

the better for art, for people, for clergymen, and for religion. Places of worship are not built for speculative purposes, and they ought not, by reason of the sacredness of their character, to imitate the commercial tricks of buildings made to be sold; but, if they be worse than the trade structures, they cannot be honorable to God or serviceable to man, and must become, though not called, temples for the glorification of sham.

RELIGION AND LIFE.

The Orthodox Theology of To-day. By Rev. Dr. Newman Smyth.

Old Faiths in a New Light. By Rev. Dr. Newman Smyth.

Philosophy in the Church of Rome. By Thomas Davidson.

THE decline of religion as a dogmatic belief forms a topic upon which much has been said and written in the last few years. It is a phenomenon which naturally attracts the attention of all observant minds, since in the question of belief are bound up the most important issues of life. Morality, so the avowed atheist does not hesitate to admit, must fade away when the basis on which the code of ethics is built is once withdrawn. Society, as such, therefore, is as much interested in the issue as are the advocates of religion on the one side and their opponents on the other. This general interest accounts to a great extent for the endless number of opinions expressed on the subject. Yet while there is an immense discrepancy between the views advanced on each side, there are, nevertheless, some points on which there appears to be very general agreement; and these points are, therefore, well worth investigating.

First of all, it is apparent to any one who follows the religious movement in its surging to and fro as it is expressed in contemporary literature that a much more correct and much more definite understanding of the true meaning of the term "religion" has obtained. Not a few argue and seemingly not without good reasons that doctrinal belief as such is falling into discredit simply because a more correct conception of the office and mission of religion gains from day to day greater currency. This, it is maintained, explains why rationalism has succeeded in making such frightful

inroads into the rank and file of Christian society ; and it explains, furthermore, why the charge is preferred against all religious systems of our day of being powerless either to direct or to hold their respective followers. Nor is it possible to entirely contradict this bold assertion. For it is indeed remarkable with what wonderful perspicuity and clearness some modern writers, though unbelievers themselves, point out the inadequacy of Theism, of Protestantism, and not less so of Positivism, to serve as a religion of mankind. In a series of papers published in preceding numbers of this REVIEW some of the more striking instances have been discussed. It has been shown in them that the charges just referred to are by no means idle accusations ; but are well founded, and that they apply with much force and precision to most Christian denominations. For this reason it seems to be a very natural conclusion that the religious systems of the past, together with those of the present day, will pass away and make room for one which, it is true, still remains an unsolved problem of the future, but of which the hope is entertained that some master-mind will construct it before long. This belief is spread far and wide, and is entertained seriously by large numbers. Nor is it just to blame society for holding such views. In many respects this view of the situation is quite correct. It contains an admission which of itself is full of promise, whether expressly made or only implied. The creed of the future, it is acknowledged, must be more than a mere cold abstract truth like the laws of numbers, the basis of mathematics. It is conceded, and this is the first point of agreement, that whatever the unborn religion of the unborn to-morrow will or may be, it must not only be able to take hold of reason, and through the intellectual faculties exercise a wholesome influence upon will and action, but it must do more. It must be able also to fill the human heart and to raise a certain enthusiasm. In short, it must be able to appeal effectively to all the nobler and finer springs of action in life, that is, it must be able to *fill life's full measure*. Most Christian denominations fail to do this. They do not, as has been shown very conclusively by some of the ablest pens of our times, come up to those practical tests which our pre-eminently practical age has applied to them. They are failures ; they have shown their inadequacy to grapple with life's entirety. Hence, the prediction made respecting religion in general, that is, of all existing religions, certainly holds good with regard to most of them.

A marked increase in the correct knowledge of the meaning of religion has apparently produced a proportionate decrease in the extent of religious belief. Knowledge and religion appear to stand, indeed, in inverse proportion, and it is hardly a matter of surprise

that this perplexing relationship should have shaken the convictions of many honest-minded people.

Again,—and this forms the second point of agreement amidst universal disagreement,—while it is believed that the world at this day has no religion worth having, it is also believed, and probably with greater firmness and greater certainty, that no matter what the future of mankind will be, some sort of belief, some religious system, will not be wanting in it. On this point there exists in fact no divergence of opinion at all. And for very obvious reasons. The world is no longer in its infancy. It has reached the ripe age of manhood. More prosperous times may be in store for it than it has enjoyed in the past, but the world will have no other body, no other soul, no other earth, no other heaven than it has had. In other words, the elements of life, and its conditions in the future, cannot essentially differ from those of the past. To assume, therefore, that mankind will ever relinquish its hold upon that which has ever been its inseparable companion in the past, is irrational. Besides, it is only necessary to witness how hard the human race struggles at this very time to retain that companion, and to observe also how hopeless that struggle is in the majority of cases, in order to discard any such assumption as altogether improbable. People, when brought face to face with the necessity of parting with their religion, are seen to cling to it with the force of despair, however unsatisfying and plainly false that religion may be. What the attitude of individuals may be as to this does not, however, concern us here. They must be left to decide for themselves whether to reject the claims of so-called science, or to accept them and lend a willing ear to the tempting insinuations of the spirit of the age. In days when everything appears to be upset and without firm foundations, the general drift of thought acquires more importance than that of social factions. •

