Most of the bishops are, of course, perfectly aware that even distinguished bishops of our church have taught in their published works that these doctrines are non-essentials, and learned professors in our seminaries openly reject them and train ministers to reject them. But was there even one bishop among those who condemned me who is so ignorant as not to know this? If so, the church had better consider whether in the long run it would not be better to depose bishops for ignorance rather than for knowledge.

Do not tell me that the point of offense of my proposition was the reference to the sun-myth, or because I grouped Jesus with other saviour-gods. Once the bishops allow us to reject as errors the old dogmas of the virgin birth and the resurrection (they themselves all reject the descent into hell and the ascent into heaven) why should they be concerned as to how those myths got into the Christian tradition? Are they being so funny as to condemn me because I trace them to the solar myth instead of to Frazer's vegetation-myth? Perhaps it will astonish them when, presently, I show that the very language I used, tracing these legends to sun-gods, had already been used by Episcopalian professors in lectures endowed by bishops for the defense of the Christian faith, as well as by one of the most learned dignitaries of the Church of England!

No, the point of my heresy is obviously that I deny the miraculous birth, atoning death and resurrection of Jesus, and I know nothing in the whole affair more wanton or discreditable to all who were concerned in my condemnation. Those doctrines are freely rejected in the church, in works which are intended, with the permission of the bishops, to present its faith to outsiders. I shall quote a score of respected representatives of the church who reject them. Even bishops have said so for more than twenty years, so that there is no excuse for those who would pretend that they are necessary dogmas in the third decade of the twentieth century. The entire body of modernists and very many others reject them, as I will amply show.

I

The old doctrine of the virgin birth is, fortunately, one that leaves no room for those modernist "interpretations" which, as Professor Lake says, generally mean "proving that a word can legitimately be used to express the exact opposite of the meaning originally intended." The mother of Jesus was, after his birth, either a virgin or she was not. Nearly all my fellow-heretics are candid about that. Jesus, they say, was, as the gospels tell, one member of the family of sons and daughters begotten by Mary and Joseph. With those writers who say that, after all there was a beautiful truth (the exceptional purity of Jesus) "at the root" of the legend of the virgin birth I have nothing to do. And no one has ventured to suggest that the writers of Matthew and Luke did not believe the virgin birth to be a fact and did not mean their words literally.

As to the writers, sometimes orthodox, who claim that modern embryology has made the virgin birth easier to believe, one can only hope that their words do not fall into the hands of students of science. Do they mean that because the zoologist tells of the birth without male parentage of certain worms and insects, or because the embryologist can fertilize a frog's egg by the prick of a needle or drop of acid, it is quite natural for one woman in the whole human race to have produced a child without a father? These things (and they have been said at church congresses) make us ridiculous in the eyes of the outside world.

It is a clear issue. Matthew and Luke do not merely say that Jesus was born of a virgin. They do not say that Jesus was "conceived in the mind of God," as one modernist makes them mean, or that the purity of Jesus is prettily symbolized by an allegory about the purity of his birth. They say clearly and at length that by a miraculous act on the part of God Mary conceived a child without commerce with any man. And because this story is not found at all (in fact, the opposite is said) in the oldest Christian documents (Paul and Mark) and there is no proof that it appeared anywhere until late in the first century at least, theologians have for decades called it into question, though the church had made it one of its most prominent dogmas. It is thirty years since the great Anglican scholar, Dean Rashdall, asked what any historian would make of a remarkable story about the birth of Napoleon which arose more than half a century after his death and was contradicted in all earlier documents. No one would look at it.

But the dogma was already challenged in the Amer-

ican Episcopal Church. In his Fifty Years Bishop Lawrence says:

Some thirty years ago I was convinced that there is no essential connection between belief in the Virgin Birth and belief in the Incarnation. There are, as we well know, clergymen, and numbers of them, who find it difficult, if not impossible, to accept the doctrine of the Virgin Birth . . . I am clear that with an honest heart they may join in the recital of the creeds (pp. 63-5).

You may please yourself whether you conclude that Bishop Lawrence did or did not himself believe in the virgin birth. He is careful not to say that he did. But he declares it an open question, a non-essential, and he denies the church teaching that it is intimately connected with the incarnation.

Professor Du Bose was more outspoken, though it is true that he sometimes used the diplomatic language, of which he was a master. In his Reason of Life he says:

When the two inevitable and inexplicable-seeming miracles of the higher generation and the resurrection of Jesus Christ are objected to, the true answer of Christianity is not an attempted physical explanation or justification of them. It is rather such a conception, realization, and appreciation of the spiritual necessities and realities (218).

In other words, the statements in the gospels must be read in a spiritual, and therefore not at all literal sense; and that this is the professor's meaning will be quite clear when, in the next chapter, I quote him expressly repudiating the doctrine of the deity of Jesus, which is the basis of the dogma of the virgin birth.

I will not claim that Bishop Fiske rejects the dogma of the virgin birth, though it is very suggestive that in his various works on Jesus, particularly the *Real Jesus*, which he wrote in collaboration with Professor Easton, he carefully avoids telling his readers what to think about the birth stories and takes the baptism as the first sound historical statement about Jesus. But Bishop Fiske does not regard the virgin birth as one of the essentials. He says in the end about the birth-stories:

If they must be dropped, at least we may ask that those who would give them up show sufficient reverence not to go about the task with thoughtless haste and loud declamation (p. 225).

So one may remain in the church and "give them up." The question of reverence has nothing to do with orthodoxy. Professor Easton in his own works on Jesus avoids the birth-stories in just the same suggestive way and begins the story of Jesus at the baptism.

Other professors may or may not be less reverent but they are more candid; and the outside public whom we wish to conciliate seems to prefer the latter virtue. In *Creeeds and Loyalties*, the reply of the professors of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge to the Dallas bishops, the belief in the virgin birth is frankly rejected, and it is abundantly proved that study of the New Testament itself compels us to reject it. This dogma is, as I said, in the singular position that, quite apart from modern science or modern sentiment, biblical scholarship prevents us from accepting it. Professor Angus Dun goes on to deny expressly that any "pre-existent Deity" became part of the person of

Jesus; which is the only reason why there should be a miraculous birth. But we shall see plenty of this in the next chapter.

Professor Drown, of the same theological school, equally rejects literal belief in the virgin birth; and, as I said, there are not two possible meanings to the word virginity, whatever we may say about incarnation and atonement. In the *Apostles Creed Today* he takes this clause figuratively, as he does nearly every other clause. "The early Church," he says, "attached no very distinct theological meaning to the Virgin Birth" (p. 97). Why look for a "theological" meaning? Virginity is just virginity, and a human virgin-birth is a miracle. And what are we to understand by the suggestion that what the church really meant was that Jesus was "not a mere product of human development?" However, it is enough for my purpose that Professor Drown does not believe in the virgin birth in the only sense in which the church teaches it.

Professor Wenley, being a lay professor, is much more candid. He calls into question the historical value of practically all the statements about Jesus in the gospels. In *Modern Thought and the Crisis in Belief* he says:

... We do not know the year or place of his birth, his early life and education, when he started his mission and how long it lasted, what year or where he was crucified or buried . . . The Christian allegation is not susceptible of proof by objective evidence; nay, the evidence now recoverable has been turned against it with terrible effect (p. 227).

But we shall see later the full extent of his heresy. Canon McComb in his *Christianity and the Modern*

Mind does not venture to say how the modern mind's difficulties about the virgin birth are to be met, he ignores the doctrine; but, as he candidly rejects the resurrection, we can gather his opinion. Dr. F. Palmer, in a special work on the subject, *The Virgin Birth* (1925) treats the dogma as if it were an ancient error that is disappearing:

The article in the Apostles Creed on the Virgin Birth was intended not primarily to assert the unusualness of the birth of Jesus Christ but rather his historic reality (52).

It is not wise to stake on a detail of history, confusedly stated and not verifiable, the blessings which come from loving worship of Christ (53).

The Virgin Birth is a detail of the Christian tradition of no importance whatever to the Christian religion (55).

One would like to see the effect if this last sentence was framed and hung up in all the churches of our communion, especially those of the "Catholic" wing. What must outsiders think? Some bishops assure them that belief in the virgin birth is essential for membership of the church, and then they read books, genially passed by the bishops, saying that it is "of no importance whatever." The heresy is with impunity aired in our church congresses, as by Dr. L. M. White at the Congress of 1925 (*Problems of Faith and Worship*, p. 34).

After all this it is hardly necessary to quote writers of the modernist school. In his exposition of modernism (*What is Modernism*) Dr. Leighton Parks says that they feel that "the evidence does not justify them in stating that the Virgin Birth is an historic fact, but

rather that it is a beautiful symbolic expression" (p. 76). It is rather difficult to see how the long and detailed narrative, extending over thirty verses of the first chapter of Luke, can be called "a symbolic expression," nor would it be easy to find any biblical scholar who thought Luke meant it in that sense, or that the creeds and prayer-book and church ever so understood it. However, the main point is that the dogma of the virgin birth is rejected.

Dr. W. R. Bowie similarly finds in the Luke narrative a beautiful symbolism that would probably have surprised the writer. The birth-stories, he says in *The Master* (1928) "read not so much like plain objective history as like a lyric effort to account for history; as symbols of the spiritual significance of Jesus Christ they carry an immortal truth" (p. 33). Unfortunately, many other modern theologians see in the birth-stories, not a beautiful or lyric symbolism, but an ascetic attack on the natural procreation of children which makes them unfit to be read in modern churches. Dr. Bowie, at all events, rejects the virgin birth. The stories are late he says, and there is no evidence that either Jesus or his family knew of any such miracle. "The history we can be sure of begins in Nazareth," he says.

There is no need to go on to quote Professor Sterrett, Professor Lake and so many other outspoken heretics. As I said, the fact that on grounds of biblical study alone we have strong reason to reject the birth-stories has made this heresy particularly widespread. It is frankly ridiculous for any bishop to call the virgin birth an essential of belief when it is so widely rejected. One of the most prominent and most treas-

ured elements of Christian belief and theology may now be treated as "of no importance whatever."

II

And heresy about the resurrection is just as widespread. Here the biblical difficulties themselves are peculiar. The detailed stories are said to be late and contradictory, yet the fact is very emphatically claimed by Paul himself. It is true that in one place Paul speaks of a spiritual body of Jesus after the resurrection. Commentaries on this are endless but there is surely only one interpretation that saves that phrase from being a contradiction in terms. He means that the body of Jesus which men had seen and heard rose from the tomb but it had now certain magical qualities of spirits. It no longer had the gross functions of a body, and it could pass through closed doors.

However that may be, and apart from the desperation of completely ignoring Paul's teaching about original sin and atonement and then appealing to one casual phrase of his against the whole weight of the gospels and all the other references of Paul to the resurrection, the issue is clear. The church doctrine which I am accused of transgressing, the official teaching from the second century to the twentieth, is that Christ "rose from the dead." That leaves no room for quibbling. Spirits do not rise from tombs. They never enter tombs. They do not die.

What is said in the gospels and Paul and Acts to be the fact that restored the faith of the early followers is a fact which never happened to any other; that not merely did the soul of Jesus supposedly survive death, as the souls of all men were supposed to do, but his

body was restored to life. And therefore, beyond any possibility of cavil, any man who says that the body which was nailed to the cross was not restored to life does not admit a resurrection in any sense whatever and is a heretic in the same sense that I am. It is equally heretical to say that the visions of the risen Christ were subjective or to say that an ethereal body was provided.

Bishop Fiske (*Confessions of a Puzzled Parson*, p. 76) professes to be amused at young men at Princeton and Yale, who are barred from the ministry by the creeds, imagining that "acceptance of a creed gives precisely the same importance to the fact of the resurrection as to certain theories about it." Does anybody doubt what he means? The church and the New Testament have no theory, and even theology has no theory, here. They simply say that the dead body of Christ that was laid in the tomb became alive again. And Bishop Fiske, when he wrote this in 1928, had agreed to the degradation of me as a heretic for putting symbolic interpretations on the creeds.

Very few of the liberal bishops I have quoted in this book have the courage to say what they think about the resurrection, though one may infer what they think from their general denial of the miraculous. Bishop Lawrence however, is clear enough in his *Fifty Years*. Commenting on the words "rose again" he says:

These words have now a deeper meaning, more spiritual than before, that he who humbled himself and became obedient to death on the cross . . . overcame the power of all spiritual enemies, overcame death and entered the life of the spirit, victoriously, his person-

ality holding its integrity through to the end and in eternity (p. 62).

One does not like to quarrel with a bishop who at least spoke out when others are silent, but it is really useless to tell people that words which had a definite meaning in the mind of those who wrote them and have been so understood for seventeen centuries "have now" a different meaning.

Canon McComb says in his *Future Life in the Light of Modern Inquiry*:

Rose from where? And how did he rise? Paul is silent . . . In a later chapter he argues for the resurrection of the body, but not the body laid in the grave (that is flesh and blood which cannot inherit the heavenly world) but another and a different body . . . Jesus rose out of the world of spirits in a new and spiritual environment (p. 125).

In his *Christianity and the Modern Mind* he has the same heresy:

It will always be possible to explain the visions of the risen Christ as subjective (87).

In some sense, the canon believes, Jesus "recrossed the barriers," but "we cannot be said to know this as we know the facts of his incarnation" (89).

Dr. S. D. McConnell is as far from orthodoxy in his work *Christianity, an Interpretation*:

It is not a question of a body but of a spirit. The body which hung upon the cross was laid in the tomb, and no doubt stayed there. The late stories in the Gospels of the empty tomb, the earthquake, the great stone, the angelic appearance, and so on, are so contradictory as to be irreconcilable (p. 50).

Professor Drown in the Apostles Creed Today says:

The Creed does not define the nature of the risen body of Christ or the relation between the body of his resurrection and the body laid at rest in the tomb.

But he admits that the writers of the gospels certainly meant that it was the same body: he would astonish his colleagues if he suggested that the compilers of the creeds and prayer book meant, or dreamed of anybody meaning, anything else; and one might invite him to explain to an English-language class at Harvard how there could be a "body of his resurrection" if nothing "rose."

Dr. E. Palmer, in his work, *The Virgin Birth*, treats the resurrection as lightly as the miraculous birth:

Whether the flesh and bones of Jesus were reanimated or not, how and when he finally disappeared, are matters of little interest and no significance (42).

No, these things do not matter until a retired bishop who is a communist talks about them. Professor Wenley is just as disrespectful to the orthodox in his *Modern Thought and the Crisis*:

We do not know what happened to his body after burial. The accounts of his post-mortem appearances to his truant disciples present irreconcilable allegations (163).

As to the modernists, it is hardly necessary to quote them. Dr. Leighton Parks says in his *What is Modernism*:

If we have faith in the supernatural (by which he explains he means the spiritual) and believe that the manifestation of the written life did not originate in the individual, but was an effect produced by a real,

that is, spiritual communication, we find ourselves in an atmosphere where it is not necessary to identify our faith with a corporeal manifestation or a purely subjective vision (47).

And if you feel that this is not quite as lucid as a popular exposition ought to be, you will further read that "the humblest Christian to-day may have the same experience as the disciples," and the meaning is clear.

Dr. Bowie (The Master) finds the resurrection-story as lyrical as the birth-story: so lyrical that "we do not know what happened." The Easter story "shimmers in an opalescent radiance;" and all that is clear is that the disciples somehow felt that they were "in touch again with the vast soul of Jesus" (310). The disciples were not necessarily romancing when they said that they found the tomb empty, because "the low sunrise slanted uncertainly into the shadows of the tomb" (314) and they could not see very well. This smoke-screen of words is not thick enough to hide the fact that Dr. Bowie is sensible enough not to believe that the body of Jesus rose again from the dead with its bones, flesh, blood and animal organism and ascended into heaven where he is sitting at the right hand of God; and, therefore he is as really, though perhaps not as fully, a heretic as I am.

III

These quotations suffice for my purpose. If the Prayer Book is the standard of the church's teaching, one would say that practically all the preachers who have been trained in our best seminaries must differ from it on two points of doctrine which it obviously regards as of supreme importance: the virgin birth and

the resurrection of the body. If these are, as Bishop Manning says, essentials of the faith, he is singularly lacking in his duty to suppress heresy. "Large numbers of ministers," to use the words of Bishop Lawrence, reject both. The modernists reject both. Some of the most learned and influential writers of the church reject both. The Episcopal Church is now openly recommended to outsiders on the ground that, unlike the Baptist and the Roman Catholic and other backward sects, it binds no man to believe in the virgin birth, the miracles and the resurrection of Jesus. You may mean what you like when you recite the words of the creed or the Prayer Book which embody these beliefs.

I have already said that the only plausible explanation why my own rejection of those miracles was selected for solemn condemnation is because I spoke of other saviour-gods and traced the stories to the religions of sun-gods. It is however quite obvious that if I am free to deny the historical truth of the statements, as I clearly am, the way in which I explain the origin of the stories themselves has nothing to do with heresy or the bishops. I will now go further. Those who selected for condemnation as heresy words in which I spoke of Jesus as one of many saviour-gods and hinted that the cult of a sun-god lies behind them all showed themselves deplorably ignorant of the science of comparative religion.

I ask the reader's close attention to this point, though there is nothing subtle about it. That "heresy" of mine which I quoted in the first part of this chapter and similar propositions from my book were either condemned because I reject the miraculous birth, resur-

rection, descent into hell below the earth and ascent to heaven above the earth of Jesus or because of the mention of saviour-gods and sun-gods. If the former, then the bishops have condemned as heresy in my case what, as they well know, numbers of writers and preachers are recommending everywhere as signs of broadmindedness and progress in the Episcopal Church. So I am compelled to look to the latter alternative.

Well, if there is any bishop who does not know that there were in the ancient world a number of saviour-gods, some of whom were born of virgins and miraculously triumphed over death, he ought to be deposed as unfit to represent the church in our age. I have given all the facts in the third and fourth volumes of my *Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism*, but it seems hardly possible that any educated person to-day is unaware that the cities in which Christianity first spread and the gospels were written (even Tarsus in which Paul was educated) had cults of saviour-gods, such as Mithra, the "Ram of God who taketh away the sins of the world," and that a dozen temples celebrated every year the virgin-birth of many of these gods (such as Horus) and the restoration of them to life after a violent death. The Christian ritual of Holy Week is actually based upon the ritual of the cult of Cybele and Attis, and mid-winter was chosen for the birthday of Christ because it was already the birthday of several pagan deities, some of whom were said to be virgin-born.

And if any person is so frivolous as to suggest that I erred in scholarship in connecting these things with a solar myth (though why such an error should, after

months of deliberation, be put among a list of heresies, I cannot imagine), I advise him to read our church literature more carefully. Professor Wenley, for instance, quotes with full approval this passage from Canon Cheyne, one of the most learned biblical scholars of the Church of England:

The four forms of Christian belief which we have been considering are the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, his descent into the nether world, his resurrection, and his ascension. On the ground of facts supplied by archaeology it is plausible to hold that all these arose out of a pre-Christian sketch of the life, death, and exaltation of the expected Messiah, itself ultimately derived from a widely current mythic tradition respecting a solar deity (p. 181).

Or take this passage which we read in a more recent Episcopalian work, the Rev. Dr. William Norman Guthrie's *Offices of Mystical Religion*:

It makes very little difference indeed whether we presume that Christianity was actually syncretic Gentile mystery religion cast into the mold of Hebrew ethnic thought, rite, and custom; or that Christianity was a kind of extravagant and therefore revolutionary Judaism . . . assuming, as it went along, the familiar form of a syncretic mystery cult (p. XX).

There is little doubt that certain fundamental doctrines of Our Lord Jesus Christ obtain extraordinary illustration from the ethical consideration of elementary astrology (p. 72).

Several such passages could be quoted, and that they are not more numerous is simply due to a change in that part of the science of comparative religion of which my simple-minded censors do not seem to have heard. Until some twenty years ago the solar theory

was commonly given as the explanation of the widespread belief in the birth, death and resurrection of gods. Then the British historian of religion Sir J. G. Frazer advanced a theory that it was rather the annual death and resurrection of the vegetation-spirit that had inspired these ancient myths and the learning and high quality of his great work, *The Golden Bough*, transferred attention to the vegetation-myth rather than the sun-myth.

What in the name of sanity does it matter to the bishops whether, seeing that I am, like others, free to reject the beliefs themselves, I trace their origin to a sun-god or a vegetation-god? But I have sufficiently discussed that point in an earlier volume. If there were any point in doing so, I could easily prove that, though Frazer is undoubtedly right in some cases, other saviour-gods, such as Mithra, the most important of all in this connection, were unquestionably solar deities. But the two ideas were closely connected, and it is in any case a purely scientific matter which not only ought not to concern bishops but is far beyond their range of knowledge.

Do not members of the church feel how deeply it is injured by this ancient practice of setting a few zealots, a few men to whom modern culture is as incomprehensible as relativity, to browse over a man's book and cut out bits that seem to them to smell of heresy? Their innocent, childish orthodoxy does not help much to-day. Remember the grim warning that Bishop Lawrence gave the church ten years ago: that "we have today plenty of babes and sucklings in the ministry but not much wisdom or inspiration comes from their mouths."

To any thoughtful man or woman in the church the situation is clear enough. For the last thirty years we have left members free to reject the outstanding articles of the creed that Jesus was "born of a virgin," that he "died for our sins," and that he "rose from the dead." Every one is therefore free to speculate how or why the Christians of the first century came to believe these things of Jesus. And science (for there is now a genuine science of comparative religion) provides the answer without hesitation; because in every city of the Greco-Roman Empire there were cults of gods who were born of virgins, who saved men from the consequences of sin or in some way "saved the world," and who triumphed over death; and all this came of primitive speculation on the annual death and rebirth of the sun and the spirit of vegetation.

As we saw, theologians wrangle with each other about the biblical evidence for the virgin birth and the resurrection. Many, on pure grounds of biblical science, reject the legends. Any man is free to do so in the Episcopal Church; or else it abounds in heretics, and it was dishonest to brand me alone. But pray notice carefully how utterly indifferent the educated world is to the whole wrangle. Educated men and women have not been won to the church by removing two or three more doctrines (the virgin birth, the resurrection, the ascension) from the category of essentials to that of non-essentials. A far larger and more statesmanlike plan is needed, and we will pursue the matter from chapter to chapter until it is clear that my plan alone will save the church.

CHAPTER VI.

Heresies About Jesus

We already realize that three stupid and mischievous blunders were committed in the procedure against me for heresy.

The first was when the examination of my book was entrusted to men whose culture was so restricted and archaic that they imagined that literal orthodoxy is as possible as ever, and so they could safely defy modern knowledge.

The second was when the trial-court harshly refused to listen to an explanation of my position; for, if the opportunity had been afforded me to outline at least the facts I have given in the seven volumes of my vindication, the bishops would surely have hesitated before flinging out so quixotic a challenge to modern culture. And the third, the most remarkable blunder of all, was the desperate choice of the Prayer Book as a standard of doctrine when I, naturally, asked for such a standard.

I ignore the vague, loose, unauthoritative and merely rhetorical assurance given in court that the church allowed "reasonable liberty of interpretation." Not only has no such liberty ever been defined; not only would no nine bishops agree upon the limits of it, but I, like more than one liberal scholar of the Episcopal Church, reject emphatically the whole idea of "interpreting" ancient formularies. The world regards it as either a dishonest or a foolish practice.

It is dishonest if you pretend that the ancient writers really meant something which it has taken the church sixteen or seventeen centuries to discover; and, be-

sides, such a suggestion would put out of court finally the idea of a Holy Spirit guiding the church.

It is foolish if you distort their words to mean something of which they never dreamed, unless you frankly admit that you are simply treating as I do old phrases as symbols of new truths.

In any case, the phrase so lightly dropped in the trial-court (and so unauthoritatively that any bishop could disavow it) is now seen to be as useless as making the Prayer Book the standard of doctrine. For it is genuinely ridiculous to say that the Prayer Book, with a little "liberty of interpretation," represents the essential teaching of the Episcopal Church to-day when nine out of ten of the doctrines embodied in it, including doctrines to which it attaches fundamental importance, may be rejected by any member or minister of the church. I have already proved this of such doctrines as the inspiration of the Bible, the fall of man, original sin, the miracles claimed in the Old and New Testaments, the efficacy of prayer, eternal punishment, the resurrection of the body, the second coming of Christ, the atonement, the virgin birth and the resurrection; and I shall further show it as regards the divinity of Christ, the trinity, creation, the omnipotence of God and the future life.

Let us be clear. I have proved as regards the first part of this formidable list of doctrines, and I shall equally show as regards the second part of the list, that for twenty years, and particularly in the last ten years, the church has permitted in numbers of books by influential Episcopalian writers and seminary professors, in several cases by bishops, the disavowal of the doctrines of the Prayer Book and the assurance to

outsiders that it is no longer necessary to believe them. I have shown that it is not a question of straining the meaning of the words of these writers so as to detect a shade of heresy in them. In every case I have quoted unambiguous rejections of the dogmas; and where, in some cases, the authors profess to accept the dogmas in a newly discovered sense, the beliefs they put before us were never taught by the Christian church in any age and are individual, fanciful and generally rejected ideas.

If I show this with equal clearness as regards the remaining dogmas or articles of belief in the list I have just given, the absurdity of saying that the Prayer Book is the standard of obligatory belief in the church to-day will be evident to all. And I now approach this task in regard to the personality of Jesus. One third of my heresies come under this head. The orthodox bishops evidently imagined that here I went far beyond what we may call the licensed heretics. I fancy that they must be too busy with episcopal duties to acquaint themselves with the literature that is actually circulating in the church. Let me, from my retirement, help them.

What I have to show, remember, is not whether any writer has or has not a very high estimate of the character or teaching of Jesus. We saw that Bishop Williams held that Professor Huxley, the famous agnostic, ought to be admitted to the church because he had such an estimate, and Bishop Slattery would on the same ground admit Unitarians. But that is a complete abandonment of the standard of orthodoxy by which I was judged and degraded.

What we have to examine here is simply whether

one is free in the church to reject the doctrine that Jesus was one person with two natures, human and divine, and that the divine element was the second person of the trinity, existing from eternity and taking flesh and the human element at birth or conception in Jesus Christ. If that is not the teaching of the church, what is? And where shall we find it? It is quite certainly the teaching of the creeds, councils, articles and Prayer Book. Yet we shall find writer after writer rejecting this teaching as out-of-date, unintelligible and the language of ancient Greek fathers whom no one need follow to-day.

So widespread is this revolt against what is disdainfully called "the theological Christ" that even Bishop Gore, who was such a stickler for orthodoxy in his old age, excuses the modernists, or excused his own refusal to pursue them with a charge of heresy, on the vague ground that he felt sure that Jesus had for them "the value of Deity." Perhaps our bishops will call that a "reasonable liberty of interpretation" in regard to what is certainly the fundamental doctrine of the Christian church. I shall, therefore, go on to inquire in what sense these liberal writers of the church believe that there was any sort of incarnation and whether they believe that Jesus was God as well as man. The fact that they have stripped the life of Jesus of every miraculous feature, from birth to resurrection and that they entirely reject the old basis of the incarnation (that a divine victim must atone for sin) must prepare us for what to expect.

Then, since the rejection of the miraculous features compels a writer to use superlative language about the character and the teaching of Jesus, if he is to retain

the word "divine" at all, we must see what they say. In fact we shall go from depth to depth of heresy until we are in a proper position to consider the charge which reconciles so many to the condemnation of me, that I have "gone far beyond" all the tolerated heretics of the church.

I

First, as I said, let us be clear that the teaching of the church, wherever you profess to find it, on so cardinal a doctrine as the incarnation or the divinity of Christ is so widely and freely rejected that it is no longer possible to talk of a fixed standard of doctrine or of heresy. Bishop Lawrence does not give us his opinion on this basic dogma of the incarnation, but we have already seen how he resented all credal tests and rejected, in their orthodox sense, the equally basic doctrines of the virgin birth and the resurrection. Most of the other liberal writers among the bishops are candidly heretical in this respect. I give several of them in the next section and will here quote only two or three who say that the doctrinal formularies are no longer binding.

