SOME SIGNIFICANT CONCEPTS AND IMPLICATIONS
OF THE GOD IDEA

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OF THE GOD IDEA

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North
Texas State Teachers College in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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Dallas, Texas

August, 1946
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

The problem of this thesis is to show that a humanistic, pragmatic, and instrumental concept of God would help man in his life, at the present stage of development in the western world, more than an authoritarian or absolute concept. The world of the middle ages was dominated by an uncritical faith and reliance on authority. The scientific revolution has brought about such changes in environment that it becomes increasingly difficult for man's thinking to keep pace with the radical alterations in his conditions of living. This is true in all phases of man's life and especially true in his economic, social and religious relations. The old forms of belief do not hold, and it is difficult for most people to give up what they are used to and accept the new.

The Purpose of this Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to show that the confusion and instability in the moral and religious life is caused by a great need of change of attitude and beliefs towards the concept of God and religion. As in every other phase of life so in the phase of religion, humanism, pragmatism, and instrumentalism have their force. Modern philosophy makes religion
more utilitarian and brings it out of an abstract world into a real and living world. The strength of humanism is growing and the humanist says that old forms of piety, prayer, and belief must give way. Man will learn to face the crisis of life by his reason and knowledge and not by beliefs in the supernatural. So the purpose of this thesis is to create an inquiring and open-minded attitude and to realize how little is reliable that passes for truth. Prejudices which are met should be weighed in the light of the day, and thought and analysis should be substituted for emotion, thereby raising the plane of thinking. It must be realized that the progress of the world is made by those who think, and each generation will have its vital problems, different from the preceding generations. Above all, it is necessary to feel that the freeing of intelligence is yet a hope.

The Procedure

A study has been made of the history of the God idea, centering mostly around the Mediterranean countries, the Christian religion, and some of the philosophers of the time; such as, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, Pyrrho, Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Voltaire, Kant, Royce, Schiller, James, and Dewey. Throughout the thesis is an explanation of absolutism, or essentialism, and humanism, pragmatism, and instrumentalism. The conclusion suggests that man must depend upon his own intelligence for the solution of his problems.
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The Data

The reading matter for this thesis, for the most part, was found at North Texas State Teachers College in Denton, Texas, and the Dallas Public Library, Dallas, Texas. Ideas from modern critics and writers were obtained from current periodicals.
CHAPTER II

THE EARLY CONCEPT OF GOD

As all roads lead to Rome, all philosophy leads to God. There has been no lack of theories how the gods began. Popular folklore abounds with tales of their creation or miraculous appearance. "The gods are the real aristocrats of history. Even the lost and forgotten ones had their day of glory, and the great gods have lived in honor through thousands of years."  

Religion at first was the worship of many gods and spirits. Man was face to face with the unknown, and unusual and startling happenings were beyond his power of understanding. The gods were indispensable because man knew so little and feared so much. The flame of intelligence burned so feebly.

Man, because of his feeling of helplessness, welcomed the gods and gave them supreme power and wisdom and goodness; and he called upon them in his needs. One thinker suggested that the earliest gods were beneficent powers of nature which won a place of devotion through their helpfulness. The gods of fertility, war, rain, and healing were very important in the religions of ancient times. Religion was a propitiation and conciliation of superior powers which were believed to direct

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2Will Durant, Story of Philosophy, p. 410.
and control the course of nature and human life. The primitive mind believed the spirit or ghost left the body in death or sleep. Echoes and reflections were sounds and signs of man’s ghost. Powerful people kept their power in their ghostly appearance, and such powerful ghosts had to be propitiated, and funeral rites grew into worship, ceremony, prayer and gifts. Devils were also born of the emotional response of early man to nature. There were real and imagined dangers lurking under the cover of darkness, and the dangerous forces of nature were personified as evil beings. Out of this process came devils. Religion grew out of fears — Pagan and Buddhist, Mohammedan, Christian, savage and civilized; and the ethical element was not essential to religion thinks Grant Allen. "The old saying that religion was born of fears seems to hold true." Grant Allen thinks religion is essentially practical. He gives a report of Duff Macdonald, a Presbyterian missionary in Central Africa, author of Africana. He tells of the Sudanese natives’ reverence for their dead. The spirits of the dead are the gods of the living.

The spirit of an old chief may have a whole mountain for his residence, but he dwells chiefly on the cloudy summit. There he sits to receive the worship of his votaries, and to send down the refreshing showers in answer to their purposes.4

By the present state of evidence, the facts that he has at the present moment, Grant Allen says, "tracing the genesis of the

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3Edward Alexander Westermarck, Early Beliefs and Their Social Influence, p. 23.

belief in a God from its earliest origin in the mind of primitive man up to its fullest development in the advanced theology of today, how inevitable they were — to beget them as of necessity. 5

The gods of uncivilized people are many times very selfish and of a malicious and harmful nature. 6 In many savage beliefs the supernatural beings disregard all questions of morality. Also it is very prevalent in the savage world that many of the gods, when they are pleased with sacrifices, do good. Major Ellis, writing of the tribes of West Africa, states that the religion has no connection with the morals or relationship of the people. The gods are not interested and show no concern in the thieving and murdering and other offenses against people. 7 There are instances in which savage gods punish wrongdoings, and many believe in a supreme being who is a moral lawgiver. Passing from the gods of simpler people to more civilized ones, men find that with the more cultured people the gods are more benevolent. The gods become better in many ways until they become perfect. Men select as their gods supernatural beings that may be more useful to them in their struggles for life, and they magnify their good qualities. The people most successful and of higher

5 ibid., p. 1.
6 Westermarck, op. cit., p. 34.
7 ibid., p. 25.
culture have strong faith in their God's goodness and power. Men attribute to their gods many human qualities and act toward them in a similar way. They think they have human needs and some wear clothes and have hunger. Such ideas lead to the practice of sacrifice, and the people think the gods will not be indifferent to gifts. Human sacrifice is in the past history of every Aryan race. Men offered sacrifice of the lives of their fellow men in the hope of saving their own. "Human sacrifices were offered by the Celts, Teutons, and Slavs; by the ancient Semites and Egyptians; by the Japanese in early days; and in the new world by the Aztecs."8

The early Egyptian religion bases itself entirely on ancestor-worship and Totemism. So it bases itself on the tomb. The commonest object of worship on all the monuments of the Nile is the mummy of an ancestor or kinsman or a greater deified mummy of antiquity blended in a mystical way with the Sun God and other allegorical deities.9 The Egyptian tomb was usually a survival of the cave artificially imitated, and greatest importance was attached to the permanence of the tomb and to the continuance of religious ceremonies. Immense importance was attached to the begetting of a son who should perform the due family rites. The Egyptians also had great national or local or common gods.

8 Ibíd., p. 99.

There is no greater single god in the Egyptian pantheon than Osiris. He was judge of the departed and king of the nether world. Identification with Osiris was looked upon as the reward of all the faithful dead. Osiris in all his representations is a Mummy. It is all but certain that Osiris was originally a local god of This, a village near Abydos, where a huge mound of rubbish still marks the site of the great deity's resting place. There are many forms of Osiris and many local gods who bore the same name and are buried in several places. A large part of the greater Egyptian gods were early kings whose myths were expanded into legends and finally into worship.

Another class of gods was the animal and animal-headed gods which developed out of the totems of the various villages. Such bestial types go back to the remote prehistoric age when totemism was the creed. The totem man has been the lucky-beast of a particular tribe. The Worship of the Dead and the crude polytheism based on it was the religion of the ancient Egyptians. Such was the religious world in which the Sons of Israel brought their God Jahweh and their other deities across the Euphrates, at the moment when the Christian faith was just beginning.