Now the two points to which we have called attention as the two points of agreement which are clearly observable at present, result from the preponderating tendency of our age to take practical views of all things, religion included. Practical tests are asked for in all things. These must be given or else society remains cold and unmoved. The question of religion is, therefore, no longer what religious system displays the most scientific, the most philosophical system and arrangement of dogmas; nor what religion contains the fullest promise of coming up to the requirements of the creed of the future. The question in its naked reality is this: *Has* religion ever solved the problem of life, has religion mastered life in all its complex ramifications, has it dealt successfully with it, has it ever solved the enigma of life in a practical way?

This, we take it, is the key-note which has been struck in our days,

and which is re-echoed more or less distinctly from all that has been written on the subject. Religion is tested and measured by life. Society, not entering thoroughly into the subject, and reasoning superficially, has declared that no such thing as genuine religion exists at the present day in this world. It is self-evident, however, that if there be a genuine religion, no practical test to which it can be subjected can possibly have any fatal effect upon it. A failure to stand the most crucial test, namely, the test of life, would plainly demonstrate that it was not, in point of fact, genuine. On the other hand, if it stands the test, then the sooner this becomes plainly manifest the better for society.

It seems almost superfluous to remark that in what follows the words *religion* and *Christianity* are used as interchangeable terms.

The discussion of the category of creeds to which the old Pagan beliefs, and the Asiatic and African forms of worship, belong, is virtually closed in this nineteenth century. For it is not contested that Christianity shows an immense advance over all religious systems which preceded it. The modern civilized world may learn, no doubt, a great deal from studying the forms under which the human race, under varying conditions, gave expression to its irrepressible want of some religious belief. But while this is true, it would be an insult to the standard of enlightenment which happily prevails now in civilized society, to presume for a moment that the worship of any Pagan deity could be seriously revived. Religion stands or falls with Christianity. This much is admitted. Hence it follows that if Christianity is not an idle phantom, if it is aught but a mere delusion, too long held by a superstitious crowd, then it should be able, in at least *one* of its forms, to show itself equivalent to and co-extensive with life. No answer to that query can, of course, be made before the meaning of life is ascertained; and here we refer not to the meaning of life in the general sense of the term, but of life as applied to man, who is the highest form and embodiment of natural life.

Life, when applied to man, comprises a great deal more than that which he has in common with creatures on a lower plane to which this word is also applied. Life, being no fiction, but a stern reality with which each human being has to deal, whether it chooses or not, includes, it is true, the cycle of animal life. But, as even the most advanced scientists concede that man is not all muscle, but has also non-physical or intellectual life, duplex elements present themselves at the outset. In his reason and intellect man possesses faculties whereby he may cut loose from the material world and soar above it. Experience confirms this fact in a way which excludes every possible contradiction on this point. Animal life and intellectual life do not, however, exhaust life in its entirety. Life,

in regard to man, embraces more even than the sum of his physical and intellectual activity. It comprises the whole complex array of relations springing from the action and reaction and interdependence of physical and intellectual functions and activities issuing forth and culminating in what is called the "moral" life. Cultured thought and science, and hence enlightened society, are honest enough to admit this.