It is more than twenty years since Bishop Williams published his *Valid Christianity for Today*, but he was already disdainful of the doctrinal expression of the incarnation. He said:

For the most part it is only the theological and ecclesiastical Christ that we believe in, the Christ who is as unlike the real Christ, the Jesus of the Gospels, as the saint in the stained glass window is unlike the real man who walks the street (p. 277).

This, and it is borne out by all the other quotations

I have given from Bishop Williams, struck the note of the growing heresy: back from theology to religion, back from the decisions of councils to the gospels. We may find that very reasonable but, we should not forget that what is impatiently called the theology about Christ is, until we are told that there has been a change, the teaching of the church in the Prayer Book and all its formularies and the belief of the overwhelming majority of its members.

Bishop Fiske says on this subject in his *Confessions of a Puzzled Parson* (1928):

Christian teachers, in proclaiming Christ's Deity, made him remote and unapproachable . . . Christian theologians became hardened to a dogmatic task, and in the attempt to define Christ in exactly the right words forgot sometimes to follow the God whom he revealed (153).

So there came the cry which was the characteristic note of the passing generation: Back to Jesus, back from creeds and councils, back from dogmas and conciliar decrees, back to the Jesus who lived amongst men (154).

I am quite sure that the Christian teachers of fifty years ago would not admit that they had ever lost sight of the Jesus who lived among men. In any case, let us understand that this "back from" means also "back from the teaching of the Church."

Bishop Brent uses the same sort of language in his works. In *Leadership* he wrote:

His followers have persisted in separating him from the crowd . . . obscuring him under a veil of theological and ecclesiastical confusion (218).

In *Commonwealth* he wrote:

Without bandying words or making fine distinctions, we must accept Jesus Christ as God made manifest in the flesh (79).

We shall see in the next section what these writers precisely mean by "God made manifest in Jesus," and I will there quote several other bishops who reject the orthodox doctrine of the incarnation and substitute for it something which in all ages of the church from the fourth century on would have been deemed deadly heresy.

In Creeds and Loyalties, the reply of the divinity-professors to the reactionary Dallas Bishops, the church formularies are explicitly rejected. Professor Dun, who takes this subject, refuses to accept the incarnation as "the entrance of a pre-existent divine personality into an impersonal human nature" (87) or, as he puts it more clearly: "The first Jewish Christians did not think of him, he did not think of himself, as the Incarnation of a pre-existent divine being." It was those terrible Greeks who started this idea and handed on a "damnable legacy" (as Hatch, I think, called it) to the church. But, says Professor Dun, "the Church can hardly afford to make any word, however precious, a universal shibboleth of Christianity" (p. 91). If he is not referring to the words "two natures in one person," what does he mean? Professor Dun continues:

In the Gospels we see a true man . . . But we find more than that. We find a man conscious that in him and through him God is reaching out to his people, that the will at work within him is the will of God . . . He calls for an absolute obedience, not as to the will of a human master, but as to the will of the Eternal God uttered and active in himself (89).

As all this, clearly, applies just as well to the prophet Isaiah or the prophet Jeremiah, we see what the new doctrine is. But we shall understand it in the next section.

Professor Sterrett (*Modernism in Religion*) is, as we should expect, a heretic who scorns diplomacy. He rejects disdainfully what he calls "the sacerdotalized and the ecclesiastical and the doctrinal forms of Jesus in the formularies," and tells the theologians that "Jesus never claimed the *omni-attributes*" (p. 94). He goes on:

Jesus was a man who was incomparably greater than any other, who was the actualized ideal of man, fully made into the image and likeness of God (107).

In reading the Gospels let us put aside the idea of a wonder-working superman or demigod, masquerading as orthodoxy . . . The Divinity of Jesus shines forth from every page of the Gospels. That of his Deity does not appear in them. This doctrine is the work of the thinking side of the Church . . . We must remember that Greek thought never conceived of God and man as wholly different from each other. Kith and kinship between the two was held as a fundamental conception. The dilemma of "either God or man" would have been inconceivable to the Greeks (108).

Human and divine are not mutually exclusive terms. There is a certain community of nature between them (131).

In a scholar so clumsy a phrase as "that of his Deity" is surprising, but the meaning is made clear elsewhere. Professor Sterrett says that modernists admit the divinity but not the deity of Jesus. This and some of the other expressions I have quoted must be, one is inclined to say, either verbiage or pantheism, but we will leave that to the next section. It is still more surpris-

ing to read what Professor Sterrett says about Greek thought. What does it matter, in this connection, what the Greek Stoics and Pantheists taught? The Greek fathers, who gave the church its formularies, precisely boasted that the new religion made clear the abyss between the infinite majesty of God and the finiteness of man. The Greek world in which the creeds took shape, from about 100 to 400 A. D., instead of being indifferent to such a point as whether Christ was "either God or man," seethed with controversy, from the Gnostic to the Nestorian struggle, on just that point. Modernism is as desperate as orthodoxy in making out its case.

However, my point here is that we have again a learned and very influential representative of the church very plainly rejecting the teaching of the church on the fundamental Christian doctrine. Professor Drown just as plainly, in the John Bohlen Lectures (*The Christian Christ*) rejects the formularies of the Church:

Theoretical arguments for belief in Christ can have little weight apart from an understanding of what that belief is (15).

We shall translate the Greek metaphysics of substance into our own metaphysics, a metaphysic that finds the true reality in the will, in the manifestation of the personal love which is the deepest thing that we know about God (24).

Unlearned readers might be misled into supposing that "our own metaphysics" means modern philosophy, and that modern philosophy lays great stress on "the will." On the contrary modern philosophy has abandoned "the will" as an illusion.

However one point at a time. Professor Drown represents Jesus as an ordinary human being who "grew in wisdom until (at baptism) God was made manifest in him." He expressly denies that there were "two natures in one person" or that a Logos with a "separate personality" united with his human nature. It is a "Greek idea," a "spiritual truth expressed in physical terms." Those terrible Greek Fathers—who have been idolized in the church for fifteen centuries. In the end Professor Drown candidly faces the question how the Divine was incarnated in Jesus differently from in other good men. He replies: (1) that the union was "more complete" (curious English for a professor) in Jesus; (2) that Jesus was "the direct gift of God to men," and (3) that Jesus was the Master of Life, Creator of the Kingdom of God (how capital letters do help). No comment is needed. Jesus differed in degree not kind from the Second Isaiah or St. Paul.

But I must hurry on, for the number of heretical passages I could quote on this most essential of dogmas, in orthodox eyes, is very large. Dr. Palmer (*The Virgin Birth*) says:

We must regard the divinity of Christ as consisting primarily in the unity of his will with the will of God (which is either poetry or the Monotheistic heresy) . . . Such a sharing of the divine will would give him accession to others of the divine powers, and we find him therefore possessed of knowledge of human character, of control over the minds and bodies of men, over natural forces, which so far transcends the powers of others that we sometimes call them supernatural . . . The line between human and divine is difficult to draw: the one shades into the other (24).

We do not venture to such a length as to say that Christ is God, for this would involve the inconceivable assertion that God Almighty was once born and died (28).

Who are "we?" The church, or Dr. Palmer and a few other members of it? And where is the standard of doctrine? Professor Stewart takes the same liberties in his Bishop Paddock Lectures (*God and Reality*). By the two natures of Jesus, he says, we mean merely "the two modes of one person" (p. 202).

After this, and in view of further quotations to the same effect in the next section, I need not cite passages from ordinary modernists. Dr. Bowie calls the formularies "sterile concepts" which "turn a mystery into a mythology." Dr. Parks puts all the trouble down to those blundering Greek fathers. "The Modernist," he says, "is not sure what *ousia* and *hypostasis* and *Homoiousion* exactly mean." Naturally—if, for some reason, you leave it all in Greek. But if you tell people in plain English that it means, and that the church teaches to-day, that there were two natures (two intellects and two wills) in Jesus you see at once what it is that the modernist refuses to admit. Dr. Parks even finds that "omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience" are "metaphysical terms" (I should like to find a metaphysical work containing them) and so the modernist will not apply them to Christ. In fine we get:

If the Modernist is asked whether he believes that the divinity of Christ differs from the divinity of all good men in kind or in degree, he frankly states that he does not know . . . The difference between the holiest saint and Jesus Christ may be so great as to be equivalent to a difference in kind (119).

Desperate language, again. But we need not discuss this crude philosophy. If these things are not "heresy," many members of the church would like the bishops to say what heresy is.

II

In citing these passages in which the teaching of the church and the Prayer Book is flatly, often disdainfully, rejected, I have had to give some idea of what view of Christ these liberal and modernist writers take. It is, in fact, not necessary to separate the two questions, but in this section I give chiefly passages in which the new view is advocated. But for those who are not familiar with these matters I must premise a word of explanation.

The orthodox person is bewildered when he finds trained theologians like Sterrett and Drown talking about the difficulty of distinguishing sharply between the divine and the human because they "shade into each other." These modernists, he will say, must have a new idea of God as well as of Jesus. It is their boast that they have. The Holy Ghost let the church go astray even about God for more than a thousand years, and the formularies drafted by the church are therefore all wrong; and as, according to Professor Drown, a dogma is "a theory resting on mere ecclesiastical authority," they do not bind us—unless we happen to be communists.

I examine this new view of God in the next chapter, but just a word must be said here. It is that God is immanent, not transcendent: he is in everything that exists, not throned in a spiritual world far away . . . Yes, I know, you learned that in Sunday school before

the modernists were born, but let us leave that to the next chapter. It follows that God "dwells" in all human nature, and is "manifested" according to the virtue of each man. Let that suffice for the moment. Jesus Christ is simply "the perfect manifestation of the Eternal as far as such manifestation is possible in a perfect human being."

It follows further that Jesus had no "divinity" until about his thirtieth year, and that even then there were never two minds or two wills in the person of Jesus. Most of our liberals and modernists say this frankly, and none deny the consequence. Whether that is one of the little exercises of "reasonable interpretation" which the bishops genially permit, or whether it simply means that the church has to-day no doctrine about Jesus, you may form your own opinion. But of one thing you may be sure. This view that Christ was divine only in the sense that God was, during his last few years, manifested in his acts and words more than in those of other saints, and that he had not a divine mind and will as well as a human mind and will is almost more common in the church than the other heresies I have traced.

And it is not of recent appearance. Twenty-seven years ago Professor Du Bose wrote in his *Gospel in the Gospels*:

Jesus did not demand allegiance upon the ground of his being more than man, but solely upon the ground of what he was as man. He nowhere in his lifetime asserts, or was understood by those who stood nearest him to assert, his divine personality (15).

It was his divinity indeed, but a divinity manifested or visible to them only in the quality and character of

his humanity, in the perfection of his human holiness, in the spiritual power of his human life (17).

It in no way militates against the perfect humanness of Jesus to know that from the first, in a more complete way than through the prophets, or St. John the Baptist before him or St. Paul afterwards, God was preparing to reveal or express himself through him (29).

The higher reach and manifestation of humanity in the person of Jesus might be due to exceptional and personal relations into which God elected to enter with that particular man (208).

And in *The Reason of Life* Professor Du Bose writes:

I myself have no hesitation in denying any presence or operation of real Deity in Jesus Christ as manifested otherwise than in the fact of his accomplished and perfect human divinity (245).

Bishop Fiske said at the Church Congress of 1922:

Ministers without number in every Protestant communion will evade the question of Our Lord's divinity . . . We are refusing to speak of the facts above a whisper because we fear to offend others or are a little doubtful of discoveries we may make within ourselves (*Influence of the Church* p. 40).

But there is nothing secret about the heresy. So little that Bishop Fiske not obscurely follows it himself. In his *Confessions of a Puzzled Parson* he writes:

Jesus exercised the powers of Deity but he could do so because his perfect and sinless humanity was wholly responsive to the power of God (148).

God is like Christ. That is the essence of Christianity (151).

And he goes on, in words I have already quoted,

expressly to reject the church teaching about the incarnation.

Bishop Brent (Leadership) is still bolder:

It is true enough that Christianity has as yet produced no character equal to that of its Founder, but Christianity is very young still and is just beginning to understand itself (154).

Could there be a plainer statement that Jesus was just the holiest man who has yet appeared and other men may yet reach the same height? And could any statement be more devastatingly heretical as regards the divine guidance, or even human wisdom and authority, of the church than this claim that it is just beginning to understand its own documents?

Bishop Slattery is very vague on this point in *The Master of the World*, and his biographer, H. C. Robbins, lets us know why. He would exclude from the Episcopal Church only those who denied that Jesus was a "unique personality" and would include Unitarians who denied his divinity. Fifty years ago many would not admit that Unitarians were Christians. To-day their teaching is exactly the same as that of scores of our writers.

Dean Hodges writes in *Everyman's Religion*:

Formerly, when God was believed to be sitting on a throne in heaven, we had to think of him as coming down. Somehow he came down and united himself with human nature and resided for a time upon this planet. That was very hard to think. Today the interpretative phrase, instead of "coming down," is "shining through" . . . God shines through nature as the sun shines through a clouded glass, dimly. He shines through humanity, especially in the lives of good people, as the sun shines where the glass is clearer . . .

Jesus Christ is like a clear place in the glass through which we see the sun (98).

And Dean Hodges accepts the words of the Unitarian Dr. Everett:

The divine principle in the world manifests itself more and more till it comes to the full consciousness of itself in the life and teaching of Jesus . . . His divinity is not that of one who has come down from above.

"This," says Dean Hodges, "may not satisfy all the requirements of the Nicene theology, but it touches the heart of the truth." As Dean Hodges well knew, it not only does not satisfy "all the requirements," but it does not satisfy any, either of the Nicene theology or any other standard of doctrine least of all the Prayer Book standard. It is essential to believe only one thing, he says: "God was in Christ." So said Renan in his *Life of Jesus*, which outraged Christendom. It is the deadly heresy of Socinianism. Men were burned at the stake for it.

But it is now a widely accepted belief in the church. Canon McComb says in *Christianity and the Modern Mind*:

The reality of God as his Father is so overwhelming that his consciousness of it makes him out as standing in a unique relation to God. He knows himself to be God's final messenger, and, as God's Son, after him none greater can arise (103).

He might well be called by way of pre-eminence the Son of God (108).

Dean Grant (*New Horizon of the Christian Faith*, the Bishop Hale Lectures in 1928) startles us by saying that the doctrine of the Incarnation "requires almost

no revision in the light of modern thought, chiefly of modern science and philosophy." As science has nothing whatever to do with the subject, and modern philosophers scarcely ever mention God, this is safe. But it appears that the doctrine of the incarnation which requires no revision is the new doctrine. The church's teaching on the matter he dismisses with the words: "Of course, the nature of God and man may be so represented as to be thrown into opposition." But it seems that in modern science (one wonders which branch) and philosophy (whereas four-fifths of the philosophers never mention God) God is "so near to man" that a union of two natures in one person is "antecedently the most probable of hypotheses" (p. 268). Thus one interpreter of the new theology finds the old phraseology of the Greek Fathers excellent, while others find only "sterile concepts" and mischievous blunders.

Professor Easton we should scarcely expect to find among the heretics on this cardinal point, yet in his *Hale Lectures (Christ in the Gospel, 1930)* he clearly enough follows the new fashion. The eighth chapter deals with the divinity of Christ, and there is no mention of incarnation or statement that Jesus was God. Instead he is represented as a normally developing human being until the baptism. His teaching was "the fruit of years of meditation" and "from childhood he had heard God's law expounded, and with this exposition he was discontented." "We can hardly avoid thinking that he was uncertain as to his commission" until his baptism, and even after it the legend of the temptation "dramatises" his uncertainty how to go to work. Certainly no "hypostatic union" there.

I have already quoted Dr. McConnell, Dr. Palmer, Professor Sterrett and Professor Drown. Professor Wenley it is hardly necessary to quote. "You fathom Jesus," he says, "just in proportion as you discern in him a normal and not an abnormal (thaumaturgic or pagan) (or orthodox) apparition of the Eternal in human nature." But we shall see presently that Professor Wenley's view of the historical value of the gospels enfeebles even this estimate of Jesus. In short, for a full statement of the new kind of Socinianism that is now very widely held in the church let me quote from Dr. Bowie's *Master of Life* (1928):

In sermons and pronouncements of ecclesiastics, and even in books by writers usually brilliant and incisive, there is a representation of Jesus which resembles curiously the gods-come-down-to-earth of ancient Greece. The message of the Gospels is made to sound like the tales of Homer (13).

In Jesus there came into the realm of human experience a spiritual force of such beauty and power that the only language which those who have felt it find adequate is to call it "very God." Recent human lives of Jesus represent at least a wholesome revolt from the stereotyped formalisms of the supposed more orthodox and proper theologies with their stiff and remote Byzantine Christ (16).

If anything is certain from the picture which the later Gospels give of him it is that he was not of the kind who accept ideas conventionally . . . He prayed that he might be enlightened. He did it repeatedly when the crossroads of his decisions were dimmed by the dust of crowding and contradictory human facts (107).

Did his nature by a dual contact bring together the two different and sundered realities of God and man? So Christian theology has often argued, and in so doing

it has made the gap which then laboriously with its explanations it has tried in vain to bridge (326).

Is it necessary to reflect that what Dr. Bowie says theology "often" argued, the view which he likens to pagan mythology and the tales of Homer, is the teaching of the universal church for sixteen centuries, the teaching of the Prayer Book, the teaching to which I was referred at my trial?

III

Nearly every one of my brother-heretics fights shy of the word incarnation. By a desperate use of language you may say, on the new theory, that God was in Jesus or that Jesus was divine, but you merely mean that, in a way you would rather not define on account of these meddlesome bishops, God acted upon the spirit or mind of Jesus. But incarnation, the cardinal doctrine of the Christian scheme, means that God "took flesh" or that God entered into intimate union with the body as well as the mind of Jesus, whereas in the case of the highest prophets he is supposed to have merely acted upon their minds and united neither with their minds nor bodies.

So there has been no "interpretation" of the incarnation. The teaching of the church is simply rejected as false. No amount of "reasonable interpretation" can bring this Unitarian estimate of Jesus into harmony with the Prayer Book. It is not a question of the precise meaning of "nature" and "person." We know sufficiently well what we mean by mind and will. The church says that there were two minds and two wills, divine and human, in Jesus. These bishops, professors and popular writers and their followers

deny it. The dogma of the trinity with which I deal in the next chapter, falls with that of the incarnation. So either one is now free in the Protestant Episcopal Church to reject the two fundamental doctrines of the Prayer Book, and there is no doctrinal standard left or else heresy is more common than orthodoxy in the educated section of the church.

But, you will say, if the bishops permit this very wide departure from orthodoxy, why not be content with it and not go to further extremes? The more learned of our modernists know quite well what my answer must be. The whole of this new orthodoxy is already shaking on its foundations. The whole thing is a theological hypothesis of the last twenty years which is, in learned circles, already being dislodged by a new and totally different theory. It began with the teaching of the German theologian Ritschl, whose gospel of the immanent God in Jesus spread over England and America. But a new theologian, Barth, who totally rejects Ritschlianism, has already captured the mind of Germany and has great and growing influence in America and Great Britain. The method of "interpretation" is more seriously discredited than ever.

The philosophical basis of the new "jesusolatry" (that is the name given to it by so devout a protestant as Sabatier) is the doctrine of immanence, which is offered to the public throughout our church as actual theological teaching. Our modernists must have had a severe jolt when they read in one of the booklets of the Lambeth Series (Looking Forward) written by a liberal theologian, Canon Raven, that the doctrine of immanence is "being powerfully challenged" in the church itself and is therefore no safe basis of teaching.

I deal with this in the next chapter and show that a number of British divines (some of them modernists) as well as the Germans heavily censure and reject the idea of immanence.

The essential foundation of the new theory of Christ's divinity is thus a disputed theological idea which is fast losing ground. And what remains of the theory, the supposed unique splendor and power of the teaching of Jesus which make us call him "divine," is being attacked from other sides. After a hundred years of fierce controversy about Jesus in the New Testament nothing is settled. Every decade a new school arises, and the prophets succeed each other (Ritschl, Bousset, Schweitzer, Barth) and proceed in the direction of the position I am occupying.

This is no place to discuss the controversy but I must examine one point. We have seen that our liberals hold that in removing the doctrinal forms of Jesus they have for the first time discovered the real, loving, uniquely sinless Jesus, unique prophet and revealer of God. I leave it to the orthodox to reply to the claim that anything new has been discovered in Jesus.*

The truth seems to be that nobody reads any longer the sermons or lives of Jesus of the last century, so it is easy to represent that modernist sermons and biographies surpass them. They do not; for the simple reason that as soon as, early in the last century, theologians began to doubt the divinity of Jesus in the orthodox sense, they applied themselves all the more to a glorification of his teaching and virtues.

* See my *Human Meaning of Christian Doctrine*; and, especially, the fourth volume of the *Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism* written from the view-point of philosophy.

But the deadly weakness of this glorification, whether it is new or not, is that it depends essentially on the historical value of the gospels, and it therefore challenges modern culture almost as violently as the doctrine of special creation challenged science. For on ordinary historical principles you cannot extract any reliable biography or account of the teaching of Jesus from the New Testament. Let me quote two professors, members of our church: one a learned seminary divine, with the limitations of his position, the other a layman and therefore a comparatively independent scholar.

Professor Easton shows in his weighty, though more or less conservative works (*The Gospel before the Gospels* and, *Christ in the Gospel*) that so much of the narrative must be regarded as legendary that one wonders how any of it can be proved reliable. In the former book he gives ten pages (139-149) of unhistorical statements in the gospels. As quite clear cases of legend he gives the earthquake at the death of Jesus, the account of the guard at the tomb, the coin in the fish's mouth, Peter's attempt to walk the water (an "exquisite allegory") the dream of Pilate's wife, the death of Judas, the call of Peter, the story of the ten lepers, the death of John the Baptist (which "impresses most students as thoroughly legendary") the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth, the cursing of the fig-tree, the stilling of the storm, the miraculous feedings and other miracles.

He next warns us that the conversations and speeches must be either fictitious or greatly altered and expanded, for no one pretends they were written down within ten years of the death of Jesus; and it is

a very desperate hypothesis that someone wrote them down about 45 A. D. The movements of Jesus from place to place are imaginative detail, Professor Easton says, and the parables are touched up. We find even the earliest gospel ascribing to Jesus the "appalling" idea that he spoke in parables so that the Jews should not understand him.

Professor Easton then makes the usual desperate effort to show that some unknown collection of sayings of Jesus was compiled about 45 A. D. and of stories about 60 A. D.; and he admits that the first gospel we have, Mark (which totally differs from the earlier Pauline Epistles) did not appear until about forty years after the supposed death of Christ. So, according to the chief authority in one of our most conservative seminaries, you get forty years of story-telling by illiterate orientals as the basis of your biographical documents, which constitute the basis of the new theology!

And now listen to the lay scholar Professor Wenley, and bear in mind that his book, *Modern Thought and the Crises of Belief*, is a series of lectures endowed for "the establishment and defense of the Christian faith:"

The Gospels contain 2899 verses; and of these only one hundred furnish strict biographical details. Aside from the record of the last days at Jerusalem and of the teaching, information about Jesus and his doings is scanty in the extreme (160).

And he then takes back with the left hand what he offers with the right. The narrative of the Passion is, he says, "late and unreliable," and of the record of teaching he writes:

If we start from quite critical premises, we must

come to the conclusion that we have no absolute certainty that a single saying in the Gospels was uttered in that precise form by Jesus himself (161).

The facts necessary for a life of Jesus in the objective or historical sense simply do not exist (163).

Little wonder then that Christians are to be found who deny that their religion took its rise from an historical individual (164).

When the rude facts concerning Jesus, as adjusted with cool assurance by historical method, are taken, when the historical allegations, as formulated in the Apostles Creed, say, are placed in juxtaposition but one inference can follow. It is this: Christians of the traditional type seem to have been fated to make tarts from Dead Sea fruit (222).

Christians now say to historians, For any sake, and in the name of anything you hold holy, allow the probability, or at least the possibility, of our plea (227).

He concludes that it is best to base Christianity "on the ideal Christ, indifferent to any historical statements in the New Testament," as several Protestant divines now propose. And a phrase from the gifted Dr. Vida Scudder's book will show that this demand is having influence among the laity:

To assert what is likely to befall our views concerning the authenticity of the records which enshrine the Personality would be presumption in the present agitated juncture (366).

She adds that various theologians consider it a "weakness" to claim an historical basis for Christianity.

But this is not the whole weakness of the modernist position about Jesus. Their superlative claims are, of course, mainly based upon the teaching ascribed to him in the gospels. Of his personality Paul, the oldest witness, knows nothing, and "Mark," the second wit-

ness, though fatally late from the historical point of view, knows little. It is unfortunate that the modernists take most of their material from "John" and on another page they tell us that scholars are nearly unanimous that the Fourth Gospel is useless as biography.

Now, even if we for a moment accept the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) as giving a fair account of the teaching of Jesus, we at least must not say that it is higher than the teaching of other prophets, that it contains a new and far more satisfactory revelation of God, until we have patiently compared it with that of the other prophets. Can you name one modernist writer who has done this, even inadequately? No one can. They all extol the teaching of Jesus as part of the evidence that God uniquely acted through him, and they never measure it by the teaching of Jewish rabbis of the first century (in the oldest part of the Talmud) or of the best Greek, Persian, Chinese, Hindu or other ancient moralists. They know nothing of the remarkable ethical monotheism that archaeologists have found in the Babylonian and Egyptian remains.

But even here we have heretics. Professor Du Bose writes in *Turning Points in my Life*:

Let us remember that our Lord taught absolutely nothing new (115).

Our Lord uttered no new word, gave no new commandment, even instituted no new sacrament (116).

Such, too, is the verdict of one of the most learned works on the subject in recent Episcopalian literature, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, by Kirsopp Lake and Foahes Jackson. They say:

In what way did the teaching of Jesus differ from that of his contemporaries? Not—and the nature of much modern writing renders it desirable to emphasize the negative—not by teaching anything about God essentially new to Jewish ears. The God of Jesus is the God of the Jews, about whom he says nothing which cannot be paralleled in Jewish literature (1, 288).

But even these scholars have not extended their inquiry beyond Jewish literature. Books are now available in which every single text in the gospel that purports to give the teaching of Jesus is shown to have a parallel in both Jewish and pagan literature. The parables, in particular, nearly all are found in the oldest part of the Talmud.

But I have shown all this in detail in Volume V of my *Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism from the View-point of the Bible*. Even a reader who is not entirely convinced must admit one thing: that the liberal or modernist who now says that the “divinity” of Christ is evidenced by the uniqueness of his teaching is as much in conflict with modern culture as the orthodox believer who found the evidence in miracles. We have sciences of comparative religion and comparative ethics, and they admit no such sudden advance in the evolution of religious or ethical ideas.

IV

The whole stress of the new claim for Jesus falls, therefore, upon the record of his character and virtues. Now, not only is that record, as Professor Wenley says, unsuitable to provide a life of Christ in “the objective or historical sense,” but one must candidly admit that it shows imperfections. Jesus not only shared the

errors of his contemporaries, even in such grave matters as possession by devils and eternal punishment and an approaching end of the world, but he shares some of their defects of character. Canon Streeter, a leader in the new theology, says:

I must frankly admit that the one objection to the belief that Jesus was normally perfect which I have found it difficult to meet is derived from the apparently exaggerated severity of his language to and about the Pharisees, who, with all their limitations, undoubtedly stood, as a body, for religious earnestness and self-sacrifice (*The Spirit*, p. 363).

I have emphasized one word in this passage to point out once more how difficult even these liberals find it to be entirely candid. We all remember the language applied to the Pharisees: liars, hypocrites, whited sepulchers and brood of vipers. And Canon Streeter suggests that this language is "apparently" exaggerated! One does not read that Buddha and a hundred other men and women of high character used such language of their opponents, called for fire upon cities that rejected them, and complacently entertained the idea that sinners would be tortured during eternity.