"Ancient magic was the very foundation of religion."10 The faithful had to get by certain rites, prayers, chants, and sacrifices, the favor of some god. Though magic is found

to fuse with religion in many lands, there was a time when magic was depended on alone for getting what was desired, and so magic is older than religion. In central Africa the Lendu tribe, west of Lake Albert, believe that certain people possess the power of making rain. The belief that kings possess supernatural or magical power seems to have been shared by the ancestors of the Aryan races from India to Ireland, and there are traces down to modern times. Legends tell of a widespread practice of dismembering the body of a king or magician and burying the pieces in different parts of a country to make the ground fertile and probably also the fecundity of man and beast. There were numerous taboos, such as, intercourse with strangers, on eating and drinking, showing the face, quitting the house, and leaving food over. Persons were tabooed; such as, chiefs and kings, mourners, women at time of menstruation and childbirth, warriors, and manacapers. Sharp weapons, blood, the head, hair, spittle, food, and many other things were tabooed. There were regular ceremonies at hair-cutting and disposal of cut hair and nails. Words were also tabooed, personal names, relatives, the dead, the king, other sacred persons, and the gods. Sometimes the divine king was killed when his strength failed or his fixed term was over. Some African kings have imagined themselves immortal by virtue of their sorceries. The practice of taking

\[\text{\textsuperscript{11}}\text{ibid., p. 194.}\]
human victims from a family of royal descent was very prevalent. Sometimes the king at a time of national danger, gave his son to die as a sacrifice for the people. There were special ceremonies of every detail of life and trees and fire played a big part. Each season had its special ceremony.

Fire-festivals are very prevalent all over Europe. The peasants have been accustomed to light bonfires on certain days and to dance around or leap over them. Customs of this kind can be traced to the middle ages and periods long before Christianity. Effigies are usually burned in these fires, or a pretense is made of burning a living person. The custom brings out the traces of human sacrifices. The most common time of the year when these bonfires are lighted are spring and summer, but they are also kindled at the end of autumn and during winter. People observe the direction the wind blew the smoke; and if it blow toward the cornfield, it is a sign the corn harvest will be abundant. It is, or used to be customary, in Switzerland to build bonfires on high places on the evening of the first Sunday in Lent. The more bonfires the more fruitful the year is expected to be, and the higher the dancers leap beside, or over, the fire, the higher the flax will grow. The Easter fire festivals are essentially pagan in character and appear to have prevailed all over central and western Germany and in Holland. Neighboring villages vie with one another in making the greatest blaze and always kindle the fire on the same hill, often
named Easter Mountain. The people observe the direction of the smoke and sow flax seed in that direction, confident that it will grow well. To save houses from being struck by lightning, people take brands from the bonfires and take them home. The ashes increase the fertility of the fields and mixed with the drinking water of cattle make the animals thrive and the plague is warded off. Sometimes the cattle are driven through the fire to cure them of sickness or to ward off plague. The custom of kindling great bonfires and the many superstitions connected with them seem to be almost universal throughout Europe. Two different explanations have been given. Wilhelm Manhardt’s theory is that they are sun-charms. The ceremonies intend by magic to insure a plentiful supply of sunshine. Dr. Edward Westermarck maintains that the ceremonial fires are simply purification in intention, to destroy all harmful influences, such as witches, demons, and monsters. James George Frazer thinks the theory of purification more probable.\textsuperscript{12}

Around the dead and resurrected humanly-embodied god, is formed the keynote of the greatest and most sacred religions of Western Asia and Northeastern Africa. "In its origin the concept of a god is nothing more than that of a Dead Man, regarded as a still surviving ghost or spirit, and endowed with increased or supernatural powers and qualities."\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 650.

\textsuperscript{13}Allen, op. cit., p. 19.
So the earliest origin of all religion, the Cult of the Dead, in the sense of worship, is "the last relic of the religious spirit which survives the gradual decay of faith due to modern scepticism." 14

The Jews were the only people who ever invented a pure monotheism. It is their peculiar glory to have evolved God. The sacred books of the Jews assign this belief to the very earliest age of their race. Abraham, the mythical father of the Jews, was a monotheist. Grant Rice says such a belief at that time is untenable and against the psychological law of human nature. Jahweh was but one and the highest of many Israelitish divinities. He was like Zeus among many gods. The Hebrew belief did not largely differ from the general belief of the surrounding people. A considerable number of local gods were worshipped here and there at sanctuaries which consisted of an altar or stone image standing under a sacred tree or sacred grove.

The gods were completely humanized in Homer's time. The gods on Olympus were quarrelsome, deceitful, and unfaithful. As in the valley of the Nile a brilliant company of gods played out a drama of four thousand years and then left the stage forever, so the gods of Greece bowed to the decree of death more than fifteen centuries ago. They presided over a brilliant culture and no deities of the ancient world are so well remembered. It was the collapse of the Greek

14ibid., p. 443.
states that closed most of their careers, and some found a foothold in Italy with the gods of Rome. Greek philosophy reduced the Greek god to shadows at home, and in Rome they were not important to the intellectuals. Cicero advised the officials to treat them as real for the sake of the people. The death blow of the gods in Greece and Rome was struck by the Christian deity. As Christianity spread northward the Teutonic gods died. In the tenth century the Christian God was triumphant over all the gods of ancient Europe.

The shores of the Mediterranean sea were the gathering place of a multitude of deities when early Christian missionaries began to preach the gospel. "The Mediterranean world is a graveyard of gods." Jesus remained true to the God of Israel, Jahweh, and had no thought of introducing a new god to the world. It was the teaching of the Christians about Jesus that gave the Christian God qualities that distinguished him from all other gods. The early disciples recognized no God but Jahweh. When Paul carried the gospel to the Gentiles, he did not dream of any rivalry between his God and the Christ. Jahweh was his God. For him Christ was a spiritual being who came from heaven as the Savior, and he did not place him on an equality with God. Jesus was advanced to the rank of deity when the leadership of the church passed from the Jews to men immersed in Hellenistic culture. By the second century Jesus was worshipped as God. Belief

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15Haydon, op. cit., p. 250.
in him was the only necessary test for entrance into the church. Simple and sensitive souls were frightened by the austerity of the Christian God at this period and made other appeal for help to the saints. The Holy Virgin Mary, "Mother of Christ, daughter of God, and the spouse of the Holy Spirit,"\textsuperscript{16} was the most helpful and beloved.