From this brief and condensed analysis of life, it is plainly to be seen that religion, in dealing with life, must perform a threefold office, and fill a mission as regards physical, intellectual, and moral life. This triplex relationship encountered in the social unit recurs, as a matter of necessity, in society and in mankind at large. For the human race is formed of nations, these of families, and these in turn of individuals. Hence it is utterly impossible that the human race should not possess what every member thereof possesses. Moreover, it stands to reason, that the triplex nature in the race should manifest itself in the same order in which it appears in individual beings. To presume that the order clearly established in the life of man is not reversed in the life of mankind, is not in accordance with common sense. Nor is the order reversed as a matter of fact. But this fulness of life, that is of animal, intellectual, and moral life, is not put at once into the possession of any human being, except in a potential sense. In infancy, which is the first stage of life, the animal portion preponderates almost to the exclusion of the other elements. But, as life runs on, the intellect gradually awakens from its dormant state, and that awakening signals the second stage, which is, as it were, added on to the first. And when intellectual activity has once fairly set in, a moment arrives when something within begins to whisper about duty, about obligation, about responsibility, and the like; and *then*, and not until then, does a human being enter upon the social field where the law of morality regulates with stern hand the intercourse between man and man. The transition from one stage of life to the other does not appear as a sudden and abrupt change, but is a continuous as well as a progressive process. The length of the period within which that change is accomplished may, and does vary, in almost every individual. The popular expressions of the three stages of life, namely, animal, intellectual, and moral life, recur in almost every language, under the terms, "infancy," "childhood," for the one, "youth," "manhood," "ripe age," for the others.

In the life of mankind, periods corresponding to the gradual development which is observed in man, should not be wanting. Nor are they wanting. And hence, in order to test religion by life, it is not enough to establish simply that in individuals the three successive phases are successfully passed through, but it is neces-

sary to prove that the fulness of life in the human race has been successfully dealt with by religion. If this has been done, it must be a matter of historic record. It must be shown that religion has directed its main energies, with discerning eye, always to the conquest of that stage which characterizes in a prominent degree the period at which mankind and religion came into direct contact. The verdict does not depend so much upon the success or the failure which may have attended the effects of true Christianity upon some, or even upon many individuals, but rather upon the success or failure of its effects upon that vast aggregation of human individuals which constitutes the race. This is a practical test, and one fraught with fewer difficulties than any other, to settle the great question, whether the world at this day has or has not a religion worth having. A very brief summary of the historic facts bearing upon this subject is, of course, all that can be given within the limited compass of this paper. But, what is alluded to in few words can be verified or amplified from the shelves of any well-assorted library. It is not our purpose to give more than a few bold tracings as an impetus to private study and reflection. The digestion of ready-made mental dishes seldom if ever bears good fruits, and never in any abundance, whereas independent work along a distinctly marked line hardly ever fails to lead to the destined goal.

At the beginning of our era a true and perfect religion was revealed for the first time by the Founder of Christianity. Consequently true religion and humanity were then for the first time confronted by each other. The question now arises, What was the state of human society at that period? Upon what stage of life had the race as such entered? What was it that religion first attacked? Fortunately, there is no lack of authentic records as to the aspect society then presented. Competent historians have drawn pictures of it in clear-cut and well-defined lines, and in colors still fresh and unmistakable. The task of consulting history on this point is therefore very easy. History tells us that it was a period during which everything was literally engulfed in the reign of the passions. The Pagan creeds had run out their course. They had proven themselves powerless to restrain any longer the animal instincts from acquiring supreme control over the ruling nation, the Romans. An unbridled indulgence in all that catered to sensual appetites had reached a height which it is difficult for us in the far-off distance to conceive. Licentiousness, avarice, luxury, selfishness, a total ignoring of the rights of fellow-men, a willingness to sacrifice these remorselessly for the gratification of some passion; these were the traits which characterize the rulers of the period, and the period itself. Life was wastefully poured on every carnal thing. Materialism's foul blight darkened the in-

tellect, chilled all the nobler emotions, paralyzed the heart, and tainted the times so much that the equilibrium of the moral law seemed to exist no longer. Corruption and depravity hurled the mightiest of all nations towards the bottomless pit of perdition which the unchecked reign of the passions had prepared for it as an ignominious grave. The animal life threatened to extinguish the intellectual and moral life. Yet, rotten to the core as the Roman Empire was then internally, it still stood externally before the world as a colossus. North of the Alps and beyond the Rhine the Gallic and Teutonic tribes had succumbed to the superior soldier-ship of Rome. In Spain, and across the Straits of Gibraltar, all along the north coast of Africa, Roman eagles were planted, and in loud tones proclaimed that the nations which lived there were subservient to that great power which had known how to vanquish them on the battlefield, and thereby to turn the freeholders into slaves, so that their labor increased the wealth of their rulers and enabled them to satiate their every whim as long as time would permit. In Egypt, the land of the pyramids, Rome also reigned supreme; and the measured tread of Roman legions was re-echoed alike from the shores of the Pontus Euxinus and the placid waters of the Persian Gulf. Even in the extreme northwest, as then known, namely, in Britannia, and again in the extreme east, on the borders of the Indus, Rome was acknowledged as the mighty mistress of the world. Rome had absorbed realm after realm. The philosophy of Greece and the mysticism of the East had been brought into the Eternal City. All creeds were sought to be amalgamated, and strength expected from the forced consolidation. But Rome no longer reigned by virtue or justice. The secret of power and expansion lay only in the intelligent use of that very element of physical strength,—that is to say, brute force, whose preponderance in individuals undermined already the existence of the race and poisoned the life-blood circulating through its veins. The domination of Rome, from the time Christianity was preached in the East down to the collapse of the Empire, rested only and solely upon the skilful and intelligent use with which physical superiority was guided, controlled, directed, and marshalled for the subjugation of whatsoever offered resistance. The structure of the Empire in all its greatness could no longer prevent the masses from uttering that cry of "*Panem et circenses*," which tells its own sad tale. The masses of the people ask not for right or for justice or for equity. No, they ask simply for what will sustain animal life, and for what can delight only the degraded tastes of a degraded populace. Therefore, if there ever was a time when the supremacy of animal life was clearly depicted in the state of society, it was *then*. The first and