I do not care to dwell upon the defects which notoriously can be found, by any person who is not blinded by a theory, in the gospel picture of Jesus. Those of us who study the New Testament from a purely historical point of view quite understand these things. Instead of being a fairly consistent account of a tradition about Jesus, the gospel narrative is a badly blended compilation of totally different conceptions of Jesus. The profound difference between Paul and Mark, and Mark and John, ought to warn us to expect

this. It was, for instance, writers representing Greek Christians, who did not know Pharisaism well and bitterly fought the orthodox Jews, who contributed the curses and false descriptions of the Pharisees.

It was a different school of Greek Christians, possibly the lax group which Paul describes at Corinth, who contributed the stories of Jesus' relations with publicans and sinners, which have always troubled serious readers. We moderns, with our knowledge of the material conditions of character, can be lenient in our judgment, but all the attempts to explain why a saint of ancient Judea should be so friendly with prostitutes and publicans (a modern equivalent would be to associate with prostitutes and racing men or pugilists) is poor sophistry.

To me, as to Professor Wenley, this is not history at all. But how serious a difficulty it creates for the new theologians who pledge their whole case on the historicity of the gospels, was curiously illustrated at the church Congress of 1922. The alienation of youth from the church was under discussion, and there were the customary references to vice. Then Dr. Bell, the orthodox President of St. Stephen's College, startled the delegates with the claim that "ours is for the most part an irreligious but moral generation." He defended this estimate by saying that the church was quite wrong in laying such stress on chastity. He said (see the report, *The Influence of the Church on Modern Problems*, p. 27):

Jesus seems to have been quite out of sympathy with the current legalism in regard to impurity. He ate with sinners and was friendly and kindly in his dealings with several women of ill-fame . . . I find no

evidence in Jesus's teaching of any special value put by him on chastity as a thing in itself.

Dr. Bell was, of course, quite wrong. In various passages the Gospel Jesus is made, not merely to insist on the Jewish feeling against unchastity but to claim an even greater strictness (as Epictetus and other Stoics did). But the situation shows how pitifully weak is the foundation of this new Christology. One writer stakes everything on the Gospel record of the "unique sinlessness" (particularly in regard to purity) of Jesus, and here is another writer, a theologian of strict views, claiming that Jesus does not seem to have attached any importance to purity!

If, therefore, I seem to "go beyond" other heretics, surely the reason is now plain. An entirely honest development of the principles laid down by Professor Wenley and others compels us to say that, since no biography of Jesus is possible, there is no strict historical proof that there ever was such a person. It is only because these liberals and modernists have staked everything on the human historicity and full biography of Jesus, to cover their real denial of his divinity, that such a statement startles people.

Most of the modernists dismiss this idea contemptuously as one that is regarded by scholars as beneath notice. Dr. Leighton Parks refers us to a note in *The Golden Bough* in which Sir J. G. Frazer says that the denial of the historicity of Jesus is "unworthy of serious attention." One might retort that Frazer is not an historian, and we have no evidence that he made a particular study of the gospels. But the more effective reply is that Dr. Parks ought to have known that the footnote in Frazer's book was twenty years

old, and that meantime the famous anthropologist had greatly modified his opinion.

In 1924 Frazer wrote the preface to the English translation of Dr. Couchoud's *Enigma of Jesus*, and this book expressly seeks to prove that Jesus never existed as a man. Frazer not only praises the high scholarship of the French author, but he says that "the problem of which he offers us a tentative solution is of profound and perennial interest." That is how church people are misinformed.

An increasing number of scholars (the famous German critic George Brander, for instance) can be quoted in support of this theory, and I have quoted several Episcopalian writers warning us not to build on the historicity of Jesus. Already a number of divines propose to appeal instead to the "ideal Christ," or the ideal of a prophet which the gospel-writers have put together. So it turns out once more that my supposed "extreme opinion," my "isolated position," is just the position to which brother-heretics, when they consider the whole of our modern knowledge, are coming.

You may say that, after all, no historians have adopted that opinion. Would you expect a professor of history at one of our universities to say that he agreed with it? He would not keep his chair a month. Do you know of such a professor in any British or American university who has ever examined the New Testament books on strict historical lines? Of course not. It is forbidden territory. It is only physicists like Millikan and mathematicians like Pupin who join in this glorification of the historical Jesus.

But I refer to my earlier volumes for a full treatment of that subject. In those books I said that, if the Chris-

tian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus is rejected, it is quite ridiculous to make a heresy of denying his humanity. Now I have shown that the doctrine is rejected with impunity throughout the church. This new theory of Jesus is a flat denial of the dogma of the incarnation, and I quoted writer after writer expressly saying so and denying that a "pre-existent Deity" entered Jesus. I have been able to quote more heresy from Episcopalian works on this point than on any other, and I could have quoted far more. I share that heresy with thousands of others, but what they have singled out as my heresy is, as you will now perceive, only a heresy against an heretical position. I deny the basis of the modernist theory of Jesus.

And if you cannot understand why the orthodox bishops strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel, or condemn me for questioning the humanity of Jesus and smile upon folk who deny his divinity, you at least understand why the other heretics acquiesced in the condemnation of me. It was not because I "went further" in heresy. It was because I pointed out that they are leading the church into a new opposition to modern culture; because I showed that their own position is, from the point of view of scientific history, utterly unsound and indefensible.

Nor is it likely to have more success with the general public than with scholars. It lends itself beautifully to pulpit rhetoric and the kind of rhetoric that is used in lives of Jesus, but the modern world at large is finding its laws of life in life itself and no longer seeks guidance in ancient authorities. Dr. Jowett said in the last century, in anticipation of this sentimental development of human nature:

I think that it is impossible and contrary to human nature that we should be able to concentrate our thoughts on a person scarcely known to us who lived eighteen hundred years ago.

The modern world will not even try to do it. Not even this sacrifice of the dogmas of the incarnation and the trinity has had any effect in conciliating it. The plan is wrong. These doctrines, if true at all, are only symbolically so, else they are superstitiously false, and this is the case with every supernaturalistic representation of the Christian Bible, Catholic Creeds, Anglican Prayer Book and Articles of Religion. I make no exceptions, and nobody can make one and sustain it. Christian supernaturalism is utterly and hopelessly bankrupt.

CHAPTER VII.

Heresies About God

Our list of fundamental heresies that are freely permitted even encouraged by many bishops in the church is growing formidable. There are good folk in the church who have a vague idea that because the bishops had permitted a symbolic interpretation of such phrases as "sitteth at the right hand" and of the Genesis story of creation, I was so misguided or simple-minded as to suppose that I could take everything symbolically; and, of course, the dear bishops had to put a stop to that. Does one half the church know how the other half thinks?

I disdain to waste my time and that of my readers on such trifles. I am no more concerned with little liberties of interpretation of phrases in the Prayer Book and the creeds than I am with casual remarks by uninfluential writers. I take a hundred books, most published in the last ten years and having influence both in the church and on inquiring outsiders, written by representative members of the church (mainly, indeed, by bishops, canons, deans and seminary professors) and I quote lengthy and repeated passages from them, so that there can be no question of misunderstanding. And I find that these representative writers reject and tell inquirers and members of the church that they are free to reject, every fundamental Christian doctrine of the Prayer Book and of all other formularies of the church; and, therefore I insist that the church has no doctrine for the rejection of which a clergyman can be rightly stigmatized as a heretic, tried, condemned and punished as I was.

I have shown that there is not a single article of the creed, not a single important idea of the Prayer Book, of a distinctively Christian character that is not freely rejected by large numbers of church writers. The beliefs in God and in a future life are older than Christianity, and therefore, cannot be regarded as distinctive features of it; and, anyhow, all educated people now utterly reject the traditional conceptions of Christian orthodoxy concerning a life to come in heaven above the earth for believers and in a hell below the earth for disbelievers.

Quarrels about evolution and Genesis now belong to Sunday schools in Tennessee. The time is past even for quarreling about the virgin birth, the resurrection, the inspiration of the Bible, the institution of the church, miracles, sacraments, the resurrection of the body, or the second coming of Christ. No bishop would dare to-day to condemn a minister for rejecting these things.

But the atonement, the incarnation and the trinity are just as freely rejected. The first of these, which is still to millions the most essential doctrine of Christianity, was, as I shall show in the tenth chapter, really abandoned by the joint Anglo-American bishops at Lambeth.*

It is trifling with words to say that you believe the church's teaching because you believe in an at-onement or believe that Christ did something that is as different from the Christian dogma of atonement as a

* See also my lectures on the Bishops' Belief in God and their Disbelief in Birth Control and Recent Science and Materialism. These lectures review the pronouncements of the 1930 Lambeth Conference.

friendly family reconciliation is from a duel with bowie knives.

It is trifling with words to say that you believe in the incarnation because you say that Jesus, in whom God in no sense whatever "became flesh," was nobler in his life and teaching than any other man.

In the case of the trinity, the liberals do not even trouble to sophisticate. The dogmas of the incarnation and trinity are pieces of ancient Greek juggling with words, they say; and the atonement is a very crude error of St. Paul's.

It remains to be seen how far heresy is permitted in the church about God and the future life. Of my twenty-three heretical propositions thirteen are concerned with the belief in God and a future life, eight with Jesus, and two (and parts of others) with what I call the salvation of the race. I have shown that practically all my heresies about Jesus were already freely permitted in the church at the time I wrote, and that even in my own special heresy, doubting if there ever was a Jesus (which is merely a way of saying that the historical evidence is quite unsatisfactory) I am not without companions; while, as I said, it is a minor theological error in comparison with rejecting the atonement and resurrection.

My propositions that relate to the salvation of the race I will examine in a later chapter. Here let us see how far the bishops have permitted heresies about God and whether it is true that I go "a great deal too far." Some of my readers will have here another painful surprise. Not only the trinity but other of the familiar Prayer-Book conceptions of God are freely rejected in the church; as the heresies I quoted in regard to

miracles, prayer and other important doctrines will already have suggested.

First let me ask the reader's attention to two points. In quite a number of my heretical propositions I simply say that the God of the church is merely subjective or non-existent. I have over and over again been represented as an atheist on account of these denials. It is part of the conspiracy of many to prevent the remedying of a blunder and an injustice. The bishops who cut a few sentences out of my book and the other bishops who refused to allow me to explain and defend myself are in large part responsible for this injustice.

But if people who professed to be astonished that an "atheist," a disbeliever in Jesus, a man who used harsh language about Christianity, should wish to remain in the church, had examined my book, *Communism and Christianity*, for themselves, they would have understood. They would have found passages such as these:

If you ask whether I am a praying Christian, I shall answer: yes, yet when I pray, as I do every day, my prayer is an appeal to a real divinity within my heart, the better self of which self all the unreal divinities in the skies including the Christian trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are but poetic symbols (147).

Though I do not now and probably never shall again believe in the existence of a conscious, personal God, a knowledge of and obedience to whose will is necessary for salvation, yet an injustice is done me by those who say I have abandoned God and religion. Every one who desires and endeavors to fulfill the requirements of a law which is independent of his will and beyond his control, has a God and a religion (153).

And I explain repeatedly why I wish to remain in

my position in the church and aim only at making it the great power in life which it ought to be and is not.

Then as regards my rejection of belief in the Christian God. Where shall I find a definition of the Christian God? Naturally, in the church's formularies. If this were a game, I should say that the bishops could not more fatally have played into my hands than by referring me to the Prayer Book. Setting apart such obviously poetic expressions as "the throne of God," here, in these formularies, is a definite picture of a God who is all-powerful yet permits all the evil and suffering in the world: a God who "made" man what he is, certain to commit sin, yet punishing sinners with the most ghastly torture conceivable: a God who condemns all men to his hell for one man's disobedience and is appeased by the cruel death of a human-divine victim. I have already quoted, and will further quote, dozens of Episcopalian heretics who reject this God as warmly as I do.

Yes, you may say, it was stupid to refer to the Prayer Book as a standard, but there really is no standard of doctrine about God. The God of, say, Bishop Irving P. Johnson has almost nothing in common with the God of Professor Du Bose or Bishop Lawrence.

You could take six different professors who train young men for our ministry, and you will find that each has a different idea of God. We shall see that this is true, but pray draw one conclusion from it. If there is no fixed standard even for such a doctrine as God, then the condemnation of me was crude, unjust, and, in view of the reference to the Prayer Book, hypocritical.

But, you will doubtless insist, I deny that there is a

conscious, personal God, and so we have nothing left to pray to. Let me remind you that we have seen that numbers of our writers already say that all prayer of petition is futile, if not foolish. Prayer is now said to be only a subjective help, and I have said that I agree. But it will be best if I tell you what my fellow-heretics say about God and then we can ask whether the difference between us justified the bishops in bringing ridicule upon the church by degrading me, and why there is any difference.

I

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth,” is the Christian doctrine of God; and, as the word Father is obviously poetical or symbolical, the doctrine is that there exists an omnipotent being who made the material of the universe out of nothing.

Now the third article of this formula, whether you call it the teaching of the church or not, may, with the bishops' permission be denied by anybody. Here a trick, which is greatly resented by the outside world, is generally used by church writers to cover their abandonment of the first article of the creed and one of the chief elements of the Christian conception of God. Until half a century ago it was held that God created out of nothing the material of the universe, and he then made out of this material all the separate parts and inhabitants of the universe. Now that science has proved that the stars and planets, plants and animals, slowly evolved out of the material of the universe, we are told that there is no contradiction because evolution was God's method of creation.

This is a trick because "creation" referred, not to the making of the earth, the plants and the animals, but to the supposed sudden coming into existence, at the word of God, of the material of it all. From the days when St. Augustine, in his final work on Genesis (some wrongly quote the earlier work, which he disavowed) insisted on that meaning, it has been the consistent teaching of the church. What poets and artists mean by the word "create" is totally irrelevant. The theological meaning is undisputed.

Some of our heretics are quite frank about this. Professor Kirsopp Lake, who detests trickery, says:

The belief that God created the world has in fact been abandoned, but this is covered up by saying that evolution is the method of creation. That is not a fair use of language.

It may be said that there is no trick because a writer who says that evolution is God's method of creation plainly means that God directed the evolution of the stars and plants and animals. Quite so; but the trick is to distract attention by this kind of language from the question whence came the material of it all. Of fifty writers who talk about evolution as the method of creation there are not five who say whether or not they believe that God created the material of the universe, which is to-day the only point to be considered by any serious person. Except in congregations of uneducated people, to whom the church encourages preachers to tell the old story of "special creation," which Lambeth has recently disavowed as an error, it is as Dr. R. Johnston said at the Congress of 1922:

Today when the first words of the Apostles Creed

are recited, the interpretative spirit is Charles Darwin and not the ancient Fathers, and this with the expressed approval of the greatest bishops of our entire communion (Report p. 64).

We know all that, and it would be excellent if we were not obliged to make the painful reflection that it took our bishops seventy years (from 1859 to 1930) to admit as they did at Lambeth the truth of what they now call a nobler conception of God's action.

But both the Lambeth bishops and the majority of our writers scandalously evade the question whether they any longer believe in creation in the sense of the church formularies: to put it more plainly, whether they believe that the stuff of the universe, which was not and could not be evolved, is eternal or was called into existence from non-existence by God. They evidently do not and refuse to speak. Some, however, are sufficiently candid, and they agree with Professor Lake that "the idea of creation has been abandoned." Thus Professor Sterrett says in his *Modernism in Religion*:

Creation "out of nothing" at any definite time is replaced with the conception of his continuous creation (89).

I need make no comment on the attempt to call the maintenance of things in existence (a point we shall consider presently) by a name which means bringing them into existence. It is enough that Professor Sterrett and his numerous followers rather disdainfully rejected the official doctrine of creation.

Dr. Leighton Parks, speaking for later modernists generally, says in *What is Modernism*:

Creation, descent into hell, ascension, and the resurrection of the body were originally conceived as facts. No educated man today believes them to be facts but symbolical truths (95).

You will note with some amusement the word originally. From the fourth century to the end of the nineteenth the entire church believed, and was sternly taught, that these were facts. The word "originally" hardly suggests that. And are there none of our bishops who believe to-day in creation and the resurrection of the body? If there are, have we bishops who are not even educated men?

Dr. S. D. McConnell is more explicit. In his *Immortality* he says:

For the purpose of human thinking matter is as eternal and ubiquitous as God is (71).

Dean Grant in his *Bishop Hale Lectures* (*New Horizons of the Christian Faith*) wriggles a little but is in the end quite candid:

We must agree with the Dean of King's college and Professor Sorley that "an absolute beginning of creation is no part of the essential idea." The notion of creation involves a more essential point than the idea either of a beginning in time or a beginning of time. It involves the idea of God as the ground or support of the world—not merely its beginning—for without him it could not at any moment exist . . . Nor do I see how a creation out of nothing is either conceivable or important (74).

It takes him a long time to come to the point, but how he swallows it when he gets there! The question of the truth of the venerable doctrine of creation is of no importance! As to his attempt to read into the

word, like Professor Sterrett, a totally different meaning (the maintenance of things in existence) it is a very feeble and misguided stratagem. Neither scientists nor philosophers would agree that such a thing is necessary. Sir Oliver Lodge, a member of the Church of England (though he thinks creation out of nothing "absurd and unthinkable") says in his *Life and Matter* (p. 101):

Whatever really and fundamentally exists can hardly be thought of as either going out of existence or as coming into existence at any given period.

It is one of the mustiest of medieval ideas that things would cease to exist unless they were supernaturally maintained in existence. Yet this idea is an essential part of the new theory of the immanence of God, which in turn is one of the two essential elements of the new Christology. As everybody knows, the church never taught and I doubt if any serious person ever imagined, that saying that God was in heaven meant that he was far away. "God is everywhere" is one of the elementary doctrines taught to children. Some writers tell you that the Deists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries introduced the idea of a remote or "transcendant" God. They certainly did not. Men like Pope and Bolingbroke and Voltaire fully understood that such spatial terms do not apply at all to a spiritual being.

At all events even the Roman Catholic two-cent catechism, from which peasants learn their theology all over the world, asks, "Where is God?" and answers "God is everywhere." So Immanentists have to find some other sense in which they are supposed to have

made a discovery about God. Instead of giving a dozen variations of their idea, I take this definition from the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, article "Immanence:"

God is the ever-present, ever-active ground of all finite existence; he is not only the cause and origin of all creatures and their powers and activities, but always and everywhere he sustains and informs the universe, the whole world of things and of spirits being continually dependent on him in whom they live and move and are.

This idea does not claim to be based upon Scripture, and it is therefore the fruit of philosophical reasoning; and there is not a philosopher alive who will not tell you that this idea of the need of a sustainer is a quite sophistical and typical bit of reasoning from the schools of the Middle Ages.

But the Encyclopaedia goes on to say that, through this new doctrine, "dualism is preparing the way for monism" and the distinction between natural and supernatural is destroyed. The truth is that the new theory is either a loose form of words which cannot be worked out in clear propositions or it is Pantheism. And on that ground many church writers, as I said, repudiate it. The learned Dean Rashdall has a very severe criticism of it in *Ideas and Ideals* (1928). "A moment's reflection will show," he says, "that it is better to avoid the word," as it leads at once to Pantheism. "If," he says again (p. 184) "God is a spirit, then he is not in space, and therefore the term immanence can only be applied to him by way of metaphor."

Curiously enough this theory of immanence, which American Modernists press upon people everywhere

as the most solid truth of the new theology, has been heavily criticized in the organ of the British modernists, *The Modern Churchman* (April, 1930). Dr. C. J. Martin there explains that the pressure of science, with which our modernists boast that they are reconciled, has upset the new dogma and he protests that "if God is a spirit, he cannot be in space at all." The Rev. C. C. Cranmer also severely criticizes it in his *Bolen Lectures of 1928*; and, as I have already said, Canon Raven, in one of the booklets semi-officially published by the English bishops, warns us that it is "powerfully challenged" and losing ground. To the great German theologian of to-day, he says (p. 25) "the British (and still more American) insistence on immanentism seems a mere syncretism, a secularising of the Gospel."

II

So the church members who imagined that, if I found it impossible to believe in the orthodox Christian God, I might at least have accepted this new conception of God, will now understand why I refuse. It is a doctrinal structure built upon sand, and it already totters. It has removed all meaning that has any relation to orthodoxy from the word creator, and it vacillates unsteadily between the chop-logic of the medieval schoolmen and the Pantheism of Giardano Bruno, who was burned at the stake for it.

The next point in the orthodox conception of God is omnipotence. What we have already seen about miracles, especially the virgin birth and the resurrection, must have prepared the reader to find that "Almighty" is now as freely struck out of the first article of the creed as "creator;" and we should be

simply amused if any person questioned that it is one of the fundamental and all-pervading ideas of the Prayer Book. Well, we have seen how widely rejected is the Prayer-Book idea of a God who wrought miracles in ancient times, suspending the laws of nature as an oriental monarch suspends his laws; a God who sends rain and fine weather when farmers ask for it with sufficient humility and inflicts or cures diseases; a God who calls all the stuff of this vast universe, or collection of universes, into being by an act of will, can annihilate it by another act of will, and can raise countless billions of dead bodies to life. Now we shall see how one church writer after another expressly or evasively rejects the doctrine of omnipotence in itself.

Read how cheerfully Bishop Lawrence surrenders the Prayer Book conception of God in his *Fifty Years*:

The thought of God, the Omnipotent Creator, the King, who set creation going and from his distant (!) throne governed nature and man as an autocrat, interfering with nature's laws as he willed, punishing the wicked, rewarding the good, fell into the background of my thought before the revelation of the Heavenly Father who, as Creator and Saviour, lives in and through nature and man (23).

We have a conception of God ten thousand times greater, nobler, and more spiritual than was that of our fathers (25).

I will not be so malicious as to point out that, while Bishop Lawrence rejects the Prayer-Book language ("distant throne") in one breath he returns to it in the next ("heavenly Father") or that his grand new idea of an immanent God is already passing under a cloud. It is enough that he plainly rejects omnipotence, as we have seen, and he takes the words "Crea-

tor and Saviour" in the sense of the new theology, not the old.

Bishop Brent is still plainer in his Commonwealth:

Our relation to God is organic, and he cannot fulfill his purpose unless we will it . . . God has his limitation of power, which we need have no fear to admit (67).

Bishop Williams is just as plain in his work *The Prophetic Ministry of Today*. He says on this point:

If we are to make men see the vision of such a God (immanent) it may be necessary to give up some of our old-fashioned orthodox conceptions of an immediate and magical omnipotence.

Professor Sterrett (*Modernism in Religion*) assures us (and he speaks for a large body of educated members of the church) that it has already been given up:

Almightiness has passed away as being the chief attribute of God (89).

Dr. Leighton Parks (*What is Modernism*) is, of course, less blunt, but his account of the attitude of present-day modernists is clear enough. "The whole conception of Omnipotence needs to be carefully reexamined," he says. He illustrates this by pointing out that God cannot violate the moral law or the law that two and two make four. But as no believer in omnipotence ever failed to recognize this, it is the orthodox idea of infinite power that is challenged.

The rejection of the dogma is often concealed, as in other cases, under a pretence of a new interpretation. Thus in the years of the war Professor Drown set out, in a little work entitled *God's Responsibility for the War*, to meet the most acute religious difficulty in the

mind of the American people. Either God could or he could not have prevented the sordid intrigue of monarchs and statesmen which led to the most appalling suffering that was ever packed into four years on this planet, and which has had lasting consequences that are unrelievedly evil and ugly. Professor Drown's book is a masterpiece of sophistry. God is omnipotent, he concludes, but he could not prevent the war! His omnipotence (that is to say, limitless power) is "limited" by his own moral attribute, and his attributes are supposed to have inhibited him from preventing the war.

Professor M. B. Stewart uses a differently colored sophistical mantle to cover his denial in his Bishop Paddock Lectures, *God and Reality*:

God is Omnipotent . . . This attribute is generally used to refer to what God can do . . . declaring that he has enough power to do all that it is in his nature to will or in the nature of power as such to accomplish. But I think that what is often mentioned as a secondary meaning of the attribute is more important . . . namely, that all the power that exists is God's power (175).

Thus one professor finds that "omnipotence" is saved because God must respect the independent power of the human will which he has created, and the other professor finds it saved because all power, including that of the human will, is God's.

All this wriggling under the pressure of ancient dogmas and out of fear of the eyes of orthodox fanatics injures the church. The writers I have quoted show that one is to-day free in the church to reject the doctrine of omnipotence. It has not "passed away,"

as Professor Sterrett affirms, but it has ceased to be an obligatory belief. Certainly not in respect of my denial of creation or omnipotence is there any peculiar heresy on my part.

III

What, then, is the Christian doctrine of God which I have so outraged that I must be singled out of the great crowd of heretics for public humiliation, as the bishops understood it? If I have any orthodox readers, they will probably find no section of my book so astonishing as this. Indeed even those who have used the "reasonable liberty of interpretation" which has been mentioned will be astonished. A score of important church writers whom I quote in this chapter have such ideas of God that it is a mockery to call those ideas "reasonable interpretations" of any doctrinal formulary that is found anywhere in the church. Most members of the church who acquiesced in the degradation of me probably thought that at least there is a common Christian doctrine of God which I, and I alone, had rejected. There is nothing of the kind.

At this point again I ask the reader's close attention; not that there is the least difficulty about my own position but because the situation in the literature I am examining is bewilderingly confused. Understand clearly that I am not claiming that numbers of others accompany me every single step of the way marked off by the twenty-three "heretical" representations in my book, *Communism and Christianity*, for the taking of which way I was tried and condemned. And certainly there is no question of putting any gloss on, or explaining away, or modifying, any word of my con-

demned propositions. But there is no agreement whatever about God among liberal theological writers. There is not even an agreement that God must be believed to be spiritual and personal. Some church writers of considerable prestige approach closely to my own position, and I shall show that, if an imperfect following of science compels them to go so far, a more perfect following of it will presently compel the whole church to take the few steps further and interpret all its supernaturalism symbolically.

I speak of only a few steps further; and, surely, in view of the showing I am making I have a right to claim that no more is needed to bring the whole House of Bishops to my position at the end of the heretical trail, "for whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point he is guilty of all." There is not a bishop in the house who is not an offender at many points. We would have shown this to be the case at the trial if we had been allowed to put a few of the bishops on the witness stand. But when the court saw the hundreds of questions we had prepared for them it denied me my admitted right to prove my contention that if I should be condemned for twenty-three heresies every other bishop could be for at least a hundred.*

I have shown in earlier works how this pressure of modern science and philosophy affects every detail of the theological scheme, and most particularly the fundamental doctrines of God and a future life. In his

* See the questions in the official document "Before the Trial Court; and also, my lectures, 'The Bishops' Relief in God and their Disbelief in Birth Control, and, Recent Science and Materialism.'"

address to the Convention of the diocese of New York in 1923 Bishop Manning said:

The supposed conflict between science and religion which for some decades has tended to chill religious faith is seen now to have no reality (p. 4).

There must have been a few lips curled in New York when this naive sentence was read. Some may have contrasted the words with which a brilliant scientist, Professor Julian Huxley, opens his work *Religion without Revelation*:

There are many well-intentioned people today who will tell you that the conflict between science and religion is over. It is not so. What has been rather loosely called the conflict between science and religion is just reaching its acute phase. Up to the present the conflict has been an affair of outposts; the incidents of Galileo and Darwin were but skirmishes. The real conflict is to come—it concerns the very conception of Deity.

And an Episcopalian writer who is one of the very few who show a fair acquaintance with scientific knowledge, Dr. S. D. McConnell, thus answers Bishop Manning (*Immortality*, 1930):

It is idle to assert that there is no conflict between theology and materialistic science. The contest is literally a life and death one (37).

So far as we can see, there is not only no living personality apart from a material organism, but a disembodied spirit is unthinkable. It is only a phrase to which no mental image corresponds. So far as human thought can go, this is true even of the idea of God. We can form no conception of the Absolute God. That is merely a symbolic expression. In reality I cannot think of God apart from the thought of the universe.