From the Reformation to the nineteenth century the God of the churches had little change. From the age of the Renaissance, which brought new problems because of probing science, theological structures with their eternal truths became unsubstantial before the revealing light of science. Authority which had been the main source of knowledge began to weaken. From this time on there has been a double history of God, the continuing history of the orthodox God and a long series of substitutes as thinkers rationalized in relation to the passing generations in a changing world. Change became the order of the day. Eternal truths and fixed principles appear as a process of ceaseless movement; and the Christian God, as far as science was concerned, took his place among the thousands of deities which have been molded by the desires and needs of men. There were some towards the close of the eighteenth century who found optimism in science and said that God was an immanent creative presence in the world, and all events were working towards a perfect,

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 288.
final end. They had faith in the law of progress. Kant was one who showed the way to God by flight to a supernatural realm, free from the tyranny of science.
CHAPTER III

THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF GOD

Christianity "set out in its development with the worship of a particular Deified Man.\(^1\) A legend, true or false, has gathered around the Galilean reformer. He was reverenced by his group of disciples, and he gradually was looked upon as a divine person. Many stories were told of him and the most important were about his death and the incidents which followed. He was crucified, dead, and buried, and at the end of three days he arose from his tomb and lived once more. He was seen in the flesh from time to time and for short periods by some of his followers. After many such visits he was received into heaven and sits on the right hand of God. Such is the Christian doctrine handed down in documents of doubtful age and authenticity. Also it is asserted that Jesus was the Son of God — or Jahweh, the Jewish deity. Paul of Tarsus was the chief one who spread the cult into the neighboring countries. Paul had never seen Jesus but had beheld him in a vision. Gradually the cult mingled with Judaism and became the early creed of the new Christian church. Many legends grew up about Jesus. It was asserted he was born of a virgin. Although regarded at times as the son of the

\(^1\)Allen, op. cit., p. 3.
carpenter Joseph and Mary, his betrothed wife, he was also regarded as the son of the Hebrew god, Jahweh. Many stories are told of his childhood adventures and his supernatural powers and his coming being a divine mission. It was in Egypt that the idea of the Trinity took shape. A sort of mystical triune deity was formed out of the Hebrew Jahweh, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit or wisdom of Jahweh. "The belief that began with the frank acceptance of Judaism plus a personal worship of the Deified Man, Jesus, crystallized at last into the Catholic Faith in one God, of three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

In Christianity's spread to other countries, especially Gaul, Rome, and Egypt, symbolism entered in and helped mysticism. From early times it was customary to reverence those who died for the faith and so arose the practice of the invocation of the saints and the founders, martyrs, and apostles came to form rank almost as an order of deities. The mother of Jesus assumed a prominent place.

Christianity "borrows from pre-existing religions, to a great extent, the ideas of priesthood, sacrifice, the temple, and the altar." There are many interesting stages between the corpse or mummy and the mere idol. Even more than the evolution of the temple and the idol, the evolution of the priesthood has given dignity, importance, and power

\[2\text{Ibid., p. 8.}\]

\[3\text{Ibid., p. 18.}\]
to the gods. The world over, there are many interesting historical instances of how priesthood originated. The temple attendant, performing the sacred rites for the ghosts or gods, have grown into priests who knew the habits of the unseen denizens of the shrine. Bit by bit customs and rituals have developed and the priests alone knew how to approach the god, and as intermediaries they are themselves half sacred. By magnifying their god they magnify at the same time their own office. In Britain, from the early stages of Christianity, the reverence paid to the bodies of saints was most marked, and the story of their wanderings form an important part of our early annals. During the middle ages the sacred Body of Britain was undoubtedly that of Thomas A' Becket of Canterbury. All England went on a pilgrimage to his shrine and even the mighty Henry II had to prostrate himself before his old enemy's body and submit to a public scourging. The altar of a church needs a body or part of a body to justify and consecrate it. The church is thus a tomb; it contains a stone monument covering a dead body or part of one and in it is made and exhibited the Body of Christ, in the form of the consecrated and transmuted wafer. So the earliest origin of all religion, the Cult of the Dead, is also the last relic of the religious spirit which survives.

Most of the Christian ministers and teachers are authoritarian in belief. Edwin Ruthven Walker, associate professor of philosophy at the University of Colorado, says that the
future is in the hands of God. Looking to the past, he says, a person will discern a providence that sustains the righteous. The more sensitive person has become aware of the living God through the cultivation of an open responsiveness to the esthetic. A person's faith becomes a great adventure in attitude and behavior on the basis of the knowledge that God works into the future. Such a faith, continues Edwin Walker, carries responsibilities because man must set the conditions that permit the work of God. If man stands in the way of God, therein lies the essence of sin. "Mature responsibility and confident trust are merged in commitment to the God who holds the future in his hands."

In the article "Does God Make Any Difference" W. Norman Pittinger says he is convinced that the clergy and laity need to be convinced of the deity of God. God is the one utterly real being upon whom all else depends, without whom nothing else would exist, who is himself from all eternity and to all eternity, the everlasting substantive. That truth is a wonderful help to man in his need. The final good is God's heavenly kingdom where human desires and hopes may be fulfilled and man may eternally live in Him. Yet, continues

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5 Ibid., p. 1285.

W. Norman Pittenger, while man is here in this vale of soul-making, he is to do God’s will and realize his true self. Man’s every action, every thought, every personal and social response will play its part in this great purpose, and man will be judged by the part he plays, large or small, according to his capacity. This is reality and men must be adjusted to it. To be integrated to such reality is salvation, and to be not so adjusted is to be on the road to hell.

The Christian interpretation of history centers in the conviction that God is at work in all events. In "War as the Judgment of God", another Christian Century article, H. Richard Niebuhr, professor of Christian ethics at Yale University, says that in this last war God was judging the nations, churches, and all mankind, and men were reaping what they had sown. War as a judgment of God is a purgatory, not a hell. God’s concern is always primarily punishment of sinners who are to be chastened and changed in character. The greater burden falls on the weak and the relatively innocent, so that the suffering of innocence is used for the remaking of the guilty. A response to God’s action in war is a hopeful and trusting one. "It trusts that if we do our duty, no evil can befall us in life or in death." A hopeful response looks upon the time of judgment as the time of redemption. "Even if death should come to them, hope wraps their

8Ibid., p. 632.
broken bodies in fine linen, conserving what it can, preparing on Good Friday for an Easter miracle of divine action." To live and act with faith in resurrection, says N. Richard Niebuhr, is to see God at work in war.

Emma L. Antz in her article on Idealism and Pragmatism also expresses an idealistic view of God. She does not like William James's statement that the idea of the Absolute is a "spiritual soporific." She thinks if it is so and men quit trying to discover the Absolute, they can never reach the Infinite. The goal of doing things is achieving the feeling that God is interested and will eternally be interested. She looks upon God as a friend who cares. The recognition of personality as the supreme value is the great thing that idealism has, she thinks, that pragmatism has not. Pragmatism emphasizes the kingdom of heaven on earth; idealism, the kingdom of heaven after bodily death. Pragmatism wants to meliorate human conditions.

Idealism answers, "Yes, but don't stop there. Go on growing towards absolute perfection." Dewey insists that education is not merely accepting facts but finding new ones. Idealism holds all this is true but goes farther and gives a universal goal as well as a human. This writer, Emma Antz, quarrels with James's idea that the

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9Ibid., p. 633.


11Ibid., p. 610.
purpose of philosophy is to show what values are merely sentimental because they cannot be realized. She says acquaintance with God is hard to prove or explain, but an interest in God, she thinks, is not just a left-over from our early fears and superstitions towards unexplained phenomena. She feels that there is personality behind man's feeling of rapport over something that is beautiful or good and believes that when a person grows spiritually he has "in the Absolute an eternal promise of personal adventure."12

If our speculative idea of God, dressed up with a long list of abstract attributes, comes to man from mediaeval theology, his popular conception comes to him from the mediaeval painter. The anthropomorphic images handed down from the Middle Ages, have done a great deal to stereotype Christianity in people's minds. It must be recognized, however, that the pictures of the mediaeval painters of the Trinity, of the Madonna and the Christ child, and of the mediating saints have had a historic value in their attempt to bridge the gulf of abstraction and to make a distant God seem something accessible. They served a function in the childhood of a new culture.13

Man in his maturity must not let this stage be perpetuated. Early Christianity struggled bravely to translate Christianity into the Greek and Roman worlds, and the church became the controlling factor in the mediaeval times. If men fail to translate Christianity into the concepts and institutions which are characteristic of today, Christianity will fail to guide the life today. It must interpret today's needs or it cannot speak with conviction.