the lowest stage of life in mankind had reached the utmost development of which that element is capable. It was consequently a time when the mission of religion as regards the human race was most clearly mapped out. The conquest of the life of the passions in man is, as is well known, the first task of religion; the same conquest in the race proved to be the first task of religion in its relationship to mankind. Whether this strange identity deserves to be regarded as a providential arrangement we shall not discuss here. It suffices for us to know that the first stage of life in the race was conquered by religion. And this is not a question open for discussion. It is a historic fact that it *was* done, and also *how* it was done.

After the lapse of three short centuries, the great Roman Empire lay at the feet of the Church of Rome in precisely the same manner in which the animal man finds himself before man when converted into a religious being,—that is, a Christian. Evidences of the victory of religion in the social unit abound. The long catalogue of martyrs, confessors, and saints proclaims that victory with a never-dying eloquence. If, on the other hand, evidence is demanded of the subjugation, at the feet of Christianity, of the first stage of life in the human race, the Roman Empire, the apotheosis of power, and as such, the superlative expression of the aggregation of animal life in the race, history speaks in accents not less eloquent of the victory of religion over human society. The examination of the past in the comprehensive way in which the philosophy of history bids us to examine it, establishes, therefore, that historic Christianity,—*i. e.*, the Catholic Church,—has recorded in indelible ink a victory which offers internal as well as external evidence that the world has not in vain agreed to count afresh its age from the date of the birth of Christ. Mindful of the condition of society and of the powers which were allied to uphold that condition, the fulfilment by Christianity of the first stage of its mission offers in itself a testimony to the heaven-born origin of true religion.

Intellectual activity and vigor follows, as has been stated before, the manifestation of physical life in the individual, and mark, as it were, the second stage. It does so likewise in the race. As soon as nations strip off the garments of infancy, the second evidence of the possession of life in its entirety appears on the scene. It is the intellect, then, which asks for untrammelled empire. As the revolt of the passions forms the first act, so does the revolt of the intellect form the second act of the great drama,—“life.”

Rome's fall swept away the old nations, and with them most of their culture and civilization and vices. What was left behind was

buried out of sight. Barbarians grew up in the place of the extinct nations; crude masters of art and science, full of vital energy, but unskilled as yet in the full and free use of all intellectual faculties. Religion stood before them like a mother who had undertaken to train them in virtue and chastity, but yet like a mother who had not as yet told them the *why* and the *wherefore* of what she had taught. That silence was now to be broken. As the waves of time rolled on, fragments of the philosophies of Greece and Rome were washed ashore. What had been saved from under the ruins of the Roman Empire gradually spread among the new nations and imparted a powerful impetus to the growth of their intellectual life. Drinking knowledge from those perennial masterpieces of human thought (unaided by a light from above), which the great minds of Greece and Rome had fashioned, philosophy; logic, metaphysics became known as taught by these, and became better known and better understood than they are in our own days. Religious faith alone no longer sufficed for mankind. The expansion of the reasoning faculties imperatively demanded that Christianity should be cast into a complete and perfect system of philosophy and theology. Thus stood religion before its second mission. Its energies had to be addressed now to the reconquest of man in his collective capacity, by showing that the intellectual life no less than the physical falls within its province. This time it was not the force of the passionate instincts and propensities of man's frame, but that greater and subtler force, the force of his reason, which had to be mastered by religion. The universal demand of human society had to be met for a rational system of belief which possesses not only faith, but places a well-ordered system of dogmas and doctrines, based upon sound philosophy, before mankind.