For the purpose of human thinking matter is as eternal and ubiquitous as God (71).

In an earlier work, *Christianity, an Interpretation*, Dr. McConnell writes:

A candid survey of the actual facts of life leaves one in doubt as to whether the world is controlled by a Power who wishes well, or wishes ill, or is utterly indifferent to the fortunes of men (232).

Other writers who do not go as far as Dr. McConnell nevertheless admit that we can no longer insist on the idea of spiritualists. So cautious a writer as Professor M. B. Stewart says in his *God and Reality* (another series of Church-endowed lectures):

God is spiritual . . . Of course, not all would agree that the most real substance is spiritual, so that this attribute cannot be said to be indubitably and necessarily involved in the idea of God the ultimate reality as such (174).

From the point of view of practical religion the metaphysical monster which the metaphysical attributes (omnipotence, etc.) offer to our worship is an absolutely worthless invention of the scholarly mind (179).

For the most part, in ordinary present-day Christian minds, I think there is more danger in a crude anthropomorphic idea of creation than in a view which favors an organic union between the Creator and the creation (183).

I will not comment on the phrase "organic union" for we are always asked not to inquire too closely into the terms of the new theology; and, anyhow, it is hardly necessary to remark that the "metaphysical monster" (it is a phrase of William James) is the God of ordinary orthodox theology and the Prayer Book.

Professor Kirsopp Lake (*The Religions of Yesterday*)

and Tomorrow) goes much further. To him the orthodox God is an "anthropomorphic God," and he adds that "scientists are today almost unanimous in saying that the universe, as they see it contains no evidence of any anthropomorphic God whatever" (109). There can be no doubt what he means by anthropomorphic because he would not even mention an anthropomorphic God in the literal sense, a God with hands and eyes and such sentiments as anger, the God of the Bible and Prayer Book. Lake just as decisively rejects the new immanent God. God is for him "the sum of Values"—truth, beauty and goodness.

Professor Lake does not mean, as some do, that God is the source of truth, beauty and goodness or that they are attributes of God, but simply that the word God "sums up the totality of our knowledge of Values." He says again that the word God "describes an hypothesis," and that it is not so important whether men accept the hypothesis as whether they recognize truth and goodness in practice.

Some may reflect that this would be a complete parallel to my own heresies about God if it were not for my materialism. But Professor Lake does not insist that his values are spiritual. It is all still very obscure, he says, and he adds:

To say that a materialist cannot have any true religion or be a Christian would be absurd if it were not so serious (111).

As Professor Sterrett says in his *Modernism in Religion*:

We find every phase of heresy repeating itself in common conceptions of God. We criticise our own

conceptions . . . He is a living God in whom we live and move and have our being, no longer wholly a separate object . . . But then we should have to validate the conceptions of people in all religions? Yes. Surely in those of the Greeks and Persians and others (80-82).

And Professor Sterrett was too learned a philosopher not to know that nine-tenths of the Greek philosophers were materialists, and that the familiar phrase which he quotes, "in whom we live and move and have our being," was taken by Paul from a materialistic Stoic.

In regard to the personality of God, in which I do not believe, we can quote any number of heretical passages. Even Bishop Brent, speaking of a certain Hindu theology in his *Leadership*, says:

Deity is present as an (impersonal) oversoul, as Emerson would phrase it. It lacks that over-crispness of the Latin—Christian conception of God, which tries to indicate that man was made in God's image by using the same term (person) to define his being that is employed to designate human selfhood. If the oriental mode is too vague, the western is too definite and suggestive of limits contradictory of Deity. Each needs the aid of the other (253).

Professor Du Bose (*Turning Points in My Life*) is not consistent in his various references to God:

The soul of man is our only ultimate judge (not the church) of what is true in or of God (24).

I believe in a personal Providence in nature because I believe that nature is God (85).

Is not God in nature and is not nature God (88).

These entirely Pantheistic expressions are curious enough, but in the end Professor Du Bose says:

I find God personally only in the person of Jesus Christ (90).

But it is now so common in liberal literature to question the application of the word "person" to God, to suggest vaguely that we ought to say supra-personal, that I need not waste time. As Dr. Leighton Parks (What is Modernism) says for his school:

The word person has changed its meaning so completely that it means in common speech the very opposite of what the creeds affirm (184).

As Professor Wenley says in his Bishop Harris Lectures, *Modern Thought and the Crisis of Belief*:

The naive simplicity of orthodox belief has gone beyond recovery (78).

The suppression of many conventional doctrines about God may prove a necessary accompaniment of our transformed knowledge of self and the universe (352).

He proposes to abandon all physical arguments for God and rely only on ethical-religious experience, but the validity of a theistic argument based on experience would hardly be admitted by any psychological expert.

It is, in fact, one of the most disturbing features (from every point of view except mine) of all these works on belief in God that they not only strip the traditional idea of God of one attribute after another, but they discard one proof after another of the existence of God and approach skepticism. While scientific men who are not astronomers, like Millikan and Pupin, blunder like amateurs into this field and find God in the wonderful universe, even so devout and distinguished an astronomer as Sir A. Eddington warns them (*Science and the Unseen World*):

Probably most astronomers, if they were to speak frankly, would confess to some chafing when they are reminded of the psalm, *The heavens declare the glory of God* (p. 17).

But while, as Professor Drown says, "these so-called arguments for the existence of God are now largely discredited," our ministers are encouraged to use them to impress the less educated. Indeed, the entire church has in recent years been drenched with rhetoric about a "new science" which discredits materialism and "the mechanical conceptions of the nineteenth century," and all this because a few mystic-minded scientists, against the majority, use this language. There is no greater master of the new physical ideas than Professor Planck, author of the *Quantum Theory*, and he emphatically denies the statements of Jeans and Eddington (who are not physicists). He says in his *Modern Physics* that "the foundations of the structure of classical physics not only proved unshakeable but actually were rendered firmer through the incorporation of new ideas." Or take the sarcastic words of the brilliant British scientist Sir P. Chalmers Mitchell in his *Vitalism in Biology* (1930):

The primitive myth-making faculty has been awakened, and the opinion is widespread that Victorian conceptions have been abandoned and replaced . . . A materialistic monism is more, not less credible.

So the disintegration of the old belief in God continues. "There is no clear-cut proof of the existence of God," says Bishop Fiske (*The Faith by which We Live*), for "belief in God is a matter of faith, not of intellectual assurance." "The fundamental facts

of religion (God and the soul) are difficult to prove," says Dean Hodges (*Everyman's Religion*, p. 30). And while the bishop still finds "probable proof" in the argument from design, which Professor Drown calls one of "the so-called arguments" that have "been discredited," Dean Hodges finds evidence in "the intuitions of prophets, mystics, and poets." As his chief prophets "who made religion their whole business" Bishop Brent gives us "Abraham, Gautama, John the Baptist, Paul and Confucius;" and of these two, Buddha and Confucius, were notoriously atheists, and two, Abraham and John the Baptist, are dismissed by large numbers of Christian scholars as legendary.

I must be content to give just two or three further quotations to show in what terrible confusion the doctrine of God is, while orthodox folk dream that there is a clear-cut idea of God that all members of the church accept. In his weighty *Dudleian Lectures* (at Harvard, 1926) *Religion or God*, Professor Drown tells us that he heard a man lecture to "a theological Society" on "Christian Atheism" and found that numbers calmly contemplated the prospect of a Christianity of the future without any belief in God! "We are," he says, "in the presence of a widespread tendency to conceive of religion as independent of any outward reality" (p. 9). Professor Drown, like most of the more cultivated of our writers finds evidence in the facts of moral and religious experience; but, as I have shown elsewhere, any man who takes up this position is in as deadly opposition to the sciences of ethics and psychology as the theologian once was in opposition to biology.

The educated lay members of the church grow weary

of all these changes and retreats before the advance of science, and I will conclude this section with quotations from two of them Dr. Talcott Williams, who has spoken at our church congresses, says in his *Foreword* to the 1908 edition of the *Rubaiyat*:

Christianity, like an indefinite decimal whose ultimate end lies in the infinite is always approximating to monotheism without ever quite reaching it. When men do, they are near Omar, for this sensitive Aryan poet had passed through the furnace of a monistic faith and had come out annealed and an agnostic (XXII).

Dr. Vida Scudder says in her *Socialism and Character*:

The conception of ultimate being will be deeply if subtly affected by the social forms of the future till it assumes a character which we can only dimly predict . . . May we retain the idea of personality? No question is more crucial, none more unanswerable (332).

Dr. Scudder seems to think that the future will accept the God of Professor Ames and others, a symbol of what is best in humanity, much as I conceive it. She is at all events sure that the faith of the future will be far removed from "the crass tri-theism of current orthodoxy" (336). Poor orthodoxy! One could gather a symposium about it from respected writers of our church which would make my own language seem tame.

IV

I have ascribed to the pressure of science as most writers would, all this twisting and turning and weakening of the doctrine of a personal God. Many of our writers will tell you that they have only to appeal

from science to the higher tribunal of philosophy and the verdict is reversed. Canon McComb says in *Christianity and the Modern Mind*:

The metaphysician has shown that agnosticism cannot even be stated without involving a contradiction in thought. The agnosticism which threatened to paralyze the spiritual energies of the generation passing away has disappeared (284).

It is really appalling that our prominent writers should make such statements about philosophy and science. The educated world which looks to our universities for truth knows better and keeps away from us in disdain. It is notorious that few philosophers believe in a personal God. One reads in the impartial pages of the *Encyclopoedia of Religion and Ethics*:

Religion is bound up with the doctrine of the divine personality; philosophers have been for the most part opposed to it.

But, though philosophers have until recently been largely in favor of some sort of impersonal God, or at least strongly opposed to materialism, a considerable change is taking place.

In 1930 there appeared an important work in two volumes, *Contemporary American Philosophy*, in which all the outstanding teachers of philosophy in America express their personal creeds and conclusions. Only one of the thirty-four is a professed member of the Episcopal Church, and he, Professor Wenley, is one of the most advanced heretics I have quoted in this book. Professor Montague says in his chapter:

Cool condescending approval or an equally cool and tolerant contempt are the usual alternative attitudes

toward Christianity that are prescribed by the genteel tradition in American philosophy (II, 136).

Professor J. H. Tufts says:

My generation has seen the passing of systems of thought which have reigned since Augustine. The conception of the world as a kingdom ruled by God, subject to his laws and their penalties, which had been undisturbed by the Protestant Reformers, has dissolved (II, 333).

The whole book is a deadly retort to those Christian writers who tell their readers that, whether science is or is not hostile, philosophy is friendly and favorable. Although the plan of the work I have quoted invites expressions of opinion on religion, only three or four writers out of thirty-four profess to believe in any sort of God. The overwhelming majority are agnostic.

You are told that at least philosophers are contemptuous of materialism and unanimously believers in spiritual realities. Well, listen to three of these thirty-four leading representatives of American philosophy there are as many materialists as there are theists and more than there are Christians. Professor Montague calls his system "spiritualistic or animistic materialism" (II, 158). Professor Ray Wood Sellars says that his system is equal to "a new form of materialism." (II, 274). Professor C. Strong is for "a revised materialism" (II, 327). If some of these men say that they accept "spirit," they mean, as Professor Strong says, something "non-existent as an entity, very real as a function." Any materialist will accept that.

So all the supercilious talk about my materialism seems to have been greatly misplaced. I have quoted

both philosophers and theological writers of our own church who either accept it or say that it is an open question. Indeed as most of the philosophers who profess any theism and the majority of our better-educated theologians say that God is "the sum of values," and neither ethics nor psychology is now disposed to see a spiritual substance as the ground of these, the future is clear. Any argument for the existence of a personal spiritual God drawn from ethical and religious experience is already in conflict with at least half the authorities on ethics and psychology and invites the same fate, as science advances, as the old arguments for a first cause or a designer. Again, what people call my "extreme opinions," though less in advance of other heretics than is generally believed, are a scientific and statesmanlike plan to save the church from further disaster.

As to the trinity, the last part of the Christian doctrine of God, one can only express amazement that several of my propositions were condemned because I rejected it in its literal meaning. I have already quoted several church writers speaking contemptuously of it as tri-theism. Indeed all the liberal writers I quote in this work are agreed that if you insist on the word "person" (and without it the doctrine of the trinity means anything you like) you are a tri-theist. Bishop Lawrence says in his *Fifty Years*:

The word person, which connotes so different a thing to us from what it did in Latin and among other peoples, has led millions of people astray; they have tried to make three persons in one nature; they have been driven to a logical tri-theism (24).

Once again let us, I will not say admire, but note the coolness with which Bishop Lawrence describes the official and universal belief of the church as a quaint aberration of a certain number of people. It is not the illiterate, but every branch of Christianity except Unitarianism, that "tried to make three persons in one nature." There is not, moreover, the difference between the Latin and the English meaning of person that Bishop Lawrence supposes. Boetius is the best authority for the Latin, and he says that person means "a being endowed with self-consciousness"—as distinct from natural objects or animals. That is what we mean.

But I must be content to give a few short quotations, since the liberal and modernist practice of "interpreting" the Trinitarian formula (which in this case plainly means an emphatic rejection of it) is well known. Bishop Brent says in *The Revelation of Discovery*:

The revelation of the threefold name is not of mathematical but of moral importance. Therefore Holy Trinity, whatever else it may signify, is a mode of saying Holy Love . . . Now, too often, men make God a sort of mathematical proposition or intellectual statement, and mistake what is a symbol of him for himself (9).

The three names are, he says, just "words descriptive of God's character." I have already quoted how Bishop Slattery would admit Unitarians to the church.

Dean Hodges says in his *Everyman's Religion*:

To the theologian the three names represented three actual distinctions in the divine nature. To the layman they represented three manifestations of God. The one God is given one or other of three names ac-

ording as he deals with us in one or the other of three ways (107).

Professor Drown says in *The Creative Christ*:

As regards the doctrine of the Trinity, this theory (!) conceives of the three "Persons" of the Trinity as though each one represented a separate individual person in the modern sense of the word, as though there were three people in the being of God . . . The whole conception expresses a view of the Trinity which is utterly out of accord with the New Testament belief in the unity of God (145).

Professor Kirsopp Lake says in, *Religions of Yesterday and Tomorrow*:

In Origen such words as God, Father, Son, Logos, and Spirit are philosophical terms used for the elucidation of reality. In the popular Christianity of the Dark Ages they are the names of mythological persons (24).

A generation ago it might have seemed ridiculous to suggest that any Christian could abandon these opinions, or to assert that any one could be a Christian without holding them. But events have moved so rapidly that it is not necessary to assert this; the fact is obvious. The Faith has been abandoned (82).

Professor M. B. Stewart in his *God and Reality* thus explains away the doctrine.

The economy of the Father is that of God above us . . . The economy of the Son is that of God with us . . . The economy of the Holy Spirit is that of God within us (206).

Professor Wenley in *Modern Thought and the Crisis in Belief* says:

When a Christian cannot explain to you why doc-

trine represents God as triune and flies to mystery for refuge, what can you expect as to truth (269).

Bishop Wilson says in his *Common-Sense Religion*:

Such a formula as that of the Trinity—Three Persons in One God—is not, and cannot be, a description or explanation of God. It is a verbal suggestion as to what the God of the Christian Gospel must be . . . It means God in three aspects, each one separate and yet all united. It is like length, breadth, and height in a table (157).

And Dr. Leighton Parks, speaking for modernists, actually treats the official teaching of the church as if it were a stupid misunderstanding on the part of our more illiterate members. He says in his *What is Modernism*:

Many who call themselves Trinitarians are really Tritheists—that is polytheists. They are really worshipping three gods . . . So it has come to pass that the unity of God has largely departed from the popular theology of the day. There are not a few devout Christians, not only among the laity but among the clergy as well, who would be glad if the doctrine of the Trinity were not dwelt upon on Trinity Sunday (175).

And the skillful preacher then goes on to say that the fundamental doctrine of all Christian churches is, and must be, “the tri-une personality of God.” He says that he means “three manifestations”—Professor Lake ironically asks why only three—and he has already explained that by “personality” we do not mean anything that we can definitely state.

It is, therefore, unnecessary to discuss the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. Since thirty or forty writers of influence in the church, including several bishops, say

that they admit the trinity only in the sense that the Father means God as the sustainer and director of the universe, the Son means the same God "shining through" human nature at its best, and the Holy Ghost means the same God in the character of moral inspirer and illuminator, there is no longer a compulsory church dogma of the trinity.

Yet several propositions of mine were condemned because they differed from the teaching of the Prayer Book in regard to the trinity. The only justification that the bishops could possibly advance in this case is that I give a material symbolism to the trinity. It sounds horrid, does it not, to find matter, force and motion (or law) called the trinity? But let me show you how the charge against me is prejudiced. I say that "my God, Nature, the triune deity, matter, force and motion" is "an impersonal, unconscious and non-moral being." Yes, but it might not sound so crude if the bishops had frankly given the continuation of the sentence: "For me this god, Nature, rises into personality, consciousness and morality in myself." Is that so very different from the words of brother heretics who say that "God is Nature," that "a disembodied spirit is inconceivable?"

Another heretical proposition of mine about trinity is:

My god, Nature, is a tri-une divinity—matter being the father, force the son, and law the spirit.

But I had just before distinguished between the physical and the moral realms, and on a later page (153) I say:

In the physical realm my triune god is: matter, the

father; force, the son, and motion, the spirit.

In the moral realm my triune god is: fact, the father; truth, the son, and life, the spirit.*

But, of course, to quote my creed in full would have weakened the main plan of my accusers and judges, which was to give an impression that I am an atheist as well as materialist and communist, so that the church might set me miles apart from all other heretics.

You see now how false this impression is. There is to-day no Christian doctrine of God. The old formularies relating to God and the trinity are positively derided by numbers of church writers and hardly two of these writers then agree with each other as to what God is and how we know it. While bishops talk about "essentials," meaning chiefly the belief in God, there is no other section of theology in which the pressure of science and philosophy is more effective. There is no other fundamental doctrine about which belief is in so chaotic a condition. There is not even an agreement to exclude materialism; and already liberal writers are finding new meanings of "spiritual" in order to save the word. As to the Prayer Book, I imagine the contents of this chapter will have removed the last hesitation about the folly of saying in our time that it is the standard of doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

* See my lecture, *The Human Meaning of Christian Doctrine*.

THE important thing about Christianity, from a social and historical point of view, is not Christ, but the Church, and if we are to judge of Christianity as a social force we must not go to the Gospels for our material. Christ taught that you should give your goods to the poor, that you should not fight, that you should not go to church, and that you should not punish adultery. Neither Catholics nor Protestants have shown any strong desire to follow His teaching in any of these respects.—Bertrand Russell.

CHAPTER VIII.

Heresies About a Future Life

In comparing these hundreds of heretical expressions with my condemned propositions the reader should keep in mind two things. The first is that my little book, *Communism and Christianity*, was not written, as these other works were, either to reconcile members of the church who felt intellectual difficulties or to attract outsiders to it by representing its teaching as reasonable. The chief aim of the book, on the religious side, was just to explain to a few friends the position I had reached in regard to the church and its doctrines.

It would not, therefore, be surprising if my language differed from that of most of my brother heretics; but, even so, I have already quoted, and will further quote, scores of expressions about church doctrines that are stronger than any of mine. The strongest language I use, which my censors have reproduced abundantly, does not come under the heading of heresy at all, since it does not attack any religious dogma. It refers, as we shall see in the next chapter, to the alliance of the church in all ages with the wealthy and powerful against the poor and exploited. I am not at all unique in using this language. In any case the bishops had no right to quote it, or let it stand in the indictment, when they professed to judge me by the *Prayer Book*. For it contains nothing on sociology. It was quoted to create prejudice.

The second point to be kept in mind is that when I bluntly reject one or another dogma, such as the atonement, the trinity or the personal God, I am

clearly referring to that dogma as it is taught by the church, not as it is variously diluted or explained away by liberals. The situation is exasperating in the last degree. Here is a church of a million people actively repeating Sunday by Sunday in its ritual, and in most places in its sermons, a definite set of beliefs. Then there is a large body of writers, including bishops, who for twenty years have assured the public, with the tacit consent of the whole bench of bishops, that belief in these doctrines is not required in the church. Many claim that there are no credal requirements to-day. Many others, amateur creed-makers, say that there are certain essentials which must be literally believed, but they are not in the least agreed what these are and would have no right to assign them if they were agreed; and even then they agree to cut them down to belief in God and Jesus, they differ materially from each other as to what they mean, but all of them mean something totally different from the official teaching of the church on those points.

This was the situation I had to face. If the liberals are right, a vast amount of untruth is being imposed upon uneducated or narrowly educated folk by the church. If the liberals are wrong yet are freely tolerated so as to save the face of the church in the eyes of cultured people, there is to-day no such thing as heresy. I have now abundantly proved that there is not a single "essential" in the old creeds in the sense of a doctrine that must be taken literally. At least, there is only one doctrine we have not yet discussed, the future life, and we shall now see that there is as much or more heresy about this than about any among all the other doctrines.

Is this too strong a statement? Let us face the facts. What have always been regarded as fundamental and essential doctrines of Christianity (the fall of man, the incarnation, the redemption from hell, the resurrection, the trinity) are no longer obligatory. To say that you permit "reasonable interpretation" of them is just a silly subterfuge, and the world so regards it. To "interpret" phrases is to find a meaning which the author intended yet which may for a time have been misunderstood. The champions of the new theology certainly do not interpret either the church formularies or the New Testament or the Prayer Book on these points. They reject what the Catholic Creeds, Protestant Articles, the New Testament and the Prayer Book say and mean.

I have now shown that they equally reject what the formularies and the New Testament say about God. You are actually urged, for the credit of the church, to deny that he punishes sinners for all eternity; you are told that such attributes as omnipotence, make him a "metaphysical monster," and that to say that there are three persons in God is "crass tritheism;" you are told by very many that the word "person" does not apply at all to God; and there are a few who say that God is nature or is a symbolic word for what is best in nature, or who say that a materialistic conception of God is as permissible as a spiritualistic.

Well, where then is this horrid heresy of mine which, you say, compelled the bishops, reluctantly, to inflict upon the church the painful scandal of a heresy-hunt in the twentieth century and the far more grievous spectacle of the degradation of a bishop in this age of science for telling the truth about the supernaturalism

of the church's most basic doctrines as this is understood by at least four-fifths of the expert scientific authorities, mostly professors in our greater universities, not one of whom is orthodox as to any of such doctrines.

Perhaps you fall back upon the doctrine of the future life. Very many perplexed members of the church think they are safe, amidst all our controversies, if they say with the poet Browning: "Soul and God stand sure." But a vast amount of water has gone down to the sea since Browning wrote those words. To what extent the doctrine of God "stands sure" we have seen. Now we shall see that the Christian doctrine of a future life is, if possible, even less sure than the doctrine of God, and that large numbers in the church do not admit any sort of a personal, conscious future life at all.

I

First, then, what is the Christian doctrine of the future life? There is none, in the sense of an obligatory belief. Unless we say that the gospels can nowhere be relied upon to give the teaching of Jesus, we must say that he firmly believed the Persian doctrine, which the Jews had adopted, that both the good and the wicked lived forever, and the latter were eternally tortured. For the texts in which Jesus is repeatedly made to say this are embedded in what are said to be the oldest and most reliable parts of the gospels, and attempts to explain them away are absurd.

Jesus shared this belief of his time just as he did in regard to the presence of devils everywhere, with a supreme captain named Satan. St. Paul, the early

fathers and the universal church in all its branches until the second half of the last century held and taught these beliefs.

You may airily say that Jesus and Paul were mistaken or that Jesus was falsely reported. Of course, if you choose the former, you make us wonder how two prophets to whom you ascribe the sublimest religious insight ever known on this planet could endorse what you call "a revolting idea;" and if you choose the latter, you say that the gospel record is not reliable even on a point of the greatest gravity.

Most of our writers who lightheartedly reject the doctrine of eternal punishment strangely ignore the consequences. Hell is not only one of the foundations of the doctrine of incarnation and redemption, but the fact that Jesus taught it, and that no non-Christian moralist ever did teach it, is a curious comment on the superlative glorification of Jesus as a moral and religious teacher.

That the belief is now rejected, and rejected with horror, hardly needs proving. I gave a number of quotations in a previous chapter and need add only a few here. We may take together the belief in heaven and in hell as the two essential parts of any Christian doctrine of the future life.

On the nature of heaven, of course, there has never been explicit official teaching, apart from the resurrection of the body, which is generally rejected. The medieval schoolmen and Dante worked out a scheme, but it has no attraction for the modern mind, and we may take the church's teaching to be that people who die in an odor of virtue, whether they lived in it or not, will enjoy some sort of happiness forever. This

dogma is almost as freely questioned as any other.

Canon McComb, whose general discussion of the subject I reserve for the next section, approvingly quotes, and suggests that educated members of the church would generally agree with, these words of the British Modernist Canon Streeter:

Traditional pictures of hell seem morally revolting, while the heaven of Sunday-School teaching or popular hymnology is a place which the plain man does not believe to exist, and which he would not go to if he did.

It is all very well to talk about "traditional" and "popular" theology, but, if there is any teaching at all in the use of formularies and Prayer Book in our churches, this, which is said to be revolting on the one hand and insipid on the other, is the universal teaching of the church to-day. Can one call it the official teaching? Either it is, or else there is no such thing now as official teaching.

Yet even Bishop Slattery (much less rudely, of course) sets it aside in a work (*Life Beyond Life*) expressly written to tell what the church holds in regard to the future life. He plainly rejects eternal punishment:

He is far from the spirit of Christ who does not at least hope, and hope with prayer, that all men shall ultimately be saved (120).

Notice again the irritating way in which it is put. The man who does believe in eternal punishment is "far from the spirit of Christ," yet on Bishop Slattery's view of the Gospels Christ himself insisted on the reality of eternal punishment. We shall find it important, when we sum up, to remember all these contra-

dictions, evasions and inaccuracies which their position forces upon my brother-heretics. On the other side of the picture Bishop Slattery is vague, but if there is any teaching of the church on heaven he ignores it. He says:

I entirely ignore theology as to the future. The life to come must be left with God, to be his great and beautiful surprise for us when we shall reach it (100).

But he does rather more than ignore "theology," as he calls the doctrine of the future life repeated every Sunday in every church of his diocese. He believes that there is no finality about the moral state at death. Men, he thinks, will continue to make moral progress in the future life!

Dean Hodges makes so little of the current phrases that in quoting him, it is almost necessary to explain that he does believe in a future life of some kind or other. He writes in his *Everyman's Religion*:

The salvation for which we today greatly care is not a future blessing—though we care for that—it is a present possession. How to be saved today, how to be happy today, how to make the most of the opportunity of this day—that is what we have in mind . . . There is a shifting of the center of gravity of the religious life from faith to works; or, rather, from a faith which expresses itself in creeds to a faith which expresses itself in deeds. The prevailing purpose of the modern Church is to increase the daily happiness of men . . . The purpose is to make them right now, to bring the kingdom of heaven down, to increase the common stock of goodwill and happiness (267).

An admirable doctrine—the very doctrine for which, in several of my propositions, I was condemned as a

heretic. At least, while Dean Hodges says that it is the main purpose of the church to further the salvation of the race in this world (is it?) I was condemned as a heretic for saying that it ought to be. It is a mad world.

Professor Sterrett (*Modernism in Religion*) who tells us that before his ordination he protested that he did not believe in the scheme of "sin and salvation, heaven and hell," represents the doctrine both of heaven and hell as now negligible. It is usual, he says, to tell educated people who are invited to enter the church that "theories of the atonement and of the state of the departed need not trouble them." He very firmly rejects hell and believes in a sort of purgatory on the semirationalist lines of Dante. After death the less virtuous will have a further opportunity to learn virtuous ways. "How piteously petty," he says (p. 111) "has been the orthodox picture of the salvation of the soul from future torments." What salvation really means, he says, is "the getting of the mind of the Master into one's soul."