12Ibid., p. 609.
13John Klof Boodin, Religion of Tomorrow, p. 72.
Today instead of speaking in terms of being or substance, men speak in terms of energy which is present everywhere by its activities. God is that creative energy, that spiritual power that works for the good, for order, for unity, and for harmony. God is living, intelligent, moral energy. God is a constructive mind working for ideals in the universe, and proof of his existence must be based upon human experience. That God should be pictured as a shepherd by nomad people, as a father by patriarchal people, and as a king by a theocratic monarchy was normal and made religion a fact at the time. Today men need a Christianity that shall express the meaning for the striving for democracy. Men must have a broader conception of human relations. It must be strong enough to withstand human selfishness, especially selfishness of groups. The large mass of humanity must be led to greater freedom and opportunity. In the last three decades Christianity has turned its direction towards the solution of the social problems and has been trying to realize in human relations the Christian values of love, justice, peace, and security.
CHAPTER IV

SOME OF THE OUTSTANDING PHILOSOPHERS OF
THE AGES AND THEIR CONCEPTS OF GOD

In enumerating the philosophers from the time of
Democritus, man finds that each powerfully impressed him-
self on his own and subsequent times, but man cannot rest
in their opinions. Philosophy has to have some socially
based concepts; but the world moves on so fast that philos-
ophy has to change, so there were systems through the long
centuries and some basic changes in many concepts. Adjust-
ments had to be made between religion, science, and morals;
and adjustments become acute as time goes on. The problem
of philosophy is to see reality and see it whole. Philos-
ophy has to go back of facts and truth makes facts. And
what is the nature of truth? The problems of philosophy
are so big because everything has to be reconciled. There
were so many things science could not answer. Science says
she is not concerned with the first cause or the final.
The world was made so the world has to have a first cause.
Philosophy goes back to find a first cause, and so says
"God" and creates a concept. Science has given man a big
conception of the universe, and man has to revise and revamp,
and it takes a long time to work over ideas that were gener-
ated under certain conditions. "We shall be surprised to
find, if we follow the history of philosophy down to the present, how great has been the progress in really solving many of the difficult problems, and how idle is the complaint that they cannot be solved. "1 It is contrary to the spirit of philosophy to affirm "that the kind of knowledge which philosophy seeks is unattainable."2 The spirit of philosophy is persistent and unwearied in its inquiry.

For nearly one thousand years mediaeval philosophy was dominated by Scholasticism. The Scholastic view gave a religious coloring to all knowledge and human living, and its aim was the exposition of Christian dogma.3 Nothing significantly new came out of the entire period. Scientific pursuits were thought a waste of time, because that time should be spent in the glorification of the church. The entire scheme of the Scholastic "depended upon the reality of an existing God to substantiate the doctrine."4 St. Thomas argued that reason could not grasp the meaning of God, and that faith is necessary in grasping the great truth. Reason is a criterion if it does not go into the realm of grace which is the province of faith. Plato was the dominant philosopher in the first part of the mediaeval period, and

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1 George Thomas White Patrick, Introduction to Philosophy, p. 50.
2 Ibid., p. 50.
Aristotle became extensively known and studied later. Finally scientific interest swept aside the Scholastic philosophy which restricted itself to theological problems. The Scholastic philosophers gave man a magnificent definition of God, who is omniscient and omnipotent, and men are the puppets and can do nothing to change the course of destiny which the will of God has from the beginning decreed.\textsuperscript{5}

The brilliant and original Plato, born about 427 B.C., was a great admirer of Socrates, and represents the culminating point in Greek thought. Plato's two deep-seated convictions were that whatever the real may be, it must be that which is eternal, unchanging, and perfect and that reality could not be found in the physical world.\textsuperscript{6} Reality is a realm of eternal essences and Plato's name for them is Ideas. They were beauty, equality, justice, man, table, or any common noun. The whole world of ideas is completely beyond the world of things and is eternal and the world of sense experience gets its meaning by a sort of imitation of ideas. The wise man will strive for reality by discovering genuine knowledge which is the Ideas rather than the things participated by them. The art of good living was a matter of bringing about a satisfactory dominance of reason over the baser faculties. Plato in the Republic says:

\textsuperscript{5}Durant, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 558.

\textsuperscript{6}Burgess, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 93.
He whose mind is fixed upon true being has no time to look down upon the little affairs of men, or to be filled with jealousy and enmity in the struggle against them; his eye is ever directed towards fixed and immutable principles, which he sees neither injuring nor injured by one another, but all in order moving according to reason; these he imitates, and to these he would, as far as he can, conform himself.  

Abstract beauty, to Plato, was a perfectly definite individual being. "There is an element of mysticism in Plato's idealism; one lives always ahead of the actual, molding the actual in conformity with the ideal." Plato believed that unless a nation believed in God, it could not be strong. It must be a living God that would stir and frighten the self-seeking individualist into controlling his passion and his greed. A mere cosmic force or first cause was not enough. If immortality be added and hope of another life, it gave courage to bear the idea of death. So it would do immeasurable good to believe in such a God and immortality. Plato was ashamed of the old Greek gods, but he saw that religion was essential to a unified and happy state. He continued to compose myths and loved them, but he went without a religion.

Plato was a great exponent of absolutism. In his philosophy of the theory of ideas he advocates that ideas are not

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7 Durant, op. cit., p. 304.
8 Ibid., p. 57.
9 Clifford Barrett, Contemporary Idealism, p. 59.
10 Durant, op. cit., p. 35.
11 John Crowe Ransom, God with Thunder, p. 323.
products of any mind but that the mind discovers them. Truth, beauty, and goodness are just received from on high. Plato thought that the mind comes into the world with certain innate truths, and are discovered by the conscious as it gradually awakens.

Aristotle, Plato's pupil, considered Plato's solution of the metaphysical problems by his theory of ideas a hindrance rather than an aid to explanation. He felt that Plato had made a mistake in not recognizing "the substantiality of particular things in favor of a realm of transcendent essences only."\(^{12}\) Aristotle was a great systemitizer and has been called the father of deductive logic. In his solution of the problem of reality he hoped to avoid anything transcendental. He sought intuitive first principles and rejected Plato's theory that all things must be interpreted as replicas of the eternal or perfect ideas. He held that reason discovers that particulars contain essential characters or Forms that are just as real as the particulars themselves. His system of development came from the relationship and the function of Form and matter. All nature was conceived as a large hierarchy. At one extreme was shapeless matter, or matter with little form, and at the other extreme Form without matter. The perfect example is the pure Form of God. "God is the un­moved mover of the universe."\(^{13}\) The scheme of development

\(^{12}\)Burgess, op. cit., p. 113.
\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 122.
has its original impulse in the pure Form of God. Such metaphysics is purposive or teleological. Aristotle's God was nothing but a Principle.\textsuperscript{14} Aristotle said God was "a being incorporeal, indivisible, spaceless, sexless, passionless, changeless, perfect, and eternal."\textsuperscript{15} He believes God is the first cause and the drive and purpose of things and the inherent goal, and is pure energy and magnetic power.

With the death of Aristotle in 322 B.C., the height of Greek philosophic achievement came to its close. Compared to the speculations in the preceding period, the period that followed had very little that was original. Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum continued under the directions of the successors, but they were mainly concerned with commenting on the work of the masters. With the downfall of Greek nationalism and the rise of Roman power came some significant results. Since city-states could no longer exist, political careers were no longer possible vocations. The result was that individuals had to look to themselves for the values of life and the primary object became self-sufficiency. Philosophy took on a practical aspect and its objective was to offer a satisfactory answer of what the wise man should do to achieve happiness or a satisfactory life. Many new centers of learning began to rise in several parts of the Roman world. The intellectuals who attended them derived a measure of satisfaction

\textsuperscript{14}Ransom, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 324.