To do this, it was necessary that Christianity should build up a system of theology and philosophy which, by its greatness alone, would put into the shade the works of those intellectual giants who continue to be honored as the master minds of antiquity, and whose greatness has never been called in question by any Christian philosopher. And here, again, it is a matter of record that the only religious organization which, as a historic organization, reaches back to the very dawn of true religion, signalizes its second triumphant victory. What is known as the scholastic philosophy was called into life; and, under such lights as St. Thomas Aquinas, it reached a perfection which made the rebellious intellect of human society bow in reverential assent. The monuments which have been left standing as landmarks of that period well deserve our attention. For, whoever studies scholastic philosophy, and particularly the works of the Christian Aristotle, will gladly testify that

they stand unrivalled as severe, continuous, logical processes of thought. They superseded the world's thought before Christianity was born, and nothing written since then equals that which preceded Christian philosophy. As Mr. Thomas Davidson so well remarks in his *Philosophy of the Church of Rome*, "Few, indeed, are the scientific or philosophical works of modern times which the application of St. Thomas's commentary on the *Organon* would not prove to be illogical or self-contradictory. Logic especially has been little more than an ignominious testimony to the absence of metaphysical ability."

The second stage of the mission of Religion, like the first, is thus seen to have been successfully achieved by the Catholic Church in the individual as well as in the race. Two stages of life have thus been grappled with and brought under dominion by true Religion, yet life, in its entirety, still remains unconquered, for the third and last stage is not yet included in the conquest. The adequacy of true Religion to cope with life's fullness remains now to be established.

The complex nature of life in its entirety, which has been mentioned before, makes it necessary to clear up somewhat this mystery before proceeding further. Life, it was said, when applied to man, means the expression as well as the measure of all the faculties of man and their relationship. Life, in its entirety, embraces all animal appetites, all intellectual pleasures, and is, in point of fact, the combination of the two natures, resulting in the constant struggle between liberty and the passions, which forms the battlefield of the moral order. The inferior being in the scale of those whose patrimony constitutes life, namely, the brute creation, is led by instinct. In the animal, instinct and passion are the same thing. But man, though endowed with instinct and passion, inasmuch as he is endowed with a body, and thereby subjected to the yoke of sensible things, rises by the light of reason towards the intelligible orb, where omnipotence itself is ruled by the law of justice. Man alone possesses the prerogative of knowing the true, of willing the good, of loving the beautiful: three things not included in the narrow limit of human life, and yet within its reach. In man there is, as the ancestor of liberty, a luminous principle, which the world knows as "conscience," and which forms the fulcrum of moral life. Man, moreover, is not born alone with his body and his intellect. He is the necessary fellow-citizen of the world, and carried along by it in a whirlwind, which governs him. No man can trace a line of circumvallation around himself, no more than he can escape from the ideas of his times, the customs of his country, and the traditions and friends of his youth. It is only by raising himself above and beyond his place here below that he can behold

a horizon free from bondage, because free from limit. Human nature, in the fulness of life, shows, therefore, a susceptibility of enlargement and transformation, which forcibly indicates that other elements are added on to the physical and intellectual part of his nature. These do not cease to play their respective parts, but the moral element also enters upon the arena and resolves itself into two, namely, a social and a supernatural element. Moral life, therefore, is the result of the action of several forces, and the mainsprings of action are three, namely: reason, liberty, and conscience. Reason may be said to stand at the summit, and serves as a light; liberty, the free choice between good and evil, right and wrong, appears as the great force in the web of activity; conscience, lastly, stands between the two as a sentiment, urging ever on to make the proper choice. These forces move between two points. At the one end stands the innate and invincible desire for happiness; at the other, the extent of our understanding. The distance between these two points varies. For only the indwelling desire for happiness is a constant quantity, while the reach of the intellectual faculties is a variable quantity. Still, no matter how limited the latter may be, this much is certain, that truth is always the object which is desired, because through it alone happiness is attainable. Truth has this, in common with happiness, that it flies ever before us into the illimitable regions which intelligence opens up. By an invincible energy man is borne on beyond time and space towards the infinite. For no limited object ever satisfies our faculties. It is a fallacious delusion to think it can; for the moment we possess what we were longing for, our thoughts and desires, after a short moment's lingering, raise themselves at once to other objects beyond our grasp, until at last we reach out into the infinite. For this reason man cannot find in himself either the principle, or the object, or the term of his existence. He drifts by necessity always into the infinite, which, it is true, he fails, and always will fail, to comprehend, but which he may, and does, apprehend, and of which he is furthermore bound to assert that it is no abstraction without reality, since he himself seeks in it the highest truth, the greatest happiness, that is to say, the fulness of life. Nor is this all. Truth forms, indeed, as life teaches us, the legitimate object after which our intellect craves in order to attain to happiness. But truth alone would leave us cold, unless it is surrounded by a halo, by a something which is capable of touching our innermost feelings. In order to raise a certain enthusiasm, truth needs to be equipped with an attractive force, and this latter is beauty. The union of truth and beauty furnishes alone an object which can be seized by human nature with all the intensity of which it is capable, and the expression of this highest and greatest and noblest