Bishop Wilson (*Common-Sense Christianity*) repudiates the "two-story scheme," as Bishop Barnes calls it, of the future life on the bold ground that Jesus never taught it. Jesus made only "the most general statements" about a future life. One would like to know how he knows that. If the statements of Jesus are to be sought in the gospels, one would scarcely call the long passage in Mark (the oldest Gospel) X, 42-49 a series of "most general statements." Yet Bishop Wilson continues:

Based upon his attitude, the Christian idea of im-

mortality may be said to be, briefly, something like this: there is a life beyond death and the kind of life lived in this world makes a difference in the possible opportunities in the life beyond (71).

In short, "the Christian idea of immortality" seems to be whatever any particular modern Christian cares to make it, provided you rigorously exclude what has been in practice the most important element of it from the time of Jesus onward—the fear of hell. It has all been a terrible mistake, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost (do not take this as a jibe but as a serious reminder of what these changes imply) for nineteen hundred years. On the positive side the idea seems to be taken from modern spiritualism: we go on living in an ethereal world and get better and better. But I need not quote further. There is a much more important aspect of the matter to consider.

II

After all, you may say, these liberals and modernists do believe in personal immortality and you do not. That is enough to put you in an entirely different category from what you call your brother-heretics. I suppose that is the way most members of the church argue about the matter and reconcile themselves to the special selection of me for condemnation. But I am now going to show them that lack of belief in personal immortality is not at all a heresy in which I stand alone.

I had better quote at once an assurance of this from one of the most substantial works on the subject in recent Episcopalian literature. This is *The Future Life in the Light of Modern Inquiry* by Canon McComb. In this we read, after a sorrowful confession

that the belief in immortality is disappearing from the mind of the cultivated few and the general public:

Whatever be the situation in the world at large, surely inside our own Christian Churches this faith is kept fresh and living. Alas this is far from being the case (14).

Then, referring to Sir Oliver Lodge's ingenious confidences, he says:

Were one to stand up in a Christian pulpit and proclaim a future life with a like assurance, he would be listened to with polite incredulity on the part of very many and would find himself regarded as St. Paul was by the Athenians—something of an enthusiast . . . Why is it that the average church goer resents the unqualified affirmation of a life beyond the grave? (17).

Canon McComb says that he agrees with these words of Dr. McGiffert:

A degree of agnosticism touching the future life is tolerable in religious men today which would have been quite intolerable in other days . . . In the absence of experimental proof few present-day thinkers are able to count immortality as other than a more or less well-grounded hope (18).

For his own part Canon McComb bases his hope of immortality on the resurrection of Christ. As to this, however, it is as well to remember the words of Dr. McConnell:

If Christ be considered a supernatural being, nothing which happened to him has any relation to me.

If, on the other hand, Christ be not regarded as a supernatural being, in which case his bodily resurrection is always denied, it would follow only from his

survival of death that good men might be rewarded with such survival. That all men, or even all good men, survive death would not at all follow.

This, in point of fact, is now a fairly common belief. Thus Dr. F. Palmer says in a large special work on the subject, *The Winning of Immortality*:

Immortality as a necessity seems to me to have little to say for itself (XI).

After all the arguments that have been advanced, from Plato onward, to prove the spirituality and therefore necessary immortality of the soul, that is a remarkable saying. "The soul is not necessarily immortal but may become so," Dr. Palmer concludes; that is to say, the high practice of virtue may win it for certain individuals. We go back in the twentieth century to the belief of the Egyptians of five or six thousand years ago; the good are admitted at death to the kingdom of Osiris, but the wicked cease to exist. Nineteen hundred years of Christian life, in one of its most conspicuous features, the fear of hell, are blotted out.

But the sophistry of the so-called proofs of the immortality of the soul is not the only modern discovery. Modern science and modern philosophy are so far (one will not say opposed to it, as they as such never discuss it) inconsistent in what they do teach with the old belief that it would be difficult to find one psychologist or one philosopher in ten who accept it. And it is easy to quote Episcopalian writers who recognize the force of this hostility. In the last chapter I quoted Dr. S. D. McConnell saying that there is to-day a conflict of science and theology and it is a "life and death one." He continues:

It (science) has made it increasingly difficult to believe that the soul has an independent existence, and that this existence can survive after the cessation of bodily functions.

In a more recent and special work on the subject, *Immortality* (1930) the title of which shows at once that he agrees with Dr. Palmer, Dr. McConnell quotes this passage from Dean Inge:

The hope of personal immortality burns very dimly among us. Those who study the utterances of our religious guides must admit that this is so. The topic is mainly reserved for letters of condolence and then handled gingerly.

"This," says Dr. McConnell, "is true in my own experience." Knowing something of science, as few Episcopalian writers do, he sees that this is mainly due to the relentless pressure of the discovery of evolution. "At what stage in evolution did man attain to the capacity of immortality" he rightly asks. He knows further that, as I have shown in previous volumes, physiology and psychology now teach such truths about the mind that "a disembodied spirit is unthinkable." He can only escape this legitimate pressure of science (or so he thinks) by granting that the great majority of men cease to exist at death, but that a few may, as a reward of virtue, be provided with a sort of astral or ethereal brain and continue to exist.

Similarly in his *Christianity, an Interpretation*, Dr. McConnell says:

We have reached the point where the old phrases "the immortality of the soul" and "the resurrection of the body" must take on new meanings . . . Belief in a future life is being given up by intelligent men . . .

their hope has met defeat at the hands of other truth which has slowly shown itself . . . To clear away the old phrases is an ungracious and distasteful task, but it is always best in the long run to know the truth (99-100).

It is a very thin shadow of the robust old belief in immortality that such writers leave. They cannot possibly set out precisely the qualifications which entitle a man to the prize of immortality; and, therefore, no individual can have an assurance of winning it.

What is more, the answers to questionnaires that have been distributed among educated men and women in America and other countries show that in increasing numbers people are ceasing to desire immortality. These inquiries have led people to reflect, and large numbers have decided that the prospect of living forever in totally unknown conditions of life is not attractive. Under the influence of modern naturalism, on the one hand, and the complete break-up of supernaturalism on the other, men now generally say, with a smile, that eternal sleep is the best termination to the fever and work of life.

And there is another aspect of the matter which appears in the following quotation from Professor Kirsopp Lake's Ingersoll Lecture on the subject, *Immortality and the Modern Mind*. Here we have the professor of ecclesiastical history of Harvard University, "a distinguished Anglo-American divine," as Dean Inge calls him, not only surrendering the belief in individual immortality but insisting that the abandonment of the belief is serviceable to the race. This, moreover, is no casual or ill-considered expression. The scholar who is invited to give the annual Ingersoll

Lecture receives six months' notice and a fee of \$200. This, then, is the well-weighed conclusion of one of the most learned and influential among our writers:

The modern scientist, postulating the dissolution of the body, argues that therefore there can be no future life (18).

Probably most men hold individual life to cease with death . . . Men regard the personal survival of their individuality much as they look at schemes for their permanent rejuvenation: a pleasant dream, impossible of fulfillment. This conclusion is often deplored by those who do not share it. But it has raised rather than lowered, the standard of life. The pursuit of individual immortality consumed a lamentable amount of energy in past generations. To attain salvation was thought to be the object of existence . . . It is not altogether surprising that people who argued in this way contributed little to the improvement of the world (20-21).

Even philanthropy was put on a wrong basis, and the charity of the Middle Ages was less often inspired by love of man than by hope of heaven. In general there was produced a type of selfishness all the more repulsive because it was sanctified (22).

He goes on to speak of "the best men of today" and their complete indifference to a future life:

Most of them are materialists, and the Christian preacher is often shocked at their plainly stated disregard for all questions concerning a future life. Nevertheless there is no type of man now living who so completely sacrifices himself for the good of others (24).

Most people will recall the name of President Stanley Hall when he reads these words of Professor Lake. He was not a materialist, but this is how his biographer sums up the message of the great scholar and teacher:

He did not preach golden mansions in the sky: his was a message of fairer homes on earth and nobler men and women to live in them.

However, let us return to and finish with Professor Lake. After all this one will certainly not expect him to embrace the orthodox, or even the modernist, view of a future life. In an earlier work, *The Religions of Yesterday and Tomorrow*, he had sufficiently indicated his skepticism by saying: "If after this world we retain any memory of its storms" (p. 73). In the Ingersoll Lecture he says:

I can see no reason for believing in a soul, of however ethereal a substance, which keeps the body alive and will ultimately leave it (34).

I am not so intoxicated by the love of my own personality as to think that it can be or ought to be immortal (36).

At the most he thinks that "life and thought," but not "living and thinking" (which depend upon the body) are eternal. He expressly refuses to believe in the survival of "individuality," and on the explicit ground that it depends upon the body.

It is no part of my claim that I have in my works said nothing whatever that other members of the Protestant Episcopal Church are not saying. No other writers in the church show the complete and solid acquaintance with modern culture, in all its branches, which the reader will have gathered from the volumes in which I vindicate my position. One would, therefore, not expect them to realize the full bearing of this modern culture upon the whole structure of theological belief.

Yet the reader, who possibly took up this work with

the idea that I was just going to compare a few heterodox statements about Genesis on the atonement with my own advanced heresies, is probably now wondering if there is a single word in my twenty-three propositions that had not already been said in works by ministers and professors of our church which were actually circulating in the church under the eyes of the bishops.

Certainly there is not one single distinctively Christian doctrine that I have challenged in its literal sense which is not equally rejected in that sense by a score of writers. If you hesitate to admit this, which doctrine will you name? The trinity? Redemption? The resurrection? Heaven and hell? All are just as freely denied in their literal meaning as I deny them; and even a bishop will surely have sufficient sense of humor not to indict me for heresy because I refuse to "interpret" these doctrines in the modernist sense.

Hence when the censors of my book selected propositions in which I reject the orthodox doctrine of salvation, the trinity, the Holy Ghost, creation and the divinity of Christ, and when a court of bishops declared me unfit for the ministry of the church on the strength of those propositions, they either betrayed an ignorance of actual church literature which I recommend to the notice of the 1934 Convention, or they deliberately selected me out of a crowd of heretics for condemnation.

It now appears that there is really hardly a single heresy in all my propositions in which I stand alone. Not only am I not the only one to deny survival after death or to say that there is no such thing as a disembodied spirit, but we have the assurance of preachers

of great experience and authority both in the American and the English churches that skepticism about a future life is so widespread in the church itself that they dare not insist on it as an essential teaching of the church.

Finally, I am not even alone in my heresies about God. When one minister of the church defines God as a symbol of "values" and insists that one can take these in a materialist sense and yet be a Christian, when another minister declares that pure spirit is "unthinkable," when a bishop declares that "God is Nature," when on all sides the word "person" is declared to be inapplicable or meaningless, my own heresy ceases to be solitary. Besides that in most of the propositions which were selected for condemnation, in which I say that "your God" is merely subjective, I quite plainly refer to the idea of God in the church formularies: the idea which Bishop Lawrence so genially dismisses as a belief of our youth that we have outgrown.

But I will return to this point in the last chapter. My worst heresy of all (in the eyes of the bishops) the heresy which is the key to all my other heresies and explains the language in which they are expressed, has still to be discussed. It is that through its preoccupation with a work of salvation which any person in the church is now free to describe as purely imaginary, and through its intimate alliance with the rich and powerful in all ages since the fourth century, Christianity or the Christian church has failed to cooperate in saving men from real evils. What this has to do with the Prayer Book, or on what standard of doctrine the

bishops call it heresy, I do not know. But, again, if it is heresy, let us see how abundant heresy is in the church.

CHAPTER IX.

Heresies About the Value of Christianity

When we make every allowance for the clumsiness with which the propositions to be condemned were taken out of my book, and the still greater clumsiness of condemning them on the ground that they were inconsistent with the Prayer Book, one sees that there is, running through them all, a certain idea which greatly irritated the bishops. That idea is of a practical nature. I was not at the time greatly interested in the speculative discussion of doctrines. I was too deeply interested in what Dean Hodges calls "the faith that expresses itself by deeds" to pay attention to shades of heresy in my references to particular doctrines. I was, and meant to be, impatient of all such matters; though, of course, my rejection of the doctrines was in each case based upon adequate study and knowledge.

This practical idea was that the entire influence which the church has or could have ought to be used in the great work of eliminating suffering and ignorance, of promoting happiness and knowledge, in this world. I had come to see that this work was the greatest to which men could put their hands; and, since I firmly wished to remain a member and a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, I wanted to see the church properly equipped to take its part in the work. For this it was necessary to transfer the direction of the church's activity from a supernatural world and supernatural powers to this visible world and the powers actually at work in it, and to break the long

association of the church with wealth, privilege and power.

That was the ruling idea of my book and that clearly was my supreme heresy in the mind of the bishops. That is the one heresy that gives my propositions a different coloring from the words of heretics who are interested only in the academic question of the truth or untruth of the formularies. I have just read over carefully once more the full list of my alleged heresies, and I see very clearly that this is the chief offense. Four out of the first half dozen are as follows:

1. Within the social realm, humanity is my new divinity, and yours (my old one) is a symbol of it, or else, as I think, he is at best a fiction and at worst a superstition.

2. Neither capitalism nor Christianity is anything except in so far as it is a system of parasitism, and as parasitic systems they have striking resemblances . . .

4. Do you not see with me that the Christ of the world is not a conscious personal God but an unconscious and impersonal machine? It is to the machine of man, not the Lamb of God, to which we may hopefully look for the taking away of the sins of the world.

5. The world's saviour-god is knowledge. There is no other Christ on earth or in any heaven above it, and this one lives, moves and has his being in the fear of ignorance.

Naturally some of this language cannot be fully understood without the context in my book, but the general idea ought to be clear to everyone. With large numbers of other church writers I hold that the salvation from hell said to have been won by the Lamb of God or Christ is a delusion; and I have again plenty of companions when I say that the benefits men expect

from a personal God, as the church tells them to expect, are illusory. Therefore any institution which receives colossal sums of money from the people for imaginary benefits must be to me a parasitical system as long as it persists in that character.

Naturally I am a heretic, judged by the Prayer Book, in the negative part of these propositions. But there are, as we have now seen, so many heretics in the same sense that one must doubt whether the mere negation would have moved the bishops to condemn me. Therefore it seems that what chiefly brought condemnation upon me was the positive side of my propositions: that in social matters humanity must rely upon itself, that the church in so far as it involves the aid of supernatural powers is parasitic, that knowledge and science are the real saviours of the world from its real evils, war and poverty.

To condemn this positive teaching because it is not in the Prayer Book is childish; but, whether it is or is not heretical, I shall show in this chapter that it is a very common attitude in the church, adopted by an increasing number of writers. Let me ask first that my words be treated fairly. When I say that "it is the machine of man that takes away the sins of the world," I say also quite plainly in my book that by those sins I mean the causes of war and poverty. When I say that "the Holy Ghost sees to it that the slave class is kept in ignorance," even the simplest person must understand that, since I (like most of the liberals and modernists) do not believe in the existence of a Holy Ghost, I must mean that bishops and priests speaking in the name of the Holy Ghost have resisted the en-

lightenment of the workers and distracted them with the illusion of heaven.

But let us take a broad view. I hold, and it is clearly quite legitimate in the church to hold, that hell is an imaginary evil and therefore salvation in the orthodox sense is an imaginary good. I would retain the word hell symbolically to stamp upon men's minds the evils that millions suffer by war and poverty and ignorance; I would retain the word heaven as a symbol of a life freed from all these evils; and I would retain the words salvation and redemption as symbols of the great work of turning hell into heaven on earth. All my propositions must be read (not "interpreted") in that light. And I can quote any number of my brother-heretics in the church similarly demanding that the church shall transfer its interest from a supernatural order to the present life of man and using stronger language than I do about its failure to do so.

As I am trying at every step to proceed with the greatest clearness, frankness and sincerity, I will divide these quotations into three groups. They will overlap to some extent, but there are really three distinct questions.

The first question is: Did Christ or early Christianity set out to redeem the world from its visible human evils, or was the Christian gospel a suitable or effective agency to help in this work?

The second question is: Whatever the character of early Christianity was, did the church actually use in the work of human redemption the mighty power it held from the fourth century to the twentieth?

The third question is: What shall we say of the work that the church is doing, or failing to do, in our own

time? My answer to these questions is my great heresy and is known. Here I have only to tell what other church writers say in answer to these questions.

I

In answering the first question Christian writers of our time contradict each other so emphatically that they provoke the smiles of non-Christian students of social questions. We saw how the rejection of the dogma of the incarnation has compelled our liberals to use more superlative language than ever about the teaching and character of Jesus, so that they can say that God "manifested" himself uniquely in him. But did that teaching rebuke social sins and insist on social virtues as well as rebuke personal vices and extol personal virtues?

The answer depends upon the social or economic views of the writer and the audience to which he is appealing. The words attributed to Jesus in the gospels, which are nevertheless held to be the most inspiring and most helpful ever uttered on this planet, lend themselves to the most contradictory interpretations. The real solution is easy enough. There is no consistent teaching of one writer in the gospels. Part of the story was contributed by Jewish ascetics, possibly of the Essenian school, who did not take the slightest interest in the social order and even thought poverty a good thing. Part was contributed by Greek Christians of the cities who deeply resented the exploitation of the working class by the owning class and cursed the rich. Part was contributed by religious groups who were equally attentive to personal virtue and to the law of justice in social life, though not rebels

against the social order. A small part was contributed by groups who fancied Jesus as a good Epicurean who enjoyed boisterous wedding-feasts in questionable company; and part by later ambitious "elders" who represented Jesus as founding a church.

Any lay historian who took up (as they are always careful not to do) the problem of the reliability of the gospels as a record of the teaching of Jesus would come to that conclusion. It is avoided by biblical scholars only because to admit it is to admit that the case for the historicity of Jesus is very feeble. Yet that is obviously the reason why the socialist and the individualist, the slave and the slave-owner, the ascetic and the wine-drinker, the ecclesiastical and the anti-ecclesiastical mind, the high church, low church, broad church and no-church-at-all can all find full confirmation of their particular views in the supposed gospel of Jesus.

Bishop Brent says that "Jesus added a new motive to ethics—the social motive." Professor Du Bose says that Jesus taught "absolutely nothing new." Dean Hodges says in his *Everyman's Religion*:

Jesus came preaching salvation—not the salvation of the individual alone, but the salvation of society . . . The Kingdom is the perfected social state.

Dean Grant says in *The Economic Background of the Gospels* (1926):

If any fact in history is assured, Jesus was no class protagonist or social revolutionary . . . He taught a gospel of renunciation (117).

Dr. Vida Scudder thinks that "the vision of Socialism proves to be the ancient vision to which faith has clung throughout the ages," while Bishop Fiske retorts that

“social partisanship in the Church does not really represent Christ.” Bishop Williams, Bishop Spalding, Bishop Parsons and others are quite sure that above all Jesus aimed at the foundation of a Kingdom of God on earth or, in the words of Bishop Parsons, “a co-operative society in which the welfare of each is the concern of all,” and just as many are sure that Jesus was as indifferent to the social order as a monk of the desert. Now, as I told in a previous chapter, a new school makes progress in the churches which insists again that Jesus expected the end of the world in his own generation and therefore was bound to be indifferent to social questions.

Let me put the contrast in the words of two distinguished clerical professors of the Episcopal Church. In his *Modernism in Religion* Professor Sterrett says:

Kingdom of God is used as a conventional symbol. His (Christ's) thought is rather that of a family composed of those who gain a moral likeness to the Father in heaven. It is a social order inclusive of all social orders on earth where the Father is loved. It is a sociological ideal (31).

It is a conventional symbol of the supreme good of the human race . . . it stands for social righteousness (33).

Dr. Sterrett cleverly gets rid of the difficulty that Jesus expected a speedy end of the world, and would therefore be indifferent to the social order, by arbitrarily assuring us that his disciples misunderstood him. “Jesus,” he says, “never succeeded in getting his conception fully into the minds of his immediate disciples.” Note again how the modernist softens his admissions. If Dr. Sterrett is right about the

meaning of the kingdom, Jesus did not merely not "fully" convey it to his disciples, but they understood him to say the exact opposite (that the end of the world was at hand) and his real meaning was lost, not only upon his "immediate" disciples, but upon all his followers until modern socialism spread.

In the meantime the church officially taught that it was itself the kingdom which Jesus founded on earth, and Professor Sterrett is full of disdain for this. "It is," he says, "Not worth while to refute such an arrogant and groundless assumption" (34). The so-called catholics in our church are "Jesuits in disguise," champions of "an utterly unhistorical fabrication." The supreme aim of Jesus (St. Paul does not seem to have known it) was to found the kingdom of God on earth, and that means an ideally just social order. Some go even further and say a socialist order.

Professor Easton is an equally learned scholar; and, while Professor Sterrett was a philosopher, not an historian, Professor Easton is an expert on biblical study. He is drastically opposed to Professor Sterrett and all who agree with him. He says in his Gospel before the Gospels:

It is generally recognized—and it ought to be universally recognized—that what is termed "the social gospel" has only an indirect connection with Jesus's teaching. In social organizations and political problems he took no interest. . . . The Kingdom of God that Jesus preached and expected is purely transcendental, and its full descent into the present aeon would mean, not the transformation, but the wreck of all that man calls the world. . . . Jesus's primary task was the awakening of individual consciences, in order to prepare

men one by one to face the judgement that would inaugurate the Kingdom (132).

Professor Easton (as also his collaborator in other works, Bishop Fiske) ridicules the attempt to find a social ethic in the gospels. There has been much controversy among biblical scholars as to the meaning of the Kingdom of God, but "it has practically reached an end, at least in technical circles," though "it persists among popularizers." By "the Kingdom of God is at hand," the experts say, Jesus and the Jews of his time meant "the end of the world is near."

So on this point, instead of being a heretic, I am in most respectable company. I also deny that there is a social ethic in the gospels, and I say that, if the gospel record is to be taken as historical, Jesus certainly expected a speedy end of the world. I have pointed out in my earlier work that the unquestionable meaning of the Kingdom of God, as generally used in the gospels, is in the Persian sacred book, the Avesta; and no one doubts that the Jews were deeply influenced by Persian religious ideas. Every chapter of the Avesta tells of the coming of the Kingdom of God or the end of the world and general judgment of all men. If scholars would follow up this clue, and then recognize that several very different schools contributed to the growing life of Jesus, there could be no controversy. At all events, I am very far indeed from heresy when I say that for their salvation from their real visible evils men must not look either to the death or the life or the teaching of Jesus.

II

But, says Professor Easton, the social gospel has an

“indirect connection” with the teaching of Jesus. He means, of course, that, when it was found that there was to be no catastrophic end of the world, Christians began to see that the principles of justice and brotherly love taught by Jesus demanded a new world-order. And it is commonplace of Christian literature that by the application of these principles Christianity gave the world schools, raised the status of woman and inspired the virtue of charity.

Well, if I am a heretic in denying all this, I again have numerous companions. The social history of Europe is now worked out by hundreds of experts, and they smile at the old claims. The old language, it is true, lingers in the pulpit and popular literature. Thus Dr. Bowie in his *Inescapable Christ*, having discarded the dogma that Jesus saved the world by his blood, has to make all the stronger claims that he saved it by his teaching. He says:

The great human redemptions of this world have been wrought by men who have learned from Jesus to see the divine worth in their lowliest brethren. And if the history of the last nineteen hundred years contains the record of slaves made free, of ignorant men lifted into knowledge, of old tyrannies overturned to make room for new democracies of opportunity, the reason is that the spirit of Christ has worked in the hearts of men (197).

With the exception of the reference to ancient slavery (and any history of slavery he cares to open will tell Dr. Bowie that from Jesus and Paul onward no Christian leader condemned it, and it was destroyed by a change of economic conditions) all these steps in the redemption of the race belong to the Europe of

modern times, and here is what a learned modernist, of the Church of England, says about them:

The greatest blot on the history of the Church in modern times is the fact that, with the glaring exception of the campaign to abolish slavery, the leaders in the social, political, and humanitarian reforms of the last century and a half in Europe have rarely been professing Christians, while the authorized representatives of organized Christianity have, as often as not, been on the wrong side. This indictment is a commonplace; and, at any rate as far as words go, its justice is readily admitted by the leaders of all the Churches today.

So says Canon Streeter (*The Spirit*, p. 358). It may sound ungracious to spoil his one claim for the church, but every American must smile at it. You remember what Theodore Parker said:

If the whole American Church had dropped through the continent and disappeared altogether, the anti-slavery cause would have been further on.

But consult the chief American Episcopalian expert on these matters, the Rev. Loring Brace (*Gesta Christi*). He calls black slavery "the most dreadful curse that has perhaps afflicted humanity," and he says that "the guilt of this great crime rests on the Christian Church as an organized body" (p. 365). I have given all the facts in a previous volume.* Canon Streeter has in mind the zeal of Wilberforce, but he is clearly unaware that Wilberforce was skeptical until his twenty-seventh year and it was among skeptics that he espoused the cause of abolition.

* *The Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism from the View-point of Sociology*, Vol. VI.

All these old claims for the action of Christianity, either in the Greek Roman World or the Middle Ages or modern times, are so discredited that our own apologists are rapidly changing their note. Dean Hodges in one of his books boasts how Christianity abolished slavery (which is the opposite to what every expert says) and assures us that it will go on to abolish modern "industrial Slavery," but in other works his language approaches very close to that of my condemned propositions. In his life of Bishop Potter he says:

For well-nigh a thousand years religion stood in the popular mind for a colossal and portentous menace on the one hand and a grasping company of official ceremonialists on the other (p. 348).

And in *Everyman's Religion* he is just as censorious:

It is true that the Christian religion has made a considerable contribution to the stock of human misery. It has often aggravated the ills of life. It has often multiplied them. To the horrors of persecution it has added the terrors of conscience. It has darkened the sky (262).

Language quite as strong in substance as that of my condemned propositions has been heard repeatedly in our church congresses. At the congress of 1922 Professor Norman B. Nash, who is no demagogue, but a learned seminary professor, said:

The Christian Church has compromised all too readily with the class-consciousness and class-selfishness of one social group after another as they came into power. She has given place to the divine right of kings, to the inspiration of the landed gentry, to the canonicity of the U. S. Constitution (Report p. 140).

How does that differ from my "heresy" that the Holy Ghost, which obviously means the church that claimed to be guided by the Holy Ghost, kept the workers in ignorance to please the owners?

But it is of little use to-day to speak of any work of human redemption before the latter part of the eighteenth century. All the social claims for early Christianity are dismissed as rhetorical froth, and all the claims for the church of the Middle Ages as fabrications of papal apologists. The real work of redemption began in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and the only question is to what extent the church cooperated in it. We have seen how Canon Streeter, approvingly quoted by Dean Hodges, affirms that it is "a commonplace" that the church gave no assistance but was generally in opposition. Bishop Williams is hardly less severe. In his *Valid Christianity for Today* he describes the terrible sufferings of the workers in England in the early decades of the nineteenth century; as I describe them, more fully, in the sixth volume of my *Bankruptcy of Christian Supernaturalism*. He continues:

Yet the Church of England never recorded an official protest against such iniquities. And when Lord Shaftesbury rose to do mighty battle for the oppressed, he was solemnly denounced and strenuously opposed by the bishops (61).

It is now customary to be silent about what the bishops did and to stress the fact that Shaftesbury was a devout churchman. But even Shaftesbury was, as I have shown, only the champion of one small class of workers. He strongly opposed the emancipation of

the millions and was hated by them. In his Prophetic Ministry of Today Bishop Williams adds:

The Church has failed, miserably failed, to realize and apply her common Christianity. Only here and there, in some isolated Christian pulpit, did the voice of some lowly prophet and seer give such radical warning and counsel as Robertson gave. But that advice was either contemptuously ignored or, if possible, rudely stopped. It was only a simple-minded preacher—a bit touched in his brains—out of his sphere, impertinently meddling with business and politics (83).