\textsuperscript{15}Durant, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 81.
from the philosophy, but there was a vast majority who were frustrated by their losses at the hands of the Romans. They wanted some means to satisfy their craving for security and some contentment, and many turned to religious cults which were never completely dead during the period. These cults grew in popularity and offered the people by way of promises of goods to be received in spite of present hardships. This religious feeling asserted itself more and more and, with the coming of the Christian era, became the main force in the Hellenic-Roman world.

Among the new schools competing with the Academy and the Lyceum were the Stoic and the Epicurean. "The Stoic referred to the universe as God and made no distinction between God and nature. In a way it may be said to have been an outgrowth of the polytheistic religion of the Greeks. It spoke of immortality and taught that all men had souls derived from the soul of the world, or God.

The Epicurean was hostile to all religious beliefs and concepts. That happiness or pleasure is the highest good, while pain and unhappiness are the greatest evil is the fundamental concept of Epicureanism. The surest way to find happiness is in tranquility or quietude in a life of few demands and the disturbing influences of sensual pleasures must be restricted. The joys of a calm mind is the greatest of pleasures. The search for happiness is the cause and ideal

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16 Burgess, op. cit., p. 145.
of activity. The philosophy of Epicurus accepted the metaphysical theory of Democritus. He held that the universe is made up of atoms and empty space.\textsuperscript{17} All things are composed of atoms, whether they are body, soul, or mind. Atoms are original, eternal, and indestructible. The atoms originally because of their weight were in a state of down motion, and owing to circumstances unknown, maybe chance, the downward fall of some underwent changes from their courses. A god's interference was vigorously denied and it was believed a purely mechanical arrangement with the law of chance operating. Each atom and group of atoms is completely independent of every other. A human being was a group of atoms. There was never a creation, and there will never be a destruction of the real. The Epicurean metaphysics is fundamentally negative, and, in a large measure, was aimed against the religious beliefs of the day. By accepting such metaphysics, or such description of the universe, did away with deep fears and groundless apprehensions. Fears which are caused by beliefs in immortality are groundless and the wise man will not have them, says the Epicurean. Everything is made of atoms so the same fate awaits soul atoms as body atoms -- dissolution but not destruction. All the evidence say that the soul lives, suffers and dies with the body. When death arrives, life cannot be aware of it, so then why worry about that which can never be a part of experience?

\textsuperscript{17}Durant, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 9.
Baruch Spinoza was born of Jewish-Portuguese parents in Amsterdam in the year 1632. Spinoza's world had one element of religious significance, the perfection of the divine substance. Josiah Royce thought this element was enough to give repose, just to be filled with faith and love, but such piety does not suffice for the more modern. A modern cannot worship a divine order that is a mere creature of someone's imagination or assumption. Spinoza was certain of this most fundamental axiom: God is.\textsuperscript{18} Spinoza thought God was the still small voice that only the man of wisdom heard.\textsuperscript{19} He was of the early seventeenth century; and philosophy of the eighteenth century, after close scrutiny, had not been able to find the still small voice in the world of experience and reason.

John Locke was a British empiricist in the seventeenth century. He is rather like Darwin in his patient devotion to the details of investigation. He decided that innate ideas cannot do anything for knowledge. He had a horror of the mystical and thought it was useless to assume the occult and mysterious.\textsuperscript{20} Locke's work was just the beginning of the psychology of experience. He believed the mind is blank at birth and ideas come through sensation and reflection and the

\textsuperscript{18}Burgess, op. cit., p. 261.

\textsuperscript{19}Josiah Royce, "The Spirit of Modern Philosophy," p. 78.

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 80.
mind learns from experience. Locke was a firm believer in the basic principles of Christianity and was an ardent advocate of religious tolerance. He disapproved rigid dogmatic belief and believed no one church should try to inflict its particular dogmas on others. He believed that reason should be called in to criticize and evaluate matters of religious opinion and nothing should be believed upon faith that was contrary to reason.

George Berkeley belonged to eighteenth century England. He was a follower of Plato and an idealist. Men like him know comparatively little of the physical world, but they see God face to face, and they have plenty of ingenuity. Berkeley said there was no such thing as material substance, but that the world is a world of ideas, thoughts, feelings, sights, colors, and tastes. He said, "The source of my ideas are two: my fellow beings, who speak to me with the natural voice, and God, who talks to me in the language of sense." He felt it true that there was an omnipresent, eternal mind, knowing and comprehending all things and giving them to man according to His rules which are the laws of nature.

David Hume, one of the eighteenth century British empiricists, was the most extreme of the skeptics. He said that reason, "is a mere recorder of experience," and that

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22 Royce, op. cit., p. 91.

23 Ibid., p. 94.
ideas stand for matters of fact, given as by our senses. Hume was merciless about the inner life, thinking it an illusion, so he disposed of the soul. In his Natural History of Religion he pointed out that traditional religions have been scarcely of the nature to command the respect of an intelligent man, saying

Examine the religious principles, which have, in fact, prevailed in the world. You will scarcely be persuaded that they are anything but sick men's dreams; or perhaps will regard them more as the playsome whimsies of monkeys in human shape, than the serious, positive dogmatical asseverations of a being, who dignifies himself with the name of rational.

One of the outstanding minds of all time was the Konigsberg philosopher, Immanuel Kant. He was born of Scotch and German extraction in Prussia in 1724. Kant had a very transcendent idea of God. The Supreme Being can never be realized in any experience and reason is incapable of knowing Him. He is a mere illusion, so thought Kant. Kant, then was an idealist, and in the wilderness of the skepticism of his day built a fair spiritual world. He felt that the objects of faith, an immortal soul, and a God could never be proved by reason. "Like a juggler out of an empty hat, Kant draws out of an empty hat, Kant draws out of the concept of duty a God,

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25 Burgess, op. cit., p. 357.
26 Theodore De Laguna, Dogmatism and Evolution, p. 83.
27 Royce, op. cit., p. 134.
immortality, and freedom, — to the great surprise of his readers. 28 God, the design of the universe, the soul, and immortality are not objects of knowledge, holds Kant, yet they have a very definite meaning for man's practice. He acts as if they were, and they influence his moral life.

On an imaginary visit of the great scientific experimenter, Albert A. Michelson, and the keen philosophic thinker Immanuel Kant, they have a good time philosophizing. 29 Kant brings up the idea that maybe the mind is involved in all physical phenomena and, accordingly, the chemical reaction is determined, instead of by two, by three factors, matter, energy, and mind. Matter at one time in chemistry was considered more important than energy. Energy was finally recognized as an important factor, so may mind be considered just as important a factor and must be considered in the humblest reaction. Metaphysics is a disciplined form of philosophic thought and is concerned with an examination of the foundations of the other sciences, with the truth of reality, and the data of science. Metaphysics cannot be based on experiment nor can it be disproved by any set of experiments, but it is not just rank speculation. Kant developed his transcendental metaphysics because he was interested in questions of the possibility of knowing reality and the significance of a moral law, immortality, and God. In mathematics men can know