energy of life is called "love." In love life presents to us its greatest friend, that is to say, the most potent cause of virtue and happiness, and at the same time its greatest enemy, that is to say, the most potent cause of vice. A passion at its root, love, in its crystallized form, is the masterpiece of life, its summit and at the same time its essence. Yet, as is well known, even the most liberal cultivation of thought by science and letters affords no guarantee, no shelter, from falling a prey to that passion in its lowest form. No less an authority than Herbert Spencer admits this freely.

Having arrived at this point, it is evident that the main office of Religion, as regards the moral life, consists necessarily in converting the greatest enemy into man's strongest ally. The belief in God, which is the first and foremost truth of Religion, is one without which life itself becomes unthinkable. Nor is this belief an artificial creation of Christianity. It is, on the contrary, a native and universal belief, emerging spontaneously in connection with the feeling of dependence and moral obligation, which appears as soon as our intellectual faculties arrive at maturity. The physical order already furnishes mankind with a negative intuition of God. The intellectual faculties, through the ideas of truth and justice, serve as a direct intuition, while life, that is, human society, gives us a practical intuition of His existence. Life itself confirms what Religion affirms. Life itself shows the necessity of religious teachings of such character as true Christianity proclaims. If we trace effects back to their causes, we show these to be effects themselves until we arrive at the dilemma either that cause itself is a phantom and no reality, or else that there is one self-existing intelligent supreme cause. Or, if we consider the human body in its relation to mind, namely, the very striking and obvious adaptation of the bodily organs to the service of our intelligence, every one who is conscious of being able to begin action cannot help experiencing a most vivid perception of design. And this consciousness of design makes the theory of chance, as the alternative of design, fall to the ground. Chance or fatality as such has no existence. Every human being forms his own destiny, since what is called destiny is simply the consequence of our own decisions. There is as little incoherence of actions, and inconsequence of results in the moral order, as there is in the physical. Even liberty has its law, and produces a regular web. A causal nexus pervades the whole universe, and consequently life. The wondrous order and harmony and perfect arrangement between part and part, visible everywhere in nature, speak to human intelligence, and human intelligence responds to nature. Both meet in conscience, and life places the seal of experience upon the revelation of the three. Whoever tries to escape from this revelation, which the study of life forces

upon our recognition, must silence a voice whose sound reverberates from age to age. Unbelief is, therefore, never a sequence of the study of life, but simply a form of indifference, and exists only as such. For the more knowledge expands the more clearly and fully is the supreme wisdom of the Creator attested; so that it is perfectly absurd to suppose that life tells of no God, rather than of God. It is only because we are so much entangled in material surroundings that we go on in a kind of reckless dream, and forget that we are captives of sense and slaves of time.

The office of religion in reference to life's entirety, as is apparent from the preceding analysis, is one which implies not only a dealing with man as a union of body and intellect, but implies a dealing with man as a being whose highest aspirations rest in the infinite; claiming God as Life-giver and possessing in conscience a force which might perhaps be defined as "reason inspired by divine love." Religion must illumine our reason, expand its horizon, call into play all our faculties, establish harmony. It must influence liberty so that due preference shall be given to the counsel whispered by the voice of conscience. In order to make reason, liberty, and conscience a triune and harmonious force, truth must be placed by religion before our understanding in such way that its beauty may engender within us a love to possess it in full. In other words, the consciousness that we cannot, as long as we are prisoners of time and space, comprehend the infinite, must not be allowed to cast us down and render us faint-hearted and despondent, but must be joined to the consciousness that the fountain-head of truth alone possesses the beauty, in the love of which man finds not only the object of his desire for happiness, but real undefiled happiness itself. In fine, religion, by using passion to destroy passion, must elevate the most fatal force from its lowest plane, and place it upon a summit where divinity and humanity meet in a true embrace.