Still stronger language is used by those Episcopalian writers who are in closer contact with the social work of our time and the sentiments of the people. Dr. Vida Scudder, for instance, writes thus in her *Socialism and Character*:

By the end of the eighteenth century the church had long abandoned the democratic passion of her youth and ensconced herself comfortably under the wings of property and privilege . . . Inspired by intense distaste for Christianity as encountered in politics, stung to scorn by the *laissez-faire* attitude of a Church which was allowing the appalling phenomenon of modern wage-slavery to reach its lusty prime with scarcely a whispered word of protest, the social radicals expressed their reaction in terms uncompromising and violent (74).

The Church has never yet to this day, either through her leaders or through any widespread movement on the part of her more spiritual children, abandoned her old alliance with monopoly and privilege, and ranged herself openly on the side of the People and of radical social change (78).

We should join fearless and honest radicals like Lowes Dickenson and Loveley in their assertion that

the victory of (orthodox) Christianity would mean the suicide of civilization (272).

Strong as the last sentence seems to be, we found Professor Easton saying the same thing, and one could quote many other churchmen. In his *Life of Bishop Spalding*, Dr. J. H. Melish says:

The medieval view of life which sees the true state beyond death and regards existence here as a mere prelude can not seriously undertake the reformation of society (82).

And he quotes Bishop Spalding himself impatiently exclaiming:

I sometimes wonder whether the Protestant Episcopal Church and Social Service can live together (234).

Is there anything more advanced than that in my "heretical" propositions about the church? But here my quotations begin to refer to the church of to-day as well as the church of yesterday, and I must open a new section. Quite certainly I am not a unique heretic in saying that until our time at least the church has been on the side of the rich and powerful in their exploitation of the poor and weak.

III

But if any person thinks that this "miserable Failure" of the church, as Bishop Williams calls it, during the long centuries of its power is now remedied, and that I am alone, or nearly alone, in applying severe social criticism to it to-day, he must be extremely ignorant of our own church literature. Let me begin with a few further sentences from Bishop Williams' *Valid Christianity for Today*, which is full of fiery

charges against the church and the bishops:

Today, thank God, the conscience of the nation is being aroused by the revelation of unmitigated graft in politics and apparently unlimited dishonesty in the management of our big business affairs. But the Church maintains a discreet silence about such matters (62).

Does not the ecclesiastical conscience still lay its paralyzing hand upon the free utterances and activity of the Church (63)?

We render fulsome adulation to certain men of high position and great wealth, though they may be notoriously guilty of flagrant sins against justice and equity and common honesty, because they rent our finest pews and give fat subscriptions for charities, while we depose from the ministry the faithful prophet and clear-sighted seer who may put a different accent on some shibboleth of the faith or differ slightly from us in the metaphysical interpretation of some mystery which nobody can ever comprehend* (138).

Are we content to be a mere appanage of the State or of the aristocracy and Plutocracy, dumb dogs that will not bark because our mouths are stopped with patronage or with social prestige and position (164)?

Charity and beneficence often debauch the conscience of the Church as much as bribes do the conscience of the legislatures. If a man only gives liberally she does not stop to ask, How did you make the money you spend so freely (174)?

Class-consciousness paralyzes our churches and our church-work (176).

Twelve years later, when Bishop Williams wrote his *Prophetic Ministry of Today*, he found no change in the attitude of the church to the social question:

* The seer referred to was Dr. Algernon Sydney Crapsy who was deposed for rejecting the doctrine of the virgin birth.

Opposing forces are gathering enormous strength on both sides to attempt the solution of this fundamental ethical problem by the clash of non-ethical weapons. And the Christian ministry is looking on (177).

From Bishop Spalding I could, of course, quote endless pages as fiery and scornful as those of Bishop Williams. During most of his life, until the pressure exerted on him was too much for him, he publicly called himself a socialist. In 1911 he wrote an article in *The Christian Socialist*, his biographer tells us, in which, in exactly the language which the church has condemned in my case, he summoned it to accept both Charles Darwin and Karl Marx, to preach the class struggle, the materialistic conception of history (which is utterly destructive of theology) and even the social revolution. Some will still remember the anger he aroused by his speech in the General Convention in 1913. "We come to a General Convocation of Capitalists," he said, and his speech was full of such sentences as these:

The Church, if she is to be a real power in the twentieth century, must cease to be merely the almoner of the rich and become the champion of the poor.

We are the Church of the well-fed and well-clothed, and we spend most of our time fattening the sheep for the fold (*Life*, p. 243).

Again, I ask, how does that language, used in convention, differ from the language of my "heretical" sociological propositions?

Much nearer to our own time, in fact after the bishops had presented my words as too shocking to permit me to remain in the episcopate, Bishop Brent used language that differed little in substance. He did

not say this in America, but he published the report of his speech at the Stockholm Conference of 1925 in which speaking of the social question, he referred to "the moral bankruptcy and cowardice of the Church." And still later, in his recently published Duff Lectures (*The Commonwealth*) he often has such passages as these:

The Church has allowed its purpose to be obscured by disproportionate attention to side-issues and petty affairs and by seeking to retain hold of men by weak or even guilty compromise. Further, the Church today is using a method which is a direct contradiction of the primary law of organic life. It is in a state of organized confusion (92).

The clergy cannot lead their flock (on social questions) because they do not themselves know enough to be good (95).

I suppose you would agree with me that my income is a wage from society. Those who receive most, whatever its immediate origin, owe most service to society. Is it not part of the Christian duty to take this out of the sphere of mere idealism and make it practical and effective? If any man will not work, neither let him eat. That was the brutal way St. Paul put it, and I think it is final (100).

The Church has tagged along after the nation instead of being its conscience and guide (101).

We have crowned wealth until numbers of us are wretched snobs (164).

Were my censors really ignorant that this kind of language had been used in the church, even by bishops, for twenty years before I used it, and does not the whole church know that it is still used? You will find plenty of it in a series of articles on "The Christian

Way Out" in *The Witness* for March and April 1932.*

Even the diplomatic Bishop Fiske is betrayed at times into severe criticism from this point of view. In his *Confessions of a Puzzled Parson* he is so satirical about preachers of the social gospel that he thinks of writing an essay on "The Present Decay in Religion, or the Activity of the Clergy in Every Good Work." Yet he later confesses:

Men will never again be interested in a religion which is tremendously exercised over small things and passive about the needs of humanity (54).

What are the things that are "small" in comparison with human needs if not ritual and doctrine? Later he says:

Many ministers are so entangled with those social elements which most deserve condemnation that they lose fineness of spiritual fibre. In some cases these entanglements are commercial, industrial, or economic as well as social. The city parish is a huge financial enterprise; the men who support it are identified with the world of industry and finance, and it would be difficult to describe to how large an extent economic determinism may mould the thought, influence the preaching, and unconsciously regulate the practice of the spiritual leaders of large and important congregations (84).

It really begins to look as if that language of mine which was especially selected for condemnation (my references to the church's connection with capitalism and failure to help in the real redemption of men) is

* See my lecture, *The Christian Way Out*, in which I criticize this 1932 *Witness* symposium of fourteen articles; also the 1933 Davenport Pastoral of the House of Bishops, the 1930 Lambeth and Vatican Encyclicals on the problems arising from the great economic crisis of the capitalist world.

just that in which I have more numerous fellow-heretics than on any other point! And it has been heard so often in our congresses that every member of the church ought to be aware of this. Take the Report of the Church congress of the year of 1919. We find Dr. Talcott Williams, Director of the School of Journalism at Columbia University, saying:

As the political powers and rights of a privileged class came to be shared by all, so economic power and rights will be shared by all by leveling up through the distribution of wealth (72).

The Church has too often preached the individual responsibility of wealth and too little the responsibility of the State to bring economic equality and privilege (73).

This confession of pure bolshevism was next sustained by Mme. Simkhovitch, the head of Greenwich House:

To the Christian the competitive system presents a spectacle of government by force which is intolerable. This intolerable situation is certain to be changed . . . The Christian social policy is opposed to a competitive capitalistic control.

And Dr. Melish, whose words must have been still fresh in the ears of my judges two years later, was even stronger:

Let the men who are to become the ministers of the Church in this new democratic age refuse to be subsidized, however good the intention of the rich laymen; let them not be classed with the rich but with the plain people of America (225).

Mighty forces operated in Russia in 1917, as they operated in France in 1789, as they will operate in America if we take no heed to our ways. The Church

that becomes identified with the things of the world, money, property, privilege, is destined to fall the moment the axe of democracy is laid at its root (278).

At the Congress of 1922 even so scholarly an authority as Professor Norman B. Nash, of the Theological Seminary, took up the indictment:

The Church prides herself on being the defender of the home, the vigorous enemy of anything which threatens the family. How curiously complacent, therefore, she has been in the face of a developing industrial system which, by the insecurity it has involved, directly threatens and all too often destroys the workers' home (137).

Our Church is obviously the Church of the well-secured. The bias of its members is too decidedly in favor of the status quo to allow it to minister sympathetically to those who aim to wrest economic power from its present possessors. Too often the Church has accommodated the Gospel of the Master to the demands and weaknesses of a new group in society whose rise to power has become obvious (139).

The ministry of the Church to Labor halts because consciously or sub-consciously the Church of Him who had not where to lay his head seeks to retain economic security by tolerating a social order which denies that security to millions of his brethren (142).

At the Congress of 1925 Dr. L. M. White returned to the charge:

Any man or Church which calls itself Christian and is not set positively against war, against a competitive economic system, against sweat-shop methods, against what has been called commercial cannibalism, against human slavery, against the exploitation of weaker people, against personal impurity and a double standard of morality, against narrowmindedness and bigotry and exclusiveness and disunity, is guilty of heresy (37).

After all this it is hardly necessary to run over the Episcopalian and heretical literature which I have quoted in every chapter. Writer after writer, even of the academic group, repeats my charges against the church. Professor Sterrett, for instance, says in his *Modernism in Religion*:

A worldly-minded man of social influence or wealth who would swallow any creed might enter the fold easily and become a pillar of the Church. Money talks even in the Church (14).

The Church has sought wealth and gotten it. It has sought earthly power and honor and glory and gotten them, but it has thereby always weakened itself as a promoter of the Kingdom (32).

An American bishop should not look forward to having a palace, perhaps not even a cathedral, unless that edifice can be thoroughly modernized, as I think can be done. It can be made a house of prayer for all people (44).

And I have already quoted Professor Kirsopp Lake saying that the best men of modern times, the men who devote themselves wholly to saving the race from its real evils, are never members of the church.

I need not quote further. I have proved to the hilt that the language about the church and the work of human redemption which I use in my condemned propositions has been used with impunity in the church for twenty years. It was familiar in the mouths of bishops before my book, *Communism and Christianity*, on account of which I was tried, condemned and punished was written, and it has not in the least been checked by the great injustice by which I have suffered.

My censors seem to be pitifully unacquainted with

church literature. They thought that they would make the flesh of church-members creep by quoting sentences in which I accused the church of an alliance with capitalism. What does it matter that I chose to put it, picturesquely, by saying that Christ had not redeemed the world or that the Holy Ghost had been on the side of exploiters? No one can doubt my meaning. It is that the Christian church and its bishops have completely failed to save the mass of the people from the terrible evils (war, poverty, exploitation) from which they have suffered throughout the Christian era. So a hundred writers in the church, and not a few bishops, have said, in language which is often stronger than my own though generally more diplomatic; but in my condemnation of the bishops and their boon companions, the bankers, in the book, *Communism and Christianity*, was I less diplomatic?

THE evidence is overwhelming that the doctrines of Christianity have passed into the region of doubt.—Lord Hugh Cecil.

God in the traditional and supernatural sense is out of the new philosophy of religion To have religion it is not necessary to believe in a supernatural embodiment, called God. Religion is wrought out of the history and experience of the race.—Prof. John Dewey.

Religion is facing a crisis because the so-called supernatural is a dubious concept.—Prof. Roy Wood Sellers.

CHAPTER X.

Heretic Prelates in the Church of England

Most of my readers will probably welcome a short chapter on doctrinal conditions in the Mother Church of England. There may be orthodox members of the American Episcopal Church who fancy that what is called the American spirit (the spirit of boldness, originality and independence) has invaded even our national church and given rise to a volume of heresy that is without parallel in the church across the Atlantic. In any case it must help us to decide whether heresy is an inevitable consequence of modern knowledge if we examine what concessions have had to be made in a church that is officially declared to be identical with our own in doctrine, discipline and ritual.

This is the more important because so many of our bishops have confessed that their colleagues over the sea are superior to themselves in "scholarly leadership." It is not often that Americans return from the Old World in a chastened mood, but that seems to have been the predominant feeling of the bishops who returned from the Lambeth Conference of 1930. The authorities followed up the work of the conference by publishing a series of books, and one of these, entitled, *Lambeth Through American Eyes*, written by Bishop Oldham of Albany, gives the impressions of the American bishops.

One wrote to Bishop Oldham that he asked a colleague why he did not speak in the sittings of the conference. "I don't," he explained, "because I feel like a pupil in school." The writer of the letter added that the English bishops "have a weight of scholarship

which none of our men possess or are likely to possess for a good while to come." He was, he said, "tremendously impressed at Lambeth with the fine and scholarly leadership." And Bishop Oldham assures us that the writer of this letter is "one of the most able and intellectual of our own bishops." Another bishop wrote:

One cheerfully concedes to the English episcopate a superiority in scholarship for which one is extremely grateful (23).

Another wrote:

Lambeth was years ahead of our usual collective thinking. One of the first impressions is that most of our leaders on this side look small and sound childish in the discussion of questions where the British leaders are splendidly at home . . . While the British are insular in details, they come nearer to thinking in world terms than we do, and their leaders show a statesmanship that we might well acquire (45).

Finally, another bishop wrote:

I was profoundly impressed with the accuracy of the scholarship of those who were conspicuous as leaders.

It was, in a word, the general impression of the American bishops that their leading colleagues in the Church of England were much better acquainted with modern culture and were more statesmanlike in governing the church.

It must therefore be particularly interesting to members of the American church to know what is the official attitude in the Church of England toward literal belief in the formularies. I may say at once that such a calamitous blunder as our bishops committed at

Cleveland, and have sustained ever since, is quite unthinkable in the atmosphere of the English Church. I think it is more than ten years since narrow-minded and misguided zealots such as we have on this side demanded in England that a priest should be proceeded against for heresy. This priest was Dr. Major, one of the most prominent modernists in England. The charge was that he denied the resurrection of the body, which he certainly does deny, in the sense of the creeds. But his bishop, the Bishop of Oxford, submitted the matter to three professors of theology of Oxford University, and they quietly reported that the bishop had no grounds on which to proceed.

But the phenomenon of Dean Inge is enough to tell any person the condition of the Church of England. Dean Inge is not only one of the best scholars in the church but, as far as the world is concerned, its most representative spokesman. In church language Canterbury and York are much more important than London, but in actual life a Dean of the London cathedral is immeasurably more important than dignitaries of the older sees. And this man, under the nose of the very reactionary and almost fundamentalist Bishop of London, who is quite powerless, assures the world, not only in book after book, but in weekly articles in the London press, that the time has gone by to insist on literal belief in any formularies and that the creeds ought to be abandoned. "Doctrinal Christianity is doomed," he once summed up his position.

I

But before I come to the learned deans and canons and professors of the Church of England, let us see

what amount of heresy, as our bishops defined it when they condemned me, there is among the prelates of the Mother Church. One does not look for heresy on the lips of archbishops, but even here there is in the English church a great tradition of liberalism. When the Report of the Lambeth Conference, which, as I will show presently, sacrifices some of the most central articles of the creeds and Prayer Book, was published, a writer in the Times said that it "embodies the spirit of Archbishop Davidson." He is generally understood to have disliked the more outspoken modernists, as they certainly complicate the duties of a prelate, yet when he died in 1930 the *Modern Churchman* in its obituary notice said: "Liberal or Modernist Churchmen recognize that his principles were theirs." It quoted this passage from his book *The Character and Call of the Church of England*:

We stand for the principle that loyalty to truth, whatsoever it be, is the first and primary duty, and that no thought at the outset or in the course of the investigation as to the consequences of honestly reading this or that conclusion ought to divert the genuine truth-seeker from his faith . . . The honest man is to search, be it Scripture or anything else, unfettered.

What a contrast to the narrow, musty and dangerous spirit which at Cleveland confronted me with the Prayer Book and refused to listen to any other truth!

Archbishop Temple combined the same broadmindedness with a larger acquaintance with modern thought. He was one of the Seven Oxford Men who in 1912 collaborated in writing *Foundations*, which radically criticises the whole orthodox scheme and even the orthodox idea of God. Temple contributed

two chapters on "The Divinity of Christ," and in these he formally rejects the official doctrines of the trinity and incarnation, as he denies the whole distinction of substance and person. He said:

The spiritual cannot be expressed in terms of substance at all. The whole of Greek theology, noble as it is, suffers from a latent materialism; its doctrine of substance is an essence materialistic . . . The substance of the Greek Fathers, whether divine or human, has the material, not the spiritual, characteristics; it is, in fact, an intangible matter. The chief result of Greek theology so far was to show the impossibility of a theology in terms of substance.

We must not be misled by the terms Greek fathers and Greek theology. What they said, in the decrees of councils, remains to this day the teaching of the church in the creeds and Prayer Book.

In regard to the atonement Temple was equally modernist. He wrote:

Did the crucifix alter God's will or purpose for us or our attitude to him? Clearly the latter, and the latter only (241).

He expressly followed the theory of the heretic Abelard. It was, he said, a question of the love, not the wrath, of God. And he was modernist again in his idea of Christ:

Christ's will, as a subjective function, is, of course, not the Father's will but the content of the wills—the purpose—is the same. Christ is the man whose will is united with God's (248).

This work caused a storm of indignation among the orthodox. Yet it remained uncensured, and Temple became head of the Church of England. When he be-

came a bishop in 1924, he republished a work he had written in 1910, *The Faith and Modern Thought*. Very little in it was altered. He dismisses the birth-stories of the Gospels as "spiritual drama," and says that "the seven great miracles represent seven stages of the spiritual life" (106). He rejects the ideas of substance and person, and therefore the credal definitions, and again says that on the atonement he follows Abelard, not Augustine, Anselm or Bernard. He says:

The Atonement was completed on Calvary in the sense that the love of God then first became fully manifest, then attained its full power to redeem (138).

Faith and Modern Thought is a manual of modernism, a comprehensive defiance of literalism—quite as really as Communism and Christianity, though more diplomatically so.

But the sentiments of the heads of the *English Church* must generally be inferred from their promotions of heretical priests and their tolerance of heretical bishops. For the last twenty years they have turned a deaf ear to such demands of procedure as were made in my case in America. When, for instance, the Rev. Mr. Streeter, one of the most advanced among modernists, was appointed canon of Hereford Cathedral, the orthodox frantically appealed to the bishop to see that his thoroughly heretical book, from which I quote later unfitted him for the post. Bishop Percival placidly replied that he found the book "a commendable effort to establish the fundamental belief in Christianity." As the equally heretical and learned Dean Rashdall was already a canon of Hereford, the orthodox *Church Times* angrily described that cathedral-

center as "a semi-pagan settlement." Yet when Bishop Percival died in 1918, an even more advanced liberal, Bishop Henson, was nominated for the see. The zealous Bishop Gore appealed to the Archbishop to refuse to consecrate him, but Davidson took no notice and proceeded to consecrate him. Rashdall had meantime become Dean of Carlisle, and Gore drew the attention of his bishop to a paper in which he clearly rejected the orthodox doctrines of the incarnation and the trinity. The bishop suavely replied that he had "read the paper carefully and can find nothing in it which amounts to a denial of any article of the creed."

As a result, the English church has heretics in its most important sees, and everybody knows that, as far as the educated public are concerned, it is these men who save the church from a more speedy collapse. They publish works which, like those of the American bishops I have quoted, show that they have abandoned any idea of literal adhesion to the old formularies. The Bishop of Liverpool (the second city of England) for instance, wrote in 1930 a Foreword to the Rev. W. S. Bowdon's *Re-Interpretations*. It begins:

The book seems to me a contribution of great value to a task in which all religious thinkers ought to join; namely, that of re-interpreting the truth about God in terms of modern experience and thought. I believe that the fate of religion in this country depends largely upon the fulfillment of this task. The author has done this with patience and honesty, and without offense.

Now, Bishop Davidson is by no means one of the much-discussed heretics like Bishop Barnes or Bishop Henson, yet the book he recommends in these terms is

one among the most advanced of all the manuals of modernism. The author says:

The difference between the Lord Jesus and ourselves is not a difference in kind but in degree . . . As he is, so may we some day be, perfected sons of God (48).

He rejects the virgin birth and resurrection, the general judgment (he humorously calculates that it would take God 100,000 years to examine the men now living). He rejects "the old conception of three persons in One God." He rejects the personality of God "in the accepted sense of the word," and says that baptism "does not make anyone a child of God." In short, the book rejects almost every article of the creed and every page of the Prayer Book.

It is hardly necessary to quote Bishop Barnes, whose advanced opinions are well known. In his work, *Should such a Faith Offend*, a defense of liberalism, he approvingly quotes these words of an American Episcopalian periodical. "In the (American) Episcopal Church we have no freedom analogous to that of the pulpits in the Anglican Church" (p. 160). It is chiefly Bishop Barnes who induced the last Lambeth Conference to urge members of the church to accept entirely the scientific doctrine of evolution and all its theological consequences. Unless modern thought is fully admitted, he pleads, the church will continue to shrink; and he points out that already "seventy to eighty per cent of the adult population seem to be indifferent to Christian worship" and "no Church in this country can get a sufficient supply of good men for its ministry." Here are a few sentences from the book, which consists in great part of sermons preached in Westminster

Abbey, the most solemn shrine of the Church of England:

Belief in evolution is becoming as much commonplace as belief in the Copernican astronomy; and almost all now recognize that Christian theology among us must be adapted to meet the changed standpoint. Hence the whole theological scheme reared by Augustine on the basis of the Fall must be rejected (XVII).

The sacraments of our faith should at the very least be not less natural, not less wholesome, than those of nature and art (XIX).

Evolution means giving up belief in the Fall and in all the theology based upon the folk-story of Adam and Eve . . . It is horrible (30).

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the doctrine that the Creator is also imminent in his creation (34).

It was not necessary that Jesus should offer himself to placate a justly angry Father (35).

Those who ask such a question really contend for a dualism between "natural" and "supernatural" which cannot be maintained (41).

Jesus apparently refused to admit that he was good as God is good; yet he was so different from normal men that those who knew him best felt that his moral perfection was divine rather than human (54).

In the Old Testament are found folk-lore, defective history, half-savage morality, obsolete forms of worship based upon primitive and erroneous ideas of the nature of God (74).

Most manuals of religious instruction are now worthless (77).

The resurrection of this present flesh of ours has become incredible (89).

You may say, and rightly, that the old view of miracles as breaches in natural law belongs to a supernatural dualism which modern science has made obsolete (165).

The local Heaven and Hell of medieval fancy have passed away (179).

That is a very respectable collection of heresies for one small book by one of the most representative of the English bishops. For Bishop Henson I may use a booklet which the English Church Union got out to support Bishop Gore's protest against his consecration. It contains no less than twenty-three pages of short quotations from Henson's works which it denounces as heretical. A large number of these are absurdly chosen, as these fanatics always make fools of themselves in their heresy-hunts, but such as the following are express rejections of Christian doctrines.

Born of the Virgin Mary in the Apostles' Creed means neither more nor less than St. Paul's phrases "born of the seed of David according to the flesh" and "born of a woman."

I may interpolate here that it was particularly in regard to the virgin birth that Bishop Gore impeached Henson. Surely the above passage is a flat denial of it! Yet not only was the archbishop unmoved, but Bishop Gore himself withdrew. Professor Lake caustically observes that, as Bishop Gore refuses to believe in hell, he felt that he could not afford to hunt heretics. Other heresies (the references are given in the Church Union booklet) are:

The modern Christian student ignores both inspiration and canonicity and takes the books of the Bible on their merits.

Historical criticism at least permits us to relieve Jesus Christ from the embarrassing misconceptions of his primitive biographers (the Evangelists!).

Jeremy Taylor proposed the Apostles Creed as a

basis of union . . . Yet even in that age, before the birth of modern science and criticism, the futility of enforcing even so brief a creed had become manifest.

I took the two affirmations of the Creed which might seem absolutely secure—the empty tomb and the third day—and showed that even they were not so unassailable as common apologists assume.

Let us seek the test of religious sincerity, not in a secure and irrational allegiance to archaic formularies which can but work out in a hollow and pedantic literalism, but in the tone of the character and the normal habits of life.

St. Paul is the true founder of the historic Catholic Church.

That there is any special force or value in prayers said in church rather than elsewhere, or by the clergy rather than by Christians, is a notion . . . essentially un-Christian and irrational.

The miracles in question (nature-miracles) did not happen, whatever occurrences of a non-miraculous character may underlie the accounts of the Evangelists.

Bishop Masterman of Plymouth (one of the large cities of southern England) published a few years ago a work significantly entitled *The Christianity of Tomorrow* (1920). From it I take the following passages:

We are gradually learning that Christianity is too large to be fully expressed in any one sect or party (17).

The difficulty about the theologians is that they feel obliged to carry with them all the luggage that the Church has accumulated in its march through history (22).

Exclusive attention to personal salvation has given place to ideals of service and fellowship, and, though the disappearance of the terrors of damnation has made life, for many half-believers, a less urgent moral responsibility, the altruistic impulse that has awakened

throughout the civilized world is more than an adequate compensation (30).

We no longer believe in inherited guilt (53).

Whatever may be true about the future of mankind, the Jewish Gehenna, which became the medieval hell, is untrue (58).

When all has been said, the doctrine of a personal immortality is, like the doctrine of God, a venture of faith (63).

The Incarnation means Christ in every man and every man in Christ (76).

There is no doctrine of the Christian faith that more urgently needs restating than the doctrine of the Atonement . . . Once for all we must banish from our theology all idea of a change effected in the attitude of God by the death of Jesus Christ. That was the result, not the cause, of the love of the Father. And we must also cease to attribute to God motives that all the penal codes of civilized peoples are leaving behind (97).

If we insist on speaking of "Three Persons in one Godhead," we must evacuate the word person of almost all that it has come to mean in modern life (105).

Satan is a personification of the tendency to reversion that belongs to the moral order as well as to the realm of nature (122).

It is better to found our claim for episcopacy on its practical advantages rather than on inference from the rather obscure history of the first century (201).

We need not believe, as many (!) Christians seem (!) to do, that Jesus lingered on earth for forty days and then passed into the eternal world . . . Jesus passed from the cross to the throne, from the temporal to the eternal, at his resurrection (283).

A reverent agnosticism about the Virgin Birth is not inconsistent with right respect for Christian tradition (284).

Bishop Bell, of Chichester, is hardly less heretical in

his recent work *The Modern Parson*:

There is a movement at the present day away from institutions and creeds. It may be onesided, but we shall be very wrong to condemn it out of hand or to forget how deep is its appreciation of religious experience (71).

The creeds are to be received, as indeed the very context in which they are found makes plain, not as the general statement of individual belief personally chosen, but the utterances of the whole society which the individual member accepts (124).

Individuals share the belief of the Church in proportion to their capacity and experience . . . It is equally possible for one to give a conscientious assent to the clauses of the Creeds either because they have entered into his religious life, or into the religious life of the Church, or simply because he believes them warranted by Holy Scripture. It is no business of the Church to inquire curiously into the individual's state of mind on each clause (125).

It cannot be regarded as intolerable that a Church member, whether layman or cleric, should today believe wholeheartedly in the Incarnation and yet feel a very genuine difficulty about the Virgin Birth (129).

Bishop Parsons, of Middlesborough, is no modernist, yet in a recent work, *Creative Liberty*, he shows how far he is removed from literalism:

Ecclesiastical controversy rages for the most part round derivative and secondary beliefs, and the dust of party conflict obscures the fundamental truths. Professional theologians have been excessively occupied over metaphysical doctrines and difficulties concerning God's omnipotence, omniscience, and his mysterious tri-unity, in which the majority of lay people are quite uninterested . . . The Church presents to the world the spectacle of a company of people engaged in religious strife about matters which it is very diffi-

cult to imagine that Our Lord himself is at all seriously concerned (23).