28 Durant, op. cit., p. 315.
29 Boyajian, op. cit., p. 440.
about spaces that do not exist. Einstein says that space is four dimensional with imaginary time as one of the dimensions. Men admit there is knowledge without experience. Metaphysics is interested in such knowledge that is not dependent on experience, because it brings in the question of freedom and moral responsibility and ideas of reality, immortality, and God. Knowledge can be divided into the subjective and the objective. Man can dogmatize on the subjective, but objective judgments must be based on observation of fact. Abstractions like space and time and the mathematical theories of the abstract spaces are all subjective. Space is not the substance but the form of a precept. Absolute judgments are like time, without beginning or end, space with no boundaries -- men cannot experience such ideas. Scientific reality is a projection of the mind. Our reasoning faculties transcend our perceptive faculties. Mind is not just a tablet on which experience writes. Knowledge is as much a product of the mind as matter. "To say that there is nothing in the flower that was not first in the soil betrays abysmal ignorance of what the nature of the plant does to the material absorbed from the soil in which it grows." 30 A requirement of the mind is God—

An "ideal" of the mind in my transcendental philosophy. A rational view of the universe without God in it is impossible. That, however, merely proves that the God so conceived of is a necessary condition of thinking and not necessarily the photographic image of something far away. As a reality in itself, God transcends scientific

30 Ibid., p. 447.
knowledge. Theologians sometime speak of the Supreme Being as the First Cause, but that is very poor language; because as time has no beginning, there can be no first anything, and therefore no first cause either."

In the realm of the spaceless and timeless must men look for God -- "the realm of the noumena -- and that we cannot know." Kant said that two things filled him with awe: the starry heavens above and the moral law within.

In the cosmic spectacle, I am aware of one of the grandest products of the cognitive (scientific) faculties of the mind; in the moral law, the "categorical imperative" of the conscience -- to act as if the maxim of our action were to become by our will a universal law of nature -- I am aware of being face to face with that which transcends space and time -- the ultimate, the self-sufficient, the Supreme Being. There is our clue for immortality. Immortality does not mean to live on and on in time; it means that, as noumena we realize a nontemporal existence; it means passing from a scientific framework into a noumenal framework."

Since our knowledge is so incomplete, so external about most things, it seems a hopeless undertaking to study the changes in any reality and try to realize that these are psychological aspects of an intelligent purposeful agent as well as a physiochemical aspect. "Maybe some day we shall have the psychology of a rusting nail ..... and the chemistry of faith, hope, and charity." One of the men to make the bitterest attacks against the causes of ignorance and superstition was Voltaire, a Frenchman of the eighteenth century. He rejected all systems, and said

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31 Ibid., p. 446.  
32 Ibid., p. 446.  
33 Ibid., p. 446.  
34 Ibid., p. 449.
it was extravagant to define God, angels, and the mind. He considered doubt a very disagreeable state, but that certainty is a ridiculous one. He thought the official church was responsible for most of the evils of the day, and that the God of Christianity was a false god. In his opinion God is less than an omnipotent being or the world would not be the miserable place that it is. Many thought Voltaire an atheist, but he was not irreligious, if deism is accepted as a religion. He believed in a God, but not the one accepted by Christianity which to him amounted to superstition. He thought religion should be basically moral training and energies should be directed towards improving man's state by changing decadent and perverted social institutions. No amount of prayer can ever achieve this end.

Josiah Royce, the American idealist in the latter part of the nineteenth century, was a great teacher in his own generation, but even he felt "towards the end a growing isolation, as of one whose voice is still heard but is no longer listened to." In one of his lectures he says,

Despise not doubting; it is often the best service thinking men can render to their age. Condemn it not; it is often the truest piety.

He said that divine truth was essentially coy and took much

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35 Durant, op. cit., p. 255  
36 Burgess, op. cit., p. 383  
37 Burgess, op. cit., p. 390.  
38 Clifford Barrett, Contemporary Idealism in America, p. 300.  
39 Royce, op. cit., p. 72.
woeing and that doubt was the essence or very soul of philosophical earnestness. "Devote yourself to losing your lives in the divine life" means to take hold of every act of life however humble and simple. "Thou has never seen, or heard, or touched, or handled, or loved anything but God." Royce believed that truth was eternally finished in God, and the complete realization of man's ideal, as of all worthy ideals, is in God.

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41 Ibid., p. 442.
CHAPTER V

THE ABSOLUTE IDEA AND THE SPIRIT OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY, WHICH IS HUMANISM, PRAGMATISM AND INSTRUMENTALISM

One of the most hopeful things of modern philosophy is that people are in on the making of reality. That is a most challenging thing. Men have built their systems: government, morals, and religions. They are all human constructs, and they are good because they work and not that they are divine. Men have no assurance that any structure in any area of development will always remain as it is now; but if men are sincere and intelligent and have constructive ideas, they can rebuild when necessary. As long as human spirits are vital, there are going to be instances of individuals breaking traditions and not wanting to be subject to controls that have been set up by mores, which are a form of human relationships worked out throughout the ages. Many philosophical interpretations that came out of the past were good at the time, and fine, but values undergo change, and it sometimes takes a long time to get rid of some old interpretations.

William James, F. C. S. Schiller, and John Dewey are the best known names in the development of pragmatic philosophy. Strictly speaking the movement is a twentieth-century
development but its roots go far back in the history of thought. William James accepted Charles Pierce as the modern founder of pragmatism. John Dewey with his instrumentalism carried on the idea in America, and in England the pragmatic philosopher was F. G. S. Schiller. The pragmatist believes that man perceives by situations, so rejects the familiar association psychology of Locke, Hume, and Mills. He does not believe that elements of experience come in isolated bits and then are related. Also the pragmatist does not believe that the mind is passive during perception, as was believed by the associationists. He does not go as far as the idealist and say that things are dependent upon mind, but he says the mind is an active agent and what man sees is determined by his mental activity.

Knowledge, like living, involves growth and change. It is essentially dynamic rather than static and must be made always to fit the needs of the people as these needs arise under the existing conditions prevailing at the time.¹ So the consequences make the truth or falsity of a belief. Truth is relative to situations.² It is something that is used so it is an instrument and a human invention and aids in the practice of living. If a belief no longer works because of altered circumstances, it is no longer true. The truth achieves a degree of certainty with the extent of its use and the approval of the many who act on it. It is merely a

¹Burgess, op. cit., p. 501.
²John Dewey, Quest for Certainty, p. 32.
statement of probability which increases in certainty as it guides man to successful action. Some truths achieve a high degree of permanence of probability and make up the body of man's most reliable knowledge. It is just assumed to be fixed but in the course of time if it fails to work, belief in it will change.

Robert Frost sets forth the qualities that go into making a strong living of life on this earth, so he is a humanist. In his "West-Running Brook" he expresses "the humanist's declaration that in man there is a duality of consciousness, a struggle between his impulse to unify himself and his impulse to drift with the stream of life."

The attitude is one of respect towards the inscrutable in the cosmos, and Robert Frost stops with respect.

Thomas Mann, one of the world's foremost representatives of universal humanism, says that perhaps humanism can be simply conceived of as the opposite of fanaticism. He said humanism is

a human mood having as its object justice, freedom, knowledge, tolerance, mildness, and serenity; also doubt — not for its own sake but as a seeking after truth, a loving care for it, standing higher than any arrogance of truth-owners.

He felt that such an attitude brought man much sorrow but also the highest joy.