This is the plain mission of religion, and, from its consideration, it is at once patent that all those Christian denominations which do not acknowledge a supernatural element are *ipso facto* excluded from putting forward any claim to being "the true religion." There is in reality but one Church, the Catholic Church, which can even pretend to be, and which in fact is the repository of true religion. Some Protestant denominations declare, it is true, that the supernatural element enters as a potent factor into life. But while acknowledging this much, they display a profound ignorance of the frailty of human nature. Protestantism stands, beyond contradiction, as the religion of respectability before the world. Its churches, as a rule, are well carpeted, provided with comfortable pews, good chairs, and are filled at the services with congregations who, in point of wealth, dress, outward appearance, etc., are in advance

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of Catholic average congregations. But a monotonous discourse on some topic of the day, or a free interpretation of some Bible-text joined to some hymn-chanting and organ playing, forms pretty nearly all that is given as religion to living beings. And that this is not capable of combating with life's energy requires but slight insight into human nature to perceive. No religion can possibly be efficacious without a series of channels by means of which life may be guided whenever its current threatens to drift away from the straight course. A memory which is only too willing to forget whatever imposes restraints, must needs be constantly reminded of the existence of safety-valves, so to speak, and of the necessity of using these unhesitatingly. All this can be accomplished only by raising an enthusiasm of fervor and affection, and by maintaining the same. Else no such effect can be produced, nor can it be expected to be produced, as religion must produce it in order to fulfil its real functions. The Catholic religion, as is now pretty generally admitted by all except prejudiced Protestants, shows daily how thoroughly able it is to subjugate life's vicissitudes; to engender patience, and submission, and virtue; to console and strengthen the weak and despondent; to curb the pride of conceit and to engraft the lesson of true charity practically upon her adherents. So far as the individual is concerned, Catholicity beyond dispute comes up to the requirements made by life upon true religion.

Outside of the pale of that Church religion has gradually become a matter of culture, of fashion, tinged only here and there with religious sentimentality. And modern culture, as will presently be seen, is incompetent to solve the momentous enigma of life. Modern culture does not neglect physical culture. That portion of human nature receives careful and considerate treatment. Walking, running, rowing, riding, in short gymnastics in general, are encouraged if not enjoined by it. And we are far from finding fault with these bodily exercises, which are perfectly legitimate and even praiseworthy. But our age has no mental gymnastics. The intellectual training shows a deplorable one-sidedness. The non-physical part of human nature, whether it be called mind, intellect, reason, or what not, consists, always and at all times, of will, memory, and understanding, as its three component parts. To cultivate one and neglect two, or to cultivate two and neglect one, means, we take it, onesided culture. And this is precisely the fault of the culture of our age. Modern thought is made up almost exclusively of facts and fancy. Science furnishes kindly the facts, literature cooks these facts, and puts them in fancy dress. The scientist searches heaven and earth with a diligence, and perseverance, and boldness sometimes truly appalling. He brings down the stars with the telescope, breaks them to pieces with the spectroscope, takes these pieces up

and examines them with the microscope, and then all is handed over to the man of fancy, who makes a sort of celestial dish out of the promiscuous material. It reminds one forcibly of Shakespeare's lines,

The searcher's eye in a fine frenzy rolling
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And as imagination bodies forth
The form of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name !

Now facts and fancy engage at best our memory and imagination ; the heart is starved from want of that which can be gotten at only through the will. The most important element of mental training, without which society never can rise from the desire of enjoyment through indulgence to the idea of happiness through self-restraint, is, therefore, left out altogether. The only effective agency which the study of life unfolds as available for that purpose, that is to say, love, has no place therein. Yet love—not love of the earth, however, and all its sordid objects, but love of that Life which is ever Lord of Death—has the power to guide man towards his destiny. Culture, therefore, can never hope to take the place of religion. For no religion can hope to survive which holds not the secret of Divine love and through it the key of real life.

From the variety of the elements of life, and from their characteristic nature, it follows that religion, likewise, has variable as well as constant elements. The groundwork remains the same as long as life remains what it is. The superstructure is, of necessity, subjected to the same changes to which life itself is subject. New times bring about new phases of life, and every phase of life, whether old or new, forms a province of religion. Hence it is, that the progress of thought, the progress of civilization, the progress of life, calls constantly for new applications of the constant to the variable elements of religion. The battle-ground of Christian apologetics will ever be shifting its place with the accumulation of experience, the progress of science, and of human thought in general. Religion has always to deal with living issues, and consequently must take the world as it is, not as it was a hundred years ago. And for this reason a continuous progress in the comprehension, and in the methods of presenting the truths of religion, will ever form a concomitant of the unchangeable doctrines of Christianity. The history of Christianity is, in reality, only the history of progress, and it seems strange, therefore, that there should be persons who feel alarmed on hearing that Christianity is being recast in our days. Yet what else is it that Pope Leo XIII. urges with such earnestness, and wisdom, and eloquence upon the