Scholarly investigation into the reasons which controlled the early development of the Church's ministry into the episcopal system has shown us that the real "validity" of the Christian ministry is derived from the unity of the Church rather than that the unity of Church depends upon the validity of its ministry (31).

The Creeds express beliefs which, even if they are true, are not in the same sense essential to the Christian faith and are a stumbling block to many sincere and devoted Christians. I refer to those clauses which deal with Our Lord's birth and physical resurrection (35).

For none of the miracles is the evidence of such a nature as by itself to compel belief (36).

I should rejoice if the Anglican Church were to invite to its altars all who desire to come because they love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity (38).

Bishop Gore has stood out on many occasions in protest against heresy. He was a very sincere man, but he suffered from the same lack of humor or sense of proportion as so many of these men do. He was really far advanced in heresy, and a hundred years ago he would have been indignantly degraded for such passages as these in his *Reconstruction of Belief* (1926 edition):

The idea of absolute divine decrees condemning to eternal misery masses of men even before their birth—the teaching about the Atonement which represented God as content to punish the innocent in place of the guilty—the doctrine of an endless hell which was to be the lot of all who had not accepted a message which some of them had not heard—such doctrines, which have no doubt been commonly preached from Christian pulpits for a long period, more or less suddenly began to produce a violent reaction . . . It must be re-

cognized that the current tradition of orthodox Protestantism had offended at certain points, even violently, the real conscience of men, and the revolt of outraged conscience reinforced the rebellion against orthodox tradition which had its source in the new sciences (20).

The universe, material and spiritual, is, as Spinoza said, one and (in some sense) of one substance (46).

Adam and Eve stand for every man, and the story of the Fall is the true story of humanity and of what has been its ruin in every individual case (572).

There is in the case of Christianity nothing which can be called vicarious punishment, nothing which was inflicted on Christ instead of us . . . Christ's sacrifice purchased for us forgiveness in the sense that it enabled the flood of the Father's mercy to flow freely in the channels of the New Covenant (595).

Bishop Gore is not quite candid when he speaks of these doctrines which he rejects (the fall, and therefore inspiration, hell and the atonement) as merely matters which were preached from the pulpit. They have been the official teaching of the church for fifteen centuries and so remain until we are officially told otherwise. Moreover, to reject hell is to discredit the authority either of Christ or the gospels, and to reject the fall and atonement is completely to destroy the authority of St. Paul. In principle Bishop Gore agrees with other heretics that the creeds and scriptures are no longer binding.

This is in some degree intimated by nearly all the English prelates who appeal to the modern world in writing. Bishop Bell, of Chichester, for instance, has such passages as these in his *Brief Sketch of the Church of England* (1929):

The harshness of the older school, though still to be found, has given way to a more literal evangelism,

which, while emphasizing the message of the personal religion, has a greater width of theology, a truer regard for reverence and dignity in Church services, and a deeper sympathy with modern thought (60).

A Modernist so called in one generation has often become the pillar of orthodoxy in the next (61).

If the Thirty-nine Articles were to be rewritten in the twentieth century, the language would be different, and also the ideas and their treatment (75).

Bishop Headlam, of Gloucester, follows the usual modernist theory of Jesus in his *W. B. Noble Lectures* (at Harvard, 1924).

We cannot interpret the life of Jesus as the life of an ordinary man . . . God is revealed to us in Jesus . . . I have not attempted to do what people have sometimes (!) aimed at, to distinguish the divine and the human elements in Christ's life.

As is usual, he makes Jesus completely unconscious of any divine mission until his baptism, which is a plain denial of a divine nature, and he denies him a divine mind even after baptism. He says:

I do not believe that in his earthly manifestation his knowledge was more than might be that of a man inspired by the Spirit of God (227).

II

I need not, after this, spend much time quoting deans and professors of the Church of England, but it will be useful to see how far they agree with heretics of the American Episcopal Church. The learned Dean Rashdall was one of the most influential champions of the new theory of the atonement, which deprives it of any element of atonement and flatly contradicts St. Paul as well as the creeds. But when he saw that this led

to the general practice of modernists of stressing the character and teaching of Jesus so as to say that he must be "divine," in the sense that an immanent God was manifested in him, Dean Rashdall just as strongly protested against this view. He severely criticizes the doctrine of immanence of his Ideas and Ideals, and of that and of the new way of proving the divinity of Jesus he says:

There are persons who by the appeal to religious experience seem to mean that the fact that they have certain religious emotions warrants their asserting certain things about the objects of those emotions. This notion seems to be so extravagant that I do not quite see how to set about refuting it (9).

I personally am conscious of no such immediate knowledge of God . . . I am sure that the vast majority of my fellow-men, including the most religious of them, are in the same state of mind (11).

The position for which I have contended is one which, I believe, has the support of nearly all the philosophers, nearly all the theologians, nearly all the great religious minds (21).

It is well to remember, when modernists and others press the new view of Christ and the atonement as if it were now general Christian teaching, that learned theologians describe it as "extravagant" and as opposed by nearly all philosophers and theologians. But Dean Rashdall did not fall back upon the so-called miracles of Jesus. He says:

Nothing can be asserted with more certainty than this—that the world will be less and less disposed to accept a religion which is supposed to rest wholly or mainly upon the evidence of miracles (115).

And in the introduction to his posthumous *God and*

Man the editors assure us that he "constantly reiterated" that the common doctrine of the trinity was "a tri-theistic view of the Godhead."

From Dean Inge quotation would be endless and horrifying. I will be content to take a few gems of heresy from various works. In *Outspoken Essays*, for instance, he disdains the "crude supernaturalism with the whole apparatus of sacerdotal magic," and he asks: "Is Christianity anything more than the generic name of the various religions professed by peoples with white skins?" Other passages are:

The divinity of Christ implies—one might almost say it means—the eternal supremacy of those moral qualities which he exhibited in their perfection (135).

It is not too much to say that the whole edifice of supernaturalistic dualism under which Catholic piety has sheltered itself for fifteen hundred years has fallen in ruins to the ground . . . Science has been the slowly advancing Nemesis which has overtaken a barbarised and paganized Christianity (169).

There is no evidence that the historical Christ ever intended to found a new institutional religion . . . Christ never expected, or taught his disciples to expect, that his teaching would meet with wide acceptance (249).

From *Assessments and Interpretations* (1929):

The spirit of partisanship, with all the hatred, injustice, and cruelty which it evokes, has dogged Christianity like a shadow from the very first and has enabled its enemies to maintain plausibly that it has brought more evil than good to the human race (40).

Protestant dogmatism has crumbled, and its authority has almost disappeared (83).

Sir John Seeley said that the man of science has a nobler conception of the Deity than the average

Churchman, and I think he was right (212).

From *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems* (1930):

The history of Christianity has been largely a history of decline and perversion . . . Its victory over the Empire was followed by several centuries of unredeemed barbarism, the most protracted and dismal retrogression which the human race has suffered within the historical period (13).

Almost all that offends the lay conscience in ecclesiastical morality—its fierce intolerance, its tortuous diplomacy, its indifference to truth, its trafficking in spiritual gifts, its refusal to recognize any moral obligation not sanctioned by its traditions and stamped by its own mint—all, in a word, which sets institutional Catholicism in permanent antagonism to modern civilization—proceeds from the supposed duty of a corporation (16).

The enemies of true religion are they of its own household, not atheism, impiety, and scepticism (26).

No real biography of Jesus can ever be written (43).

The doctrine of eternal life has been vulgarized and, by being vulgarized, it has become incredible (69).

Justification and redemption are metaphors (77).

The monopolist claim of the Western Church, which adds so much to its survival value implies a monstrous conception of the character of God (167).

The traditional Christian eschatology . . . is flatly contrary to our most rudimentary ideas of equity and justice (168).

Miracle is the bastard child of faith and reason, which neither parent can afford to own (198).

The God of traditional Catholicism and Calvinism, though not lustful like Jupiter, was far more cruel and unjust (206).

Europe is still plagued with priestly frauds, imaginary cures, and superstitions of every kind. But science has laid the axe to the root of the tree (207).

Wherever the secular progress of humanity has

brought new hopes and new duties in sight, it seems to me that the institutional Churches have shown themselves unsympathetic and even hostile (378).

Many of the chapters of these books of Dean Inge are newspaper articles which were read by hundreds of thousands. Even more than Bishop Barnes, he is regarded as the most enlightened and influential of British Churchmen, and it is his hope that all creeds and doctrinal tests will soon be abandoned that chiefly cause the public to retain some interest in the shrinking church.

Dean Sheppard is not the scholar that Dean Inge is, but the fact that he has been made Dean of Canterbury Cathedral shows what importance the Church of England attaches to his influence. On the eve of the 1930 Lambeth Conference he edited a work by liberal church writers (*My Hopes and Fears for the Church*) in which he wrote himself a chapter on "Some Straight-forward Issues." Here are a few of them:

The world has wellnigh ceased to be interested in the rulings of official Christendom (4).

The present generation, which has removed itself from clerical control, is interested neither in ecclesiastical subtleties nor in the disputes of its forefathers (6).

If any man, summoned in recent years to the Episcopal bench, does not realize the need for fundamental change, it is either because he is disastrously ignorant of contemporary religious opinions and requirements or because he is primarily interested, not in enlarging the Church for the service of all the sincerely religious, but in creating a certain type of Churchman for the service of a certain type of Church (8).

It is unthinkable that Jesus Christ would impose intellectual tests on those who come to him (10).

Today intellectual tests are, at least officially, a pri-

mary necessity . . . All this is a direct negation of Christ's way of approaching mankind . . . encourages intellectual dishonesty . . . Cannot the Lambeth Conference declare from the housetops that Christianity demands only one thing from a man: namely, that he should endeavor to follow the example of Jesus Christ in incorruptness of living? (11).

I cannot speak in moderate language about what I conceive to be the wickedness of that which exalts consideration of Church orthodoxy above the mind of Christ (13).

The Dean of Manchester, the third greatest city of England (and we have seen what the Dean of London and the Bishops of Liverpool and Birmingham think) is an outspoken modernist. In a chapter on "The Game of Christian Living," in the book from which I have just quoted he used such language as this:

Who can blame them if men outside the Church unconsciously assume that our real interest lies in the lesser and not in the deeper things? (62).

We are rigid where we should be flexible, camping where we should be campaigning; exchanging the pioneering spirit for a slavish regard for the institution (67).

We must cease to be content with the forms of Christian living as they have been handed down to us . . . We ask the bishops to welcome new knowledge wholeheartedly, even where it appears to disturb some of our older views (79).

Canon Raven, of Liverpool, in the same book, addresses this sort of language to the bishops:

If the bishops cannot themselves lead, then let them definitely create a general staff of scholarly prophets and seers, enlisting men of courage and vision, and admitting them to an accredited status. At present we are allowing such men to break their hearts and work

themselves to death in loneliness, compelling them to waste their energies in stunts or in criticism, exploiting them when a crowded meeting is desired but disowning them as soon as their passion ruffles our complacency or disturbs our self-esteem. Instead of treating them as pariahs, we ought thankfully to encourage them to feel that they are not only within the Church but exercising a valued and responsible ministry (210).

And Canon Storr, of Westminster, makes in the same book an equally eloquent and indignant appeal:

Are we free enough? Or are we hindering our true growth because we are allowing some dead hand of the past to weigh too heavily upon us? Could Jesus Christ, if he came in the flesh to England today, breathe in our ecclesiastical atmosphere? An increasing number of people cannot see that it is really Christianity . . . By clinging rigorously to existing forms may we not be in danger of substituting the Church for Christ (53-54).

It is significant that Canon Raven was invited to write one of the booklets of the Lambeth Series, yet how inadequate he thought the work of the Conference may be judged by these words, spoken at the Modern Churchmen's Conference in the following year and reported in *The Modern Churchman*:

We have identified pure Christian faith with the idol that has fallen with scholastic philosophy, or Puritan bibliolatry, or the Elizabethan settlement, or the Victorian compromise; we have accepted the Christ of Rome or Geneva, of the Book of Common Prayer or of Hymns Ancient and Modern, as the Saviour of our world; and such a Christ so belittled and bedizened, cannot save us (345).

From the works of Canon Streeter, who has great influence both in America and Britain, quotation would

be endless. In *Reality* (1926) we read:

In the Creed we find a statement in which most of the events, though in form historical, are evidently symbolical (50).

The conviction of the sonship to God, though in one sense unique, is not proclaimed by Jesus as an exclusive personal privilege (186).

The Three in One and One in Three is a symbol (214).

The old mythology of a future state is grotesquely discouraging (311).

In the Canon's introduction to the collective work, *The Spirit*, that is much quoted in American literature, we find such phrases as:

The advance of knowledge has long ago made bankrupt the crude supernaturalism of traditional Christianity (IX).

The Holy Ghost in the classical theology is a scholastic abstraction (X).

Popular Christianity is tritheism with reservations (350).

I have never heard a single sermon devoted to emphasizing the all-important fact that the love of truth is a fundamental element of the love of God (358).

The greatest blot on the history of the Church in Modern times is the fact that, with the glaring exception of the campaign to abolish slavery (in which he is wrong), the leaders in the social, political, and humanitarian reforms of the last century and a half in Europe have rarely been professing Christians . . . This indictment is a commonplace, and at any rate as far as words go its justice is readily admitted by the leaders of all the Churches today (358).

The axe is laid at the root of the tree (370).

The learned professors of divinity at Oxford and Cambridge agree as a body with the modernists in

denouncing the requirements of literal adhesion to Creeds and Articles. Prominent among them is Professor Bethune-Baker, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. In a recent popular work, *The New View of Christianity*, he has such bold phrases as the following:

The miracles ought no more to be treated as true accounts of actual occurrences (14).

In my opinion, in order to be a Christian it is not necessary to believe in the Virgin Birth or the physical Resurrection as historical facts, nor in the divine institution of the sacraments, nor in the Atonement in the traditional sense of those phrases (22).

At present many of our leaders hang back, or at most stay safely away from the front, as generals do (24).

Supernatural is the great slogan of traditional Christianity (41).

The emergence of Jesus in the process of evolution was not supernatural (49).

The anthropology of St. Paul depended on belief in a historical Fall of Man which brought death and degradation with it. All those ideas, and all in the scheme of redemption which depended on them, must be discarded (69).

Our early Christian legends, and some of the later ones, would find their proper place in a delightful book of stories (81).

In the doctrine of the Trinity "person" means "mode of being," nay of existence (127).

The question of the personality of God is crucial, yet I am sure we can have religion without it (129).

There never was a creation (130).

Do we all attain that level of life and being, that quality of personality, that has survival value? I do not attempt to answer the question (141).

When we thus find one of the leading professors of divinity of the Church of England rejecting, or hesitat-

ing to subscribe to, every single article of the creeds, I need not go on to quote popular writers and preachers. Any person who wishes for such should get the series of pamphlets ("What We Believe") issued by the Modern Churchman's Union and written by clergymen, or read the monthly organ of that body, *The Modern Churchman*. It is enough to say that the same heresies about every article of the Creed are freely propagated on both sides of the Atlantic.

III

What church members in America do not realize is that the most important of these heresies were endorsed by the Lambeth Conference of 1930, in which our American bishops joined with the British. When the Report was issued, a British Modernist wrote of it in the *Times* (September 13th, 1930):

It silently treats the Creeds and all the theology of the past in exactly the same reverent way that men have learned, of late, to treat the Old and New Testaments and some of the expectations and beliefs of the early Church. It places them quietly in their proper historical setting . . . treating the Creeds as educative stages of our faith, as preparatory, as symbolical, as temporary and approximate.

But this is too temperate an estimate of the work of the Conference. I have examined its Report and Resolutions at length in my occasional lectures* and here I will confine myself to a few points.

The first of the Resolutions which were passed by the entire body of bishops, including fifty-three Amer-

* No. V, The Bishops' Belief in God and their Disbelief in Birth Control and No. IX, Recent Science and Materialism.

ican bishops, says in its second clause that "in view of the enlarged knowledge gained in modern times" there is "urgent need in the face of many erroneous misconceptions for a fresh presentation of the Christian doctrine of God." I repeat that, as I have said so often, the outside world resents this kind of language. On the surface of it one would imagine that these "erroneous misconceptions" (can any misconceptions fail to be erroneous, by the way) are the blundering ideas of ill-educated members of the church. In that case why not correct them by the official teaching of the church instead of needing to appeal to "enlarged knowledge gained in modern times?" The world knows perfectly well that these erroneous misconceptions are in theology and in the official church formularies.

This is made clear enough in the next clause:

We would impress upon Christian people the necessity of banishing from their minds ideas concerning the character of God which are inconsistent with the character of Jesus Christ.

After the hundreds of quotations that I have given from our licensed heretics there is no ambiguity about this passage. It is the essential and quite general contention of the modernists and liberals that the Pauline conception of God (the God who condemns the race to eternal punishment for the sin of Adam or personal sins) is not consistent with the character of Jesus Christ and must therefore be abandoned.

The Resolution, in demanding a "fresh presentation of the Christian conception of God," goes on to say: "We recommend the Report of our Committee." This

Report is signed by thirty-four bishops, seven of whom are Americans, and it puts beyond question the meaning of the words of the Resolution. It in the first place declares that "all instructed opinion is now agreed" upon the scientific doctrine of evolution; and it expressly includes the science of anthropology. In other words, it plainly directs that all dogmas relating to Adam and Eve and the fall must be abandoned.

The Report then comes to the meaning of the death of Christ, and here it is crystal-clear that the bishops have completely abandoned the official doctrine of atonement. Not only does it never use the words atonement or redemption, not only does it make the idea of "propitiatory sacrifices" resented even by Jewish prophets, but its language about Christ's mission and death is taken entirely from the new heretical literature. It says:

The Cross sums up the struggle of love against evil throughout the ages. Christ's love redeems the world by creating the conditions in which righteousness and love can be all-powerful. Thus God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

That is the plainest expression of the new theory of at-one-ment. Not a word is said about salvation from hell or the blood of a Saviour (which word is strikingly avoided).

The Resolution itself sufficiently endorses this when it goes on to say:

The Revelation of Christ was presented to the world under the forms of Jewish life and thought. It has found fuller expression, not without some admixture of misunderstanding, through the thought of Greece

and Rome and the sentiment of the Teutonic and Slavonic peoples.

That is in every word modernist language. It was, as we have found liberals contending throughout this book, the Greek who made the dogmas of the incarnation and trinity: it was the Middle Ages that finally fashioned the theology.

This principle is then, with great caution and much diplomacy of language, applied to the incarnation. It is said that the words "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" point to "the attainment of the purpose of the whole cosmic process through the agency of the immanent Logos or creative thought of God;" and this is said to "bring Christian theology into harmony with that modern view of the harmony of the universe which has been outlined above"—the teaching of evolution. No one would dream of suggesting that the doctrine of the incarnation is reconcilable with science except in the modernist sense. The entire language is taken from the literature I have reviewed. There is in Christ "a revelation of God" and "here is the secret of that compelling insight and power which make men turn to him in their deepest experiences."

The doctrine of the trinity is next explained away. The early Christians "felt that the divine unity could not be expressed by an analogy derived from a single person." The Greek Fathers (and our own Anglican Fathers) would have been surprised to hear that it was only a question of analogy. The terminology of the formularies is further weakened, on modernist lines, by saying that "personality as we know it in man is not adequate to express fully the divine nature." In other words, you may now take symbolically the

three persons in one nature and the two natures in one person of the creeds and Prayer Book.

It is rather unfortunate that the bishops of both Anglican and American churches pinned their faith to the theory of "immanence," which occurs on every page of the report. Just at the time when, as I showed and as is actually pointed out in one of the booklets of the Lambeth Series, it was beginning to be "powerfully challenged" in theology. That is the fatal danger of the policy of reinterpretation. But at Lambeth the modernists persuaded the rest that they alone could save the church. The report uses their language to the end. Prayer, it seems, "must be in no sense the selfish seeking of personal ends;" which puts the Prayer Book in a peculiar position. There is a "progressive revelation" in the Bible, and we must discard the teaching of some books. It is an error to think that God "sends disease, war, catastrophes, untimely deaths;" which is even harder on the Prayer Book. It is a popular error "to limit God's concern within the confines of some selected doctrines or along the line of one or other approach to him;" in other words, to claim sanctity for particular creeds or churches.

I have said enough to show that the British and American bishops have now themselves disowned some of the cardinal doctrines of the church; for no one can fail to see the identity of their discreet language with that of the heretics I have reviewed. The fall and atonement with all their corollaries have been explicitly abandoned. The incarnation and trinity are given only in the modernist sense. It is nowhere stated in this solemn presentation of "the Christian conception" that Jesus was God, or that he was born

of a virgin, rose from the dead, or performed miracles; and the doctrine of hell is very plainly, if only implicitly, abandoned. So more than fifty American bishops, not censured afterwards by any of the others, joined with all the Anglican bishops of the world in declaring.

Now I claim that the Resolutions and Reports of the 1930 Lambeth Conference contain representations which are as contrary to the teachings of the Prayer Book as any among the representations of my Communism and Christianity; and, therefore, the whole of the proceedings should be reconsidered and annulled.

CHAPTER XI

What Is My Heresy

From the quotations which I gave at the beginning of the last chapter and from what was actually done at the Lambeth Conference it is clear that the American bishops accepted the lead of what they call the scholarly statesmanship of the English prelates. In a sense they made a revolutionary departure. This Lambeth Conference is the nearest approach that we have in modern times to an Ecumenical Council. For the Anglican Churches in the whole English-speaking world its decisions are as authoritative as were those of the General Councils in the early church or of the Convocations of Reformers in the sixteenth century. And this Lambeth Conference laid it down, not merely that the fall and the vicarious atonement need no longer be accepted, but that they must no longer be believed, since the first is disproved by science and the second is inconsistent with the nature of God as we now know it.

The diplomatic language of the conference, which is intended to prevent the more orthodox from perceiving this astonishing revolution too clearly, does not really conceal the change. The official resolution of the conference opens with the statement that the bishops propose to correct "erroneous conceptions" to give a "fresh presentation of the Christian doctrine of God." These erroneous conceptions are in the church, and it is to members of the church that the bishops offer the new presentation. There is no meaning whatever in all this language unless the bishops meant, as all the writers I have quoted mean, that the ancient

doctrines of original sin, eternal torment and vicarious atonement should now be abandoned.

It is, however, enough for my purpose that these doctrines may be abandoned, and this book has shown that, apart from Lambeth, rectors, professors and bishops of the church are free in all parts of the world to reject these doctrines. For twenty years a very large and influential literature has circulated in the church which not only denies these doctrines but often speaks of them as barbaric and repulsive. Not one of these books has been condemned. In no case have the authors or their church-readers been warned that their teaching is inconsistent with the teaching of the Prayer Book.

Yet the surrender of these three doctrines alone has the very gravest consequences for the entire scheme of orthodoxy. It is merely frivolous for church writers to suggest, airily, that in abandoning the story of the fall they are just acknowledging that the church had, until we knew better attached too much importance to certain ancient Jewish writers. Their own readers know better than that.

The fall and the need of an atonement for that and for sin generally by the death of Jesus is the deepest conviction of St. Paul, the earliest and most authoritative of New Testament writers. The doctrine of eternal punishment is beyond cavil put into the mouth of Jesus in the gospels, and therefore either the gospels are unreliable records of the words of Jesus, compiled without the slightest shade of divine guidance, or else Jesus was very far from being divine. It is foolish to think that the world does not see these consequences even if the bishops and the literal writers are very

careful not to speak of them. An intelligent child can see that the rejection of these three doctrines removes the very foundations of the whole doctrinal scheme. It is a claim that we are not bound to believe what the New Testament most plainly asserts.

Further, it is a flat denial of the doctrine that the Holy Ghost in any sense watches over the church. Lambeth gives the final blow to that doctrine. It was rudely shaken when the Reformation doctors laid it down that every branch of the Christian church had most grievously erred during more than a thousand years. It was ruined when the Lambeth doctors told the world that the Reformation doctors equally erred in accepting the fall, the vicarious atonement and eternal punishment. They did more. If they wavered a little about original sin, they, on the other hand, made the eternal punishment of sin and the conciliation of the Father by the blood of the Son the basic doctrines of Christianity. It now appears that these are erroneous misconceptions that must be abandoned.

I

One therefore very naturally raises the question: What is heresy to-day? It would scarcely be flippant to say that after Lambeth the man who believes in the fall, the atonement and hell is a heretic.

In 1924 the American bishops, in condemning me, laid it down that the teaching of the church is the teaching of the Prayer Book. Let us have no more twisting and turning about it. Bishops cannot take solemn action on the words of an official of their court and then disavow his essential words. To my request for a standard of doctrine the chief judge of the court

referred me to the Prayer Book, and I was condemned because my teaching is inconsistent with that of the Prayer Book. Six years later the bishops went to Lambeth and rebuked as "erroneous misconceptions" three of the basic doctrines, to say nothing of a dozen others, of the Prayer Book.

It would be humorous to call this "a reasonable liberty of interpretation," in the phrase that was used in court. It is not a question of interpretation at all. Every scholar knows that the simplest Bible reader is right as to what St. Paul meant by the fall and the atonement. What we are now told is that St. Paul was grievously wrong. Every scholar knows that the Greek text of the gospels is as plain as the English in those long and repeated passages in which Jesus threatens eternal torment. It appears that either Jesus grievously erred or we cannot trust the gospels on a cardinal point.

At all events, if the bishops of the whole English-speaking world, gathered in most solemn assembly, are not recognized to be giving us the teaching of the church, then there is no such thing to-day as any teaching of the church. And since those bishops declared that the fall, the atonement and hell must no longer be regarded as Christian doctrine (that they are, in fact, inconsistent with the sound Christian doctrines that God is love) it follows that the Prayer Book is a standard of heresy and any member of the church who accepts this ancient teaching of it that is now declared to be inconsistent with the teaching of the church is a formal heretic.

I am not here playing with words but very seriously pointing out the consequences of these recent develop-

ments in the church. There is no standard of doctrine left by which to judge heresy. Referring me to the Prayer Book was almost flippant. That there are three persons in God; that one of these created the world from nothing and condemns sinners to hell; that a second, existing from all eternity, took flesh in Jesus for a time, died to save men from hell, and rose from the tomb; that a third is especially interested in the guidance of the church, and that God sends disease, accident and war—these are the fundamental doctrines of the Prayer Book. And any member or minister of the church is free to reject the whole of them and is now urged to reject half of them. Reasonable liberty of interpretation!

Let us be serious. It is not serious to say that there are essentials that must be literally believed and non-essentials that need not. It is not serious because you must first state a clear principle in virtue of which any doctrine is said to be essential. It is quite useless now to say that an essential doctrine is one that is clearly contained in Scripture. The fall, the atonement, hell, the virgin birth, the miracles and the resurrection are as plainly affirmed in the New Testament as any other doctrine, but the bishops permit scores of ministers who write books and all their tens of thousands of readers to reject the whole of these doctrines. Lambeth formally condemns three cardinal doctrines of the New Testament.

In the course of this work I have quoted a dozen bishops and other writers attempting to draw up a little creed composed of essentials. Not one of them has the least authority to do it, and there is not the slightest agreement between them. Bishop Manning would

make the virgin birth essential, and a group of learned divinity professors retort that it is one of the feeblest of doctrines. In any case, it is quite openly rejected everywhere, particularly in the diocese of New York.

Many other bishops would say that the incarnation is unquestionably an essential; yet these bishops dare not take any action when preachers and writers openly reject it. It is in no sense an interpretation of the incarnation to say that there is an immanent God in all of us, but that he immanently manifested himself more fully in Jesus than in other good men. It is a flat denial of the orthodox doctrine of the incarnation, which means that there were two complete natures (two minds and two wills) in Jesus: that, as the result of the Virgin Mary's conception of him by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, a pre-existent deity entered into him as part of his personality and made him different in kind, not degree, from all others, including bishops.