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4Thomas Mann, "Humanism and Europe," Living Age, 351, (September, 1936), p. 68.
Down through the ages was that purport to explain, to find out. Plato gave the greatest contribution up to his time. Man's analyzing factors had gone on so far when Plato came forward saying that an idea was a thing within itself. Plato's influence has a tremendous effect today. He put in a classification of ideas and how to come into control of ideas. To Plato ideas are the basic things in all reality and everything else is on a lower plane and not real. How to get ideas has been the quest of philosophy since that time. Men are getting away from Plato's philosophy, but it is embedded in literature. Now, the emphasis is on behavior, and the world is analyzed to see what happens and what changes. Now, men are looking at ideas as human social instruments. Ideas are reduced to an act. When activity is placed as the core or central thing, many of these older accumulations of philosophy begin to recede. An act is classified as real by its behavior. When Man thinks of behaviors and acts, he gets away from some of the machinery of the older forms of idealism and the supernatural, which hold that the main ideas are over, above, and not of this world. That is the whole approach to this new realism.\(^5\) It is very difficult to trace back this idea of emphasis being placed on behavior and relationships. In the time of George Eliot it was a dominant idea of her time that the idea was a pure thing, but now man is more interested in behavior and conduct. Man

is getting away from the idea that if the intention is good, it is all right. It is with the doing that the realist is concerned. Of course, thinking comes into the process. The main thing this new realism is concerned with which is different from the old philosophies is that it looks at acts. Doing puts men in the territory of the real, and everything is related and more understandable. The old philosophies search for the real.

Humanism is a phase of the intellectual movement that characterizes the transition from the medieval to the modern period; that is, the Renaissance Period. This system concentrates upon human interests and the mind of man rather than upon the external world of nature and upon religious ideals. The chief concern of the humanist is to explore the uncharted territory of the mind, thereby raising the personality of the individual to its highest efficiency. He believes in man and has the conviction that man himself has sufficient power to insure progress towards an ideal society on this earth. There were many eminent humanists twenty-five to thirty centuries ago, so they are not new on the face of the earth. The new humanist that emerged again in the fourteenth century, after the Dark Ages, became a dynamic part of the Renaissance. There were strong motivating forces that guided men towards humanistic thinking. They were striving to get away from the tyrannies of the church and from the indoctrinated fears of supernatural elements.
Humanism helped to produce such an era as the Revival of Learning. It is a big philosophical treatment. All interpretations and values and beliefs are products of human thinking. They are instruments that man has conceptualized in the framework of thinking so that he could get along better. Darwin and his revolutionary ideas on evolution gave the concept of sin as a product. The theologian, or converted man, says he does wrong because he is earth-born and right because he is pure, and his sins are erased. The Christian says that he walks with Him and that he is in the presence of the Spirit. The other side says that he is human and his sins are the result of the kind of parents he has and the world he is in. His viewpoint is from the standpoint of science. Plato said ideas and laws were made by the Creator at the dawn of creation, or before, and it is the purpose of man to discover them. The humanist looks at it differently. Man is a great maker of all meanings, phenomena of certain kinds of experience, results of behavior.

The Absolutist says that when something is right it will always be right. He teaches that there is a wrong way and a right way. For generations it has been taught that God made the world and things are fixed and beliefs are inflexible. Men are creatures placed here to find out and conform. The old attitude, the carpenter theory, is that there are many absolute laws made by God that, by labor, some scientist will work out. All these forms have been
worked out slowly by man because that is the best thing to do. The humanist says that all laws, moral and economic, are made just as language. They grew as they were needed. They are good instruments, says John Dewey. When conditions change there will be other instruments. All meanings are human products and the only fixed thing is change. Reason, the intelligent instrument on most modern problems, is rather a recent thing. In religion the instrument is faith and reason is superfluous in faith.

The absolutists are "standpatters". The world was so insecure and people wanted a fixed philosophy and a fixed state, and they were happier when they got things fixed. The conditions of the time justified such a philosophy. There was something to anchor to, and it was something more stable than just a group of individuals. People naturally came to the conclusion that the State was supreme. The church came into existence and had something that was fixed. Their ideas were everlasting to everlasting and the custodians received instructions and patterns for human life from God. The Pope is an outstanding example of the authoritarian view. Some people get so grounded in fixed ideas that it makes them scared to be pulled away, and they want to get back to old mores and habits and get comfortable. Some people get bored by old routines of belief, and more and more people want change in point of view. Pragmatism encourages people to be a little daring in their thinking and courageous
enough to look in and examine. There is more democracy in pragmatic thought. The authoritainerian says there is absolute right and wrong — but the pragmatist says what works more satisfactory is right.

Knowledge is not an end but an instrument or process of acting. Dewey did not accept anything as fixed and unchanging.6 Man will always come upon problems he cannot explain and it has been the case all down the ages. For a long time people did not understand lightning. They thought it was an expression of anger from the gods because someone had misbehaved. An idea, says John Dewey, is an instrument and has no absolute existence.7 This world and all reality are products. He remodels the whole structure of things and gives men more leeway and greater opportunity. In the old framework God created the world and fixed values.8

William James championed pragmatism. He did not claim it to be a philosophy but a method. It depends upon human experience and is not transcendental. About the metaphysical attributes of God James said, "From the standpoint of practical religion, the metaphysical monster which they offer to our worship is an absolutely worthless invention of the scholarly mind."9 He said that dogmatic theology cannot prove

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7 Ibid., p. 373.
8 J. S. Brubacker, Modern Philosophy of Education, p. 29.
9 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experiences, p. 446.
the existence nor any of the following arguments:

Being holy, God will do nothing but good.
Being omnipotent, He can secure its triumph.
Being omniscient, He can see us in the dark.
Being just, He can punish us for what He sees.
Being loving, He can pardon us.
Being unalterable, He can be counted on securely.

Dogmatic theology can claim a solid basis for religious sentiment, if she can prove such a God exists.\(^{10}\)

As long as a critical spirit dominates a man's thinking, humanism will work to find "what elements enter into a richly diversified, a finely shaped, and an exalted life."\(^{11}\)

There is no problem more pertinent today than the relation of humanism and religion. The strength of humanism is growing. Old forms of piety, prayer, and belief must give way, so says humanism. The new religion of the day must work for the common good and let the supernatural go.\(^{12}\) Thirty-four editors, educators, and ministers, almost three times the number first to spread the gospel, offered the following humanism:

Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.
Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.
The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.
Religious humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end

\(^{10}\text{Ibid.}, p. 447.\)

\(^{11}\text{Norman Fearster, "Humanism and Religion," Forum, 82 (September, 1929), p. 150.}\)

\(^{12}\text{Adams, G. P., and others, Knowledge and Society, p. 143.}\)
of man's life, and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now.

In place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer, the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being.

There will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural. Man will learn to face the crisis of life in terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability. Reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported custom.

We assume that humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene, and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.

The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good.

The time has come for widespread recognition of the radical changes in religious thoughts throughout the modern world. Science and economic change have disrupted the old beliefs.

Religions the world over are under the necessity of coming to terms with new conditions created by a vastly increased knowledge and experience.¹³

Pragmatism makes religion more utilitarian and brings it out of an abstract world into a real and living world.¹⁴ It gives it a relationship to life, and it becomes practical through practice. A pragmatist is not satisfied with words and generalities and dogmatic verbiage. He insists upon the concrete and all theories worthwhile must get their meanings from someone's experiences. A pragmatist has no dogma, and he is open-minded to any thing that gives evidence or value to a person. With the idea of God the field is widened, and any idea is acceptable if it helps the individual concerned. In other words what works best for the individual is best.