expounders of Christianity? He bids them simply prepare for the conquest of life in the human race, the third and last mission of religion, and the one which, as yet, is but partially carried out. He does so, not, however, as if he held that Christianity and life were out of joint. The supreme Pontiff who stands at the head of the Catholic Church is one who, to use the words of Mr. Thomas Davidson, is not only a man of great energy and administrative ability, but who combines to a wonderful degree the qualities necessary for the guidance of the Church in the present times. Pope Leo XIII. is said to be "enthusiastic, without being blind; scholarly, without being clogged with learning; devoted to the Church and her hereditary rights, without desiring that they should supersede all those of the state; a sincere admirer of the scientific, moral, and political progress of modern times, without admitting that it can ever enable us to dispense with revelation and religion; an enlightened believer in the powers of reason, without enthroning philosophy as the arbiter of truth; and, above all, a sincere Christian, without being a fanatic, an ascetic, or a saint." This well-paid tribute, coming from one who does not identify Catholicity with religion, contains the avowal that no one sees clearer the situation than the head of the Church of Rome. It is unquestionable that to life should be imparted again that fragrance and flavor which modern culture has taken away from it, and which genuine religion alone is able to restore to it. But Mr. Davidson, in the essay referred to before, commenting upon the revival of Thomism, imagines that its purpose and object is to restore that condition of thought which made the Church of the thirteenth century a possibility, in order to restore thereby the Church to the position of authority which she enjoyed at that period. He is, accordingly, unable to see that Thomism ever will accomplish what he surmises Thomism is expected to accomplish, and he predicts, therefore, that the whole movement will prove a failure. Here Mr. Davidson is right. Were the object of the Encyclical "*Æterni Patris*" to bring back through the study of Thomism the condition of thoughts and things which existed in the thirteenth century, it would necessarily fail of its object. For the world has no intention to retrace its steps. It is neither desirable that this should be done, nor can it be done. Mr. Davidson is, therefore, quite right in asserting that such a hope of the Church of Rome will never be realized. But he is quite wrong in assuming that the Church entertains such a hope. He looks upon the revival of Thomism as destined to do what no Catholic, and least of all Pope Leo XIII., expects from it.

Careful philosophical training is an indispensable requisite for practically applying the changeless doctrines of religion to the ever-changing constellations of life, for determining their multitudinous

bearings, for proving cogently the errors of science, for elevating science by demonstrating that scientific progress does not endanger religion, but on the contrary helps to advance the true objects of life, and its entire dependence upon the Master of all life. In the two great struggles of the past between religion and life, the road to the objective point was comparatively a straight and level road. In the present struggle, it leads over hill and dale, through mountain passes, and over precipices, now running alongside of the bank of a murmuring brook, among romantic scenery, and again in tortuous windings creeping up a steep glacier. At present, art, letters, science, history, ethics, music, painting, sociology, in short every branch of knowledge, and every department thereof, have to be made subservient to the great end. For all lead to the goal, because all, from one point or another, touch life, form life, are life. Those who enter the arena should, therefore, be properly equipped. Unless a very solid mental training furnishes a firm, solid foundation, even the heaviest mental calibre will be compelled to retire, for a time at least, from the stage of activity. Not even the great Napoleon could lead an army equipped with flint-lock muskets of the time of Gustav Adolf to victory against one fitted out with the most improved repeating rifle. The same holds good in intellectual warfare. The Church, therefore, appropriates the large mass of light thrown upon life through the progress of civilization, in order to be able to show that the light *she* offers has a power of incandescence which the light of mundane knowledge can never hope to equal. Thomism, after all, is the A B C of true philosophy, without which no problem of philosophical nature can be understood in all its bearings, and much less can be dealt with. It is, therefore, the means of reducing the existing intellectual chaos to order, and the first step which augurs the victory of the Church in carrying out the third and last stage of its mission to mankind. The reorganization of society, the welfare and prosperity of all nations, the security of our culture and civilization, nay, the very continuance of the secular order, depends upon this last victory of true religion over life, this last expression of human greatness and human nothingness. The characteristic mark of the Catholic Church, of true Christianity, of true religion, is life. She has outlived the past, she will outlive the present struggle also. This struggle appears to our generation so great and significant, simply because we reckon with time on the niggardly basis of human life, forgetful that "time" applied to Christianity means, always and forever, more strength, more vitality, more vigor, in fine, more life, since what we call "life" is but existence with beginning and end, whereas religion gives life without end.