The Lambeth conference of bishops boasts that it has brought the incarnation into harmony with evolutionary science by adopting this modernist theory of an immanent God.

Well, what is essential? And why? No doctrine of the future life is essential, for the old doctrine is freely rejected, often with derision, and many Episcopalian writers are permitted to say in their works that the human mind is not in itself immortal and probably the great majority of the race do not survive the grave. Could there be a more drastic rejection of the teaching of the Prayer Book? Yes, just one—to call into question whether anybody is personally immortal; and, as

we saw, Professor Kirsopp Lake did that in his works for ten years, and nobody stirred.

That belief in the trinity is not essential I need not further point out. We found even so moderate a man as Bishop Slattery saying that Unitarians ought to be admitted to the church. We found Lambeth taking the word person figuratively. We found scores of writers unwilling to admit more than three "modes" or aspects of Deity: which is the very ancient heresy of Sabellianism and the very modern one of Socinianism. We found Episcopalian ministers asking the church to forbid sermons on Trinity Sunday because, as some say, what the preachers rightly give as the orthodox doctrine is "crass tritheism."

Will anybody now say that it is the theory of Immanence upon which the Lambeth bishops built so much, that is essential? Scarcely: seeing that within a year the bishops who were appointed to continue the work of the conference issued a book in which members of the church were warned that the theory of divine immanence is seriously disputed and must be regarded with reserve.

Will anybody say that the essential is to believe that there is a God who loves the world? One might gather that from the Lambeth Report, for eternal torment and salvation by the blood of Christ were rejected on the ground that they were inconsistent with the surer doctrine of the love of God. An outsider would probably make here a shrewd point against the bishops. How do they know of this supreme love of God which makes eternal torment inconceivable? Because they say it is revealed in the teaching of Jesus. But it is Jesus who is almost alone responsible for the belief

in the eternal fires of hell, which is not given in the Old Testament.

The critic might go on to point out that on the new theory of at-one-ment no theologian has ever given us any plausible explanation why it was necessary in the counsels of God that Jesus should die at all, especially so horribly. But I will be content to point out a different fact. In his *Reconstruction of Belief* Bishop Gore, a deeply religious prelate, says:

I have always thought that the only very difficult dogma of the Church was the dogma that God is love (VII).

Bishop Gore is right in representing it at least as a doctrine that offers very formidable difficulties to the modern mind. Hardly any theistic philosopher would endorse it. The minority of scientists who believe in God ignore it and conceive him as a power or cosmic mind. And the general public seeing the evil and suffering in the world, is disposed to atheism on the precise ground, above all, that God is represented as loving. Yet the combined bishops of England and America setting out to relieve the perplexities of the world stake everything upon this modernist cry that God is chiefly manifested in Jesus as love!

You cannot to-day agree upon even the slenderest list of essentials. It is, in fact, significant that when a liberal bishop tries to do so he falls back upon symbolical phrases, such as the Fatherhood of God and the Sonship of Jesus. Press for the real meaning of those words, and the apparent agreement at once disappears. It is impossible to insist on any creed to-day when, as I showed, seminary professors reject twelve clauses out

of fourteen of the simplest of three Catholic Creeds, the Apostles' Creed, and the remaining two clauses are rejected by other professors and preachers.

II

Let us approach the matter from another point of view. Many a member of the church, and every other reader of this book, will ask, after reading my hundreds of quotations from other Episcopalian writers: What is Bishop Brown's heresy?

We rule out at once half of my condemned propositions. They simply say that the alleged salvation of the world from hell by Jesus is imaginary: that the world still needs salvation from the hell of war and poverty: and that this is to be brought about by human wisdom and idealism. It was stupid to select these. They are truisms and have, in one form or another, been said over and over again by bishops and rectors. It was equally stupid to select passages in which I denied, in their literal and official sense, the divinity of Jesus, the resurrection and ascension, the reality of the Holy Ghost, the Trinity and the creation of the universe. I have quoted dozens of Episcopalian writers of high prestige making the same denials.

Will it be said that I went beyond all others in claiming that the God of the churches is "a symbol?" I have quoted a distinguished minister and professor using just the same language or saying that the word God is a symbol of moral values and he might have added, cosmic realities.

If this is a rare heresy, let me remind the reader of the circumstances. Not only all philosophers, but many of the religious writers I have quoted, reject

every attempt to connect God with the material universe, either as creator, designer, ruler or sustainer. We must believe in God, they say solely because of the existence of moral values, such as truth and goodness.

But this position is already undermined by the new sciences of ethics, aesthetics and psychology. It took the church, or the collective body of bishops, fifty years to recognize that evolution is true and must affect theology. It may take some among the bishops and rectors further years to realize that moral values are part of this scientific evolutionary scheme, but the development is inevitable. Already numbers of writers declare that there is no proof of the existence of God, and that the belief rests only on the affirmation of the religious consciousness: which Dean Rashdall calls an extravagant error, and certainly psychology would not admit it.

Moreover, if it is objected that I at least do not admit a personal God, I reply that writer after writer, and now the Lambeth Conference itself, deprive the word of any meaning when it is applied to God. It has become a symbolic word; and in a symbolic sense I myself personify all that is best in the universe and call it God. One thing is certain. If you insist on the word "personal," you repeat and intensify the conflict with modern thought.

Probably superficial folk will say that my great heresy is to call into question the historical existence of Jesus. But one has to be very superficial to say that. To call it heresy to deny his humanity and allow scores of writers to deny his divinity is assuredly to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

Moreover, again, I have companions. If even Dean

Inge says that no biography of Jesus can be written (and we found Professor Wenley and others saying the same) what is the value of insisting on historicity? Others I quoted agreeing with me that the picture of Jesus in the gospels has been largely built up from earlier legends of saviour-gods. Others we found warning the church not to pledge itself to this historicity.

I suppose others will say that my great heresy, my exclusive title to condemnation, is my materialism. Yet I have quoted works of divines of the church in which the idea of spirit is rejected just as I reject it: in which even God is said to be material.

But let us understand this properly. In his *Reconstruction of Belief*, Bishop Gore, who would be selected as one of the most "spiritual" bishops in the church, says:

The universe, material and spiritual, is, as Spinoza said, one and (in some sense) of one substance. No fundamental antagonism exists, or can be tolerated in idea, between spirit and matter, and this is one of the central certainties of modern science (46).

I also quoted Professor Du Bose saying that Nature is God, which amounts to the same thing.

Now, how can the same thing be material and spiritual? The answer is that, as one would suspect, the old distinction between matter and spirit, to which alone my heretical propositions referred, is being abandoned. I have in this book quoted several writers, philosophers as well as theologians, insisting that spirit now means merely mind or the world of mental phenomena. Naturally I do not deny the existence of mind, as long as you do not affirm that it is a mysterious entity with no

dimensions that can live apart from the body. But I dislike this chopping and changing of the meaning of words. When I say "spirit," I mean, as most theologians still do, something that has "no parts and no magnitude."

Let us sum up. In not one single heresy do I really stand alone in the Episcopal Church. The way in which I express myself (since in my book I was not addressing a religious reader or trying to convert anybody to the church) is, of course, often different from that of other writers. But I have quoted plenty of parallels for most of my language. My censors seem to have shuddered when they found me speaking of the church as parasitic. I have also quoted plenty of parallels to this, even from the pages of bishops. On other points I have quoted passages (that Christianity was "barbarized," that the God of the Bible was "more cruel than Jupiter") from eminent divines which is much stronger than mine.

But, after all, heresy is not the use of strong language about a doctrine but the rejection of that doctrine. Well, there is no heresy to-day because there is no new official teaching, while every single item of the old official teaching is rejected with impunity. Instead of my being an extreme person, in the doctrinal sense, who wants to reject all dogmas because some other people rejected a few, I am just one of a score or more of Episcopalian writers who say that the time has gone by for clinging to any doctrinal test of membership of the church. That, we have seen, is the sentiment of a very large part of the church and its writers, preachers and professors.

III

The only live issue to-day, therefore, is whether the church ought to reinterpret its dead formularies or leave members free to understand them as symbols of great truths. If anybody has a serious difficulty about choosing between these alternatives, I ask him to reflect very earnestly whether the policy of reinterpretation, which has been freely permitted to preachers and writers for ten years or more, has had the desired effect.

In the Church of England, where modernism is older and we are told that the pulpits are freer, there has been a grave and continuous decline. Take the Year Book of the church. The last issue gives the official figures of baptisms, confirmations and Easter communions for 1928, 1929 and 1930. Under each heading there has been a positive and considerable reduction. The annual births alone ought, in a church which condemns birth-control except in a few cases, to give an increase of three or four per cent per year. Instead, there has been a large positive decrease; and the figures announced in the press for 1931, after Lambeth, show not the least check on the decline. There is, says Bishop Gore, "no prospect of immediate recovery." Dean Inge says that the prospect is ruin unless the creeds are abolished.

What of the American Protestant Episcopal Church? Bishop Brent says:

If ever Christianity was with its back to the wall, it is today, and the sooner we recognize it the better. To be frank, Christianity is in extreme peril (*The Commonwealth*, p. 110).

Bishop Fiske, in his *Confessions of a Puzzled Parson*, says:

It cannot seriously be disputed that the ministry has fallen into public disregard, and that the Churches have assuredly lost prestige (87).

It is no unusual thing to hear the frank acknowledgment among Church leaders that we must recognize the loss of our generation and prepare now to win the next (85).

Dr. Leighton Parks says, from the Modernist side:

There is today a crisis which menaces all the Churches, but that of the Episcopal Church is the most acute (*The Crisis*, p. 92).

If you ask me to look at the statistics, I will quote first the words of Dr. McConnell in his *Christianity, an Interpretation*:

Church statistics are worth less than nothing. It is probably speaking within bounds to say that not one parish in ten could find and locate one half the number of members it reports (229).

Yet on the latest statistics available, for the year 1926, the church claims only 1,859,086 members out of a population of about 120,000,000 people, and more than a quarter of these are under the age of thirteen. On the face of it, there seems to have been a great increase on earlier figures, but the earlier figures included only confirmed members. Where we have a positive figure for comparison (the number of Sunday School scholars in 1916 and 1926) there is a large positive decrease instead of an increase.

But these statistics, supplied by ministers who naturally decline to strike seceders from their lists, tell

little. It is a fact of the utmost notoriety that the church is steadily shrinking, especially as regards two classes: the college-trained class, who resent creeds, and the male workers, who say that it is the church of the rich exploiters.

Why do college-trained folk not appreciate the reinterpretation of doctrines that is offered to them? Because in the words of Professor Lake, this reinterpretation looks like "proving that a word can legitimately be used to express the exact opposite of the meaning originally intended." They know quite well how the process began. Writers felt that if they rejected outright such doctrines as the incarnation and the atonement, the episcopal rod would fall upon them; but if they merely reinterpreted the doctrines, they gave the bishops a fair pretext to avoid trouble. That, outsiders say, may be convenient for your clergy and your bishops, but it does not interest us.

In the next place, people say, you are trifling with truth. Either the old or the new meaning is true, but your bishops have the old taught in one church and the new in another. For instance, as I said the bishops laid it down at Lambeth that the old idea of Christ averting the wrath of the Father by his bloody death is false. But does anybody suppose that on the following Good Friday this false view was not preached in any of the 7,000 churches of the Episcopal communion? It certainly was, in the great majority of them, and with the full consent of the bishops. These reinterpretations are for the rich, the educated. The poor are still indoctrinated with "barbarised Christianity."

Further, you seem to think that you can "reinterpret" what St. Paul says about redemption, or Mark

says about eternal fire, or Luke says about the virgin birth, or Matthew says about nature-miracles, yet leave the foundations of your Christianity just where they were. It is bad enough that this reinterpreting should be left to individual writers, often of no great learning, very rarely having a sufficient knowledge of the modern culture which they profess to meet. They impress nobody but a few church readers. But it is still worse when the full body of bishops gives the world "fresh presentations" and in the same document sues all the old language about the church being in charge of the revelation from God and being guided by the Holy Ghost.

In other words, outsiders complain that in all this interpreting and reconstructing of old beliefs there is a lack of candor, lack of strict truthfulness, that would not be tolerated in modern science or history. And they find this still more in the eagerness with which the eccentric opinions of a few mystic-minded scientists are snapped up and represented to the church as accepted changes in the attitude and teaching of scientists. The Lambeth Conference did this flagrantly, building on the theory of "emergent evolution," which few biologists follow—and it is not at all new and representing it as the new teaching of science. Since then the eccentric opinions of Jeans and Eddington have been scandalously trumpeted throughout the church as "the new teaching of science," though the leaders of physics and astronomy in America reject and resent them.

As to the other class which is alienated from the church, the thoughtful workers, they are not only impressed by the hostility of leaders of culture to the kind

of Christian doctrine that is still preached in the churches in industrial districts, but they begin to despair of the Episcopal Church ever having the courage to apply its own moral principles to the world's gravest problems. I have quoted bishops and preachers fiercely attacking the bishops during the last twenty years for their entanglement with the wealthy and their refusal to say a word about the scandalous distribution of wealth. I have shown that many prominent lay members now demand in our conferences, as I do, that the church shall condemn this unjust distribution. And the answer of the bishops was to join, on the flimsiest and most untruthful of pretexts, in the capitalist attack on Russia, and at Lambeth the united bishops confined themselves to the usual and quite sterile general moral principles of justice and brotherhood. When, in 1931, the Witness arranged for a series of fourteen articles on "the Christian Way Out" of the world-trouble, it was made painfully clear that the church has no consistent message at all on social and economic matters.*

Does any serious member of the church question that I am right in this description of the actual situation? If any do, let them call, not for eloquent public discourses but for a private conference in which the best-informed and most practical representatives of clergy and laity shall discuss these issues: whether the church is increasing or decreasing (allowing for birth rate) whether the policy of reinterpreting dogmas has conciliated college-trained men and women, and whether the mass of the people are satisfied with the policy of stating general moral principles.

* See my review of this symposium in a lecture, entitled, *The Christian Way Out—A Criticism*.

But this has been done sufficiently in our church congresses to inform anybody. Serious members of the church must have been pained by the superficial and rhetorical assurance of the Lambeth Report, that the prospect is brighter because science has become more favorable and men and women are returning to religion. More sincere and more truthful is the cry of the score of writers I have quoted, that the church faces a crisis and that all supernaturalistic religion is in peril. Such statistics as we have fully support them. Every policy has failed, and the world looks upon the church as hopelessly distracted by its own doctrinal controversies and more and more negligible in the discussion of the great problems of modern life.

After the discredited and disdained policy of reinterpretation there are two ways out. One is to abandon the creeds and all doctrinal tests. Very few regard this as practicable or helpful. The doctrines of the creeds are woven into the entire liturgy, and to attempt to cut them out entirely would cause intolerable confusion.

So the only way out, the obvious and inescapable line of ecclesiastical statesmanship, is to leave all members, lay and clerical, free to regard those ancient superstitious beliefs as symbols of new scientific truths. Canon McComb says in one of his liberal works from which I have quoted:

It is true that great ideas of religion are not clear cut and sharply defined, but vague and symbolical. It is, however, these vague and symbolical ideas that are the most powerful levers of the human will and the greatest stimulants to human emotion.

This power of symbolic ideas (the flag, Santa Claus,

statues of justice and liberty) is well known, but I advocate a way in which all vagueness will be avoided.

Let redemption from hell mean the redemption of the race from its visible, terrestrial evils, in which the entire emotional influence of the church shall be enlisted. Let God be the symbol of the highest social ideals that men have conceived. Let the Holy Ghost cease to be the guiding spirit of bishops in their temporizing counsels and stand for the light of modern truth and civilization. Let heaven be the most glorious life on earth that can in truth be brought about.

But let every man and woman be free. That is the only way out of the confusion which paralyzes the church. Truth is not yet the same for all, and each man and woman may read his own symbolism into the ancient words, until the time when all are united in the great work of redeeming the world.

That is my heresy. The church members to whom I appeal are now in a position to understand it. They thought, perhaps, that it was just a question of measuring my heresies against those of a few others and finding that I went far beyond them: that these took a "reasonable liberty" and I an unreasonable one. In view of the contents of this book all such ideas must be abandoned. Most of these writers claim, as I do, that the time has gone by for insisting on the literal acceptance of any of the old supernaturalistic beliefs and formularies. Every one of them is called into question, in our literature, with impunity and just those formularies which a few would regard as most "essential" and indispensable (the personal God, the personal Christ, the personal Spirit) are the beliefs

which the latest advances of science, history and philosophy are steadily undermining.

The only recourse for statesmanship, the only way to give the church unity and peace, new power and prestige, is the way I advocate; and I am merely giving practical form to the demand of thousands that doctrinal tests and discussions shall cease. For this statesmanlike proposal a majority of the bishops cast me into outer darkness while they blundered on with the old policy under which all the churches are dwindling, none more than our own. I suggest how by one simple plan we may put an end to all this wearisome discussion of doctrines and face the world with a genuine welcome to all the new truth it discovers. And for this I am, after fifty years of zealous service to the church, cast out as unfit to wear its robes of office.

Do you not see how at one stroke this great injustice may be remedied and the church saved from all its perils and crises? We do not want the bishops to make a solemn declaration that henceforward the church makes no doctrinal conditions of membership. In time certain forms will be altered, but there is no need whatever for a public declaration of policy which to the more conservative, who do not know how this liberty has really existed for twenty years, must seem revolutionary.

By the single act of reinstating me the church will gain peace in its fold and reconciliation with the world. None henceforward would be driven to insincerity or unworthy quibbling from fear of a charge of heresy. The world would know that, since the bishops freely admitted to their company one who read every supernaturalistic representation of the Christian Bible,

Catholic Creeds, Protestant Articles and Anglican Prayer Book symbolically, it is no longer a condition of admission to the Episcopal Church that you shall profess to believe anything that conflicts, or can possibly conflict, with any other truth. And church members will for all time honor the men who had the courage to complete the work of the Reformers, lift from them the reproach of hostility to or ignorance of modern truth, and give a new unity and energy to the distracted forces of the church.

WHILE traditional civilization is sinking into despair, ruin, and misery, the condition of the people of the Soviet Republic is daily being raised to a standard of security which, whatever present shortcomings in the quality of food or of boots, has not been, as a uniform level common to a whole people, known throughout the history of traditional civilization. Considered, I say, apart from all issues and partisan judgments, and regarded solely in the light of a concrete achievement of power and determination, it is without parallel.

How has revolutionary Russia been enabled to compass that achievement? The Soviets have clearly been fortunate in the ability of their leaders. But that alone is not sufficient to explain the miracle. "Bolshevik Russia is the only country which is today inspired by a living faith." The words are not mine. They are the Archbishop of Canterbury's — Robert Briffault.

A P P E N D I X

I

"That book, *Science and History for Girls and Boys*, is superb, but you have done yourself and others an injury by not putting the essence of pages 296-8 right at the first of it and also of all your books and lectures. Quite a circle of my friends are reading your books together and they all agree with me that you should do this. The circle includes some Jews, some Catholics and some infidels. I wish you could hear our discussions."

Following practically, if not exactly, this advice I am reprinting as an appendix the section of that book to which my correspondent refers:

The Future of the Churches

The only way in which you can foretell the future is when something has been happening during a century or so, and it grows more and more in our time. Then you are justified in saying that it will probably continue in the future. So, as the churches have been losing ground for a full hundred years, and ever more rapidly as time goes on, we say that the future is very serious for them. What has actually happened in the last fifty years is that, in proportion as we opened the eyes of people, or gave them knowledge and education, they gave up the churches.

Well, we certainly are going to open people's eyes more than ever in the next fifty years. When politicians and priests no longer control the schools, all the facts of history and science will be taught in them. And when we have a juster social order, every girl and boy will get at least a high school education, if not a college

education, and such churches as the Baptist and Roman Catholic, the Four-Square-Gospellers and Seventh-Day Adventists, will not find millions of ignorant people to be deceived by the kind of stuff they write for them. I do not believe that any church will exist by the end of this century which teaches anything contrary to the facts of science and scientific history or does not preach justice fully and practically.

Can they do that? Well, I myself welcome every word that science and history tell us and, as to justice to the workers, I am, you know, a "bolshevik." But I am also a bishop and I like to go to the services of the churches especially the Anglican and Roman, because of their rituals. At the same time though I say "amen" to the prayers, recite the creeds, sing the hymns and receive the holy communion, I do not believe one word of their supernaturalism literally interpreted. For me they constitute the greatest of all dramas, the drama of human redemption from the hell of ignorance, poverty, slavery and war to the heaven of knowledge, plenty, freedom and peace. I never pretend to believe any representation of biblical supernaturalism literally interpreted. I interpret it all symbolically and it means more to me than ever. Perhaps that puzzles you, and I will explain, because it shows a way in which some of the churches may meet their difficulties and really begin to help men.

You know all about Santa Claus and Christmas, though not so much notice is taken of them in America as in Britain and Canada and most countries. Now nobody believes to-day that there is such a person as Santa Claus, and most people do not believe that a God named Jesus was born on December 25th. But we do

not want to do away with Christmas, and we look on Santa Claus as just an imaginary figure representing the fine, generous spirit of Christmas time: a symbol of it, as grown-up people say.

Now to me the Christian story of a God dying to save men is, of course, totally false if you take it literally, as the churches do, but it is a symbol of the coming salvation of the world by science. You know the statue of Liberty outside New York. There never was any such person, of course, and there was not even complete liberty in the country. But let us keep the statue as a symbol of the liberty that ought to be and will be some day.

So I want the church to say that its services represent the drama of the fall and redemption from the misfortunes of the human race. Then, you see, the church would really at last be in complete sympathy with the people, and nothing that scientists discover could possibly trouble it. Many people might like to go to church services if they meant a fall and redemption of that kind. At all events, it is quite clear that the churches are doomed if they do not make such a change. The world will not tolerate much longer the power of the churches unless they quit teaching untruth and supporting injustice.

II

Bishop Brown: A Fundamental Modernist

By Professor John Dewey

That the fundamentalists stole a march on their opponents in the selection of epithets by which to characterize the religious issues at stake I have had occasion to point out previously in these columns. It is evident

that the modernists are themselves more or less at fault in this matter, not just because they have accepted the word, but because of an intellectual vagueness which attends their convictions. At least to one outside of the controversy, to one not attached to either wing, religious "liberalism" as stated by its adherents seems to be essentially transitional, mediating, in character. Its psychological value to many persons in easing strain cannot be doubted; no one can deny that there is a social value in movements which modulate from one position to another in a way which avoids the crises and breakdowns incident to abrupt changes. But it is in the interest of intellectual coherence and integrity that the direction of a movement of transition should be recognized, that there should be some clear perception of the outcome to which the moving logic of the situation points.

Bishop William Montgomery Brown has in his lifetime traversed the whole course; he has done it knowingly, aware of where he started and where he has come out. He has moved from one fundamentalism to another creed equally fundamental. He is therefore more than a modernist; he has surrendered a supernaturalism connected with the authority of tradition and the institution of the church for a naturalism connected with the authority of investigation and the institution of science. Yet no reader with a spark of sympathy can gainsay his repeated assertions that at the end he is as religious, in his own conviction indeed more religious than when he was an orthodox bishop in the Protestant Episcopal Church, where he was more than usually successful in rehabilitating dying churches and founding new ones. His recent book

(My Heresy, published by the John Day Company, New York) breathes the confidence, assurance, of a faith which knows that it is founded on an indestructible Rock of Ages.

That is the fact which gives interest to the record of the spiritual development of Bishop Brown—the reality of religion so impregnates his life as well as his book that it is difficult to fancy even his ecclesiastic enemies failing to think of him, in spite of his deposition, as Bishop. In his intellectual conceptions, his ideas of the nature of belief, of authority, of the objects of faith and aspiration, he has swung full circle. But the circle is inscribed within an atmosphere which is everywhere religious; nowhere does it cross the boundary. For this reason the movement which the book records has a typical significance which is absent from most heresies. The history of the disowned ardent cleric presents what is lacking in the activities of most modernists: the attainment of a location and a possession which is as fundamental as that of any ecclesiastic who arrogates to himself the title of fundamentalist. Because of this fact, his career makes clear an issue obscured in most recent controversy: What is the foundation of a vital religious experience in this present time?

The intellectual naivete, the innocence and virginity, of Bishop Brown's temperament is an agency in clarifying the situation. His book as a book is too argumentative, too concerned with making a conclusion definite and strong in the mind of the reader, to be subtly illuminating "spiritual autobiography" which a literary egoist would have made of the material at hand. But in spite of the reiterated striking of the same note which at times imparts heaviness to the book, the fact

is made to stand out that the successive steps of Bishop Brown in "heresy" (surely it cannot be long before the word will be permanently embalmed in quotation marks) represent a succession of widenings and deepening of faith. His clerical career did not end in a defrocking because he discovered from time to time that he believed less, but because from time to time he discovered that absence of faith in man and knowledge were bound up with the beliefs which he had previously held. Others who had shared these beliefs remained in their unbelief; his faith moved on.

Thus he found himself without desire, without expectation on his part, moved, rather than moving, from one level to another. Each crisis found him with the naive belief that his brethren in the faith would respond as soon as he communicated to them the new revelation, that is, the new perception of scientific and social realities, which had been forced upon him; that, even if they did not actively approve and go with him, they would at least acknowledge his right and duty to follow the light which he had seen. Each time the refusal he encountered, refusals to enter even in imagination into the new and larger ways of truth in which he must walk in order to remain true to the faith which was in him, compelled him to further thought to search for the reasons for the refusal. Only at the very end, at the close of his trial by the bishops and by reason of the character of the trial, was he forced to the conclusion that "My Heresy" consisted essentially in the fact that he had placed faith in truth and reality above and below all other articles of faith. Only then, upon his appeal, did he turn to the business of making the issue clear, of getting written plain upon the record

the official attitude of the Church. Till then he had only striven to share the faith which possessed him, even as he had striven to bring others to the faith when he was still orthodox of the orthodox, ecclesiastic of the ecclesiastics. Doubtless history knows many instances of faith which from childhood to old age remained childlike. But the instances in which childlike faith persisted while passing from extremes of literalism and dogmatism to doubt and denial of a personal God, personal immortality and the historic existence of Jesus, are certainly rare.

The way out and onward which Bishop Brown found for himself and which he offered others who would be religious while living in full communion with the present intellectual and social world is the way of symbolic interpretation: Yield glad and complete allegiance to whatever truths are anywhere discovered and treat the formulae in which bygone ages stated their faith as symbols of what humanity now feels, knows and aspires to do. There are many, also heretics from the standpoint of the churches, whom the method leaves cold. They have no more interest in retaining as symbolism the Old and New Testament, the Apostles and Nicene Creed, than they have in giving a symbolic interpretation to Plato or Virgil. But even they realize that the church is an historic institution and one with which the religious life of most men has been bound up; they realize that piety to the traditions which are closely associated with deep emotional experiences is a thing to be respected; they know that the church as an institution, and personal piety to the sources from which the ideal life of man has been so largely nourished, are confronted with the problem

of adaptation to the intellectual and social realities of present life. The way of symbolism is with respect to these things a fundamental release, emancipation and inspiration. The issue which the trials of Bishop Brown for heresy have written clear and large upon the record is whether the Christian churches are to continue surrendering to symbolism one after another of the special items of the old beliefs and formulae, when the coercion of accomplished facts leaves no other course open, while clinging obstinately to literalism and dogmatism as to others; or whether it will voluntarily and graciously concede to all men the fullest liberty of symbolic interpretation of any and all articles and items, reserving its faith for the realities of life itself. Upon the decision of this issue the future of Protestantism depends. Bishop Brown is no intellectual giant; he makes no claim to great scholarship. But his sincere and genuine faith in spiritual fundamentals has accomplished more in making the issue clear than has been effected by men of greater intellectual stature and profounder scholarship. In comparison with this achievement the crudities and eccentricities which may accompany some of the symbolic interpretations which commend themselves to Bishop Brown are of no importance. He is a fundamentalist in religion, though a heretic in traditional supernaturalism.

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