¹⁴ John Dewey, Creative Intelligence, Essays in the Pragmatic Attitude, p. 64.
Pragmatism does not look at first things but at last things. What conduct is true or bad does not have to measure up to a standard but what are its results. The same thing is true in all areas, truth, goodness, and in all values. Ideas are instruments not absolutes as Plato would have men believe. They are just human instruments and do not belong in any company or community except people. All mathematical rules and physical and chemical and moral laws are just instruments man has tediously worked out for use by people and experimented with, and they seem to work satisfactorily. As it works it becomes the rule and comes out in human behavior and action.\textsuperscript{15} So everything is humanized, products of human kind. There is not a chemical law, biological law, moral law, or economic law that has not been formed, designed, made, and used by human kind; and the fact that these things are for man's use, John Dewey calls them human instruments, and they do not exist anywhere else. This creativeness finds its highest expression, its highest form of reality in mankind. Intelligence is a part of the vital creativeness of the universe; and creativeness is creating all the time and creates out of human intelligence. Man created human intelligence. His conception of God has changed many times. God is growing and is a product of human intelligence.

The importance of creativeness is coming into the picture of modern relationships. This modern way of looking

\textsuperscript{15}John Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, p. 198.
at the world, or new point-of-view will help a great deal in solving the problems of the world. Human kind has to create some new forms for human relationships, and thinkers and statesmen have to work at the job and find new ways for nations to deal with each other. There has to be an attitude of working at it. Some mentally-handicapped people say it cannot be done. They oppose making shifts or new arrangements in their beliefs. They say it was not the way God intended. What will make progress is this creative power, this human intelligence, which will implement new forms of relationships so man can get along without wars. Man works out his own salvation.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

DEPENDENCE UPON INTELLIGENCE

This intelligence, this mind, this power which man has created throughout the ages is the only thing that will solve man's problems as they appear. Bergson calls it mind energy, or vital impetus.\(^1\) It is up to man to continue creating this force. The scientific method of inquiry seems to be the best method for man today. H. G. Wells suggests that the next great discovery may be a realization of the full significance of possibility of scientific methods. The scientific habit of full inquiry has not affected the great mass of mankind who are ignorant, indifferent, and even hostile. There are "a multitude of pious excuses for neglecting to instil the scientific mood in the young."\(^2\) Modern scientific research has brought a new world and great possibilities of control in the interest of human welfare, and the older poetic and religious ideas have to be reinterpreted. Scientific knowledge has metamorphosed man's life, and man's environment and his relationship to each other should be

\(^1\)Patrick, op. cit., p. 268.

looked at scientifically. Man's traditional beliefs, because of their familiarity, age, sanctity, or general acceptance by respectable people seem, to many, firm and lasting. Many people have been taught to believe that the old prophets were wiser than man can hope to be today, and they got divine truth which can never be questioned. "Accordingly, one of the greatest obstacles to a spread of scientific thought is still the old conception of the Bible."\(^3\) The question still is should the Bible be read and studied and criticized like any other collection of old writings and its contents interpreted by the light of the beliefs and ignorances of the prevailing time? "Encouragement of a scientific attitude of mind and a full and vivid appreciation of the inherent obstacles that oppose themselves to its successful cultivation in the human species" is the chief end of education.\(^4\)

Modern science does not have a magic key to unlock the secrets of the universe. Its methods do not differ in general outline from the ways in which reliable conceptions about the world have been established in all ages. "The achievements of modern science are therefore the fruits of a method, accepted as authoritative because long and hard experience has shown it to yield intellectual and practical mastery over the processes of nature."\(^5\) Science as an art

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 45.  
\(^4\)Ibid., p. 54.  
for finding things out has given the world many achievements. A partial list must include not only the tremendous technological skills but also the less obvious consequences as the elimination of many fears, the destruction of traditional systems of dogmatic morals, the development of a frankly experimental attitude toward questions of conduct, and a widespread conviction that both public and private policies must be evaluated by rational methods of weighing evidence and not by their conformity to uncriticizable authority. In recent years critics of science have challenged science, maintaining that it is the naturalistic outlook in politics and morals that is responsible for the contemporary chaos and that the rational methods of science are inadequate to the task of dealing with moral questions. These critics ignore the distinction between science as a body of knowledge and science as a method of inquiry. The scientific method of inquiry requires a precious and heroic quality of mind. Science demands of all who join its ranks tireless critical reflection, factual material, accuracy, discrimination, honesty, and fearlessness. The scientist must not let his personal likes and dislikes and social prejudices hamper his findings. Until the scientific methods have been tried systematically and wholeheartedly, men cannot find out what may be achieved by use of the scientific method. So it is foolish to say that science must bear the responsibility for social ills. However much inspiration and suggestion a man may get from mystic and
religious experiences, they are not methods of finding things out. Having convictions is not enough to make knowledge. A conviction must be criticized and submitted to the light of evidence before it can become knowledge. The influences of personal preferences and habitual concepts affect even the best of scientists, but it can be mitigated by discussion and criticism. For centuries sound ideas of biology were delayed because of the dominance of the teleological or authoritarian viewpoint. All problems must be free to be tackled and must be pursued to any conclusion which the evidence warrants, and no factual material should be excluded or discouraged through the use of various sanctions. The investigator must let his views be decided by the evidence.

Joseph A. Brandt has for sixteen years served three of the great universities in America as publisher of their scholarship. He thinks that not always will there have to be wars. He considers there is cause for alarm that there is an increasing number of them since the Industrial Revolution and even cause for great alarm that mass murder began with mass education, if the meager learning the masses get, can be called education. Something is radically wrong, he feels, with the educational leadership of the people. Generals win wars, if they have the tools of war and a trained army. Politicians and statesmen can win peace, only if the people they represent

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have wisdom and tolerance. The scholar assumed a burden when he joined forces with the government and produced the atomic bomb. He assumed the responsibility for the kind of government that would use it. The scholars must give the people intellectual and spiritual leadership; and unless the people have their leadership, nothing will avail against a future war. Joseph A. Brandt thinks the American scholar, as he is today, is inadequate. The scholar listens for the praise of his colleagues rather than in giving his findings to the people. His books use terminology too confusing for the average man. The scholar must write for the people and give them the truth and the facts.

Another similar phase wherein mind could assist humanity is suggested by Arturo Costiglioni in his book *Adventures of the Human Mind*. He has as his thesis that

> if there is an analogy between the tragic social events that brought about a mortal danger to humanity and the great epidemic diseases of the past, as regards their origins, some of their causes, and especially their psychological factors; if it is true that they differ in extension and intensity more than in their essential character, is it not obvious that the psychologist, the educator, the 'hygienist of the mind,' may obtain the same results as were brilliantly achieved by public health organizations?"  

In other words can mental hygiene accomplish what the science of epidemic disease has accomplished? Such scourges as plague, cholera, smallpox, typhoid fever, and diphtheria have been reduced to insignificance. Can mass mental

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phenomena be brought under control as the mass bacteriological-social phenomena have?

A hindrance to the application of the scientific method to man’s needs is religiosity. Irwin Edman looks upon Franz Werfel’s Between Heaven and Earth as an alarming symptom of a dangerous disease that is in many of the distinguished writers of the day. The illness he calls religiosity. He uses that term to distinguish it from religion “which is arguably not a malady at all.” He thinks this disease is caused in many men of letters by a failure of nerve which they interpret as spiritual vision. They distrust the scientific method, do not like the secular world, and think there is no meaning in life except in supernatural and mystical terms. Also they have a tone, so says Irwin Edman, of the reformed sinner, saying they, too, once believed in progress and science. Two of Franz Werfel’s latest novels are Embezzled Heaven and the Song of Bernadette which have obtained their popularity mostly by the spiritual lesson they have taught. The violence and chaos of a world and “the apparently exploded belief in progress” have caused many to seek escape to a world of eternity. In a flight of imagination Franz Werfel brings the mind into a mystical and vague realm of faith and the whole book is made up of smug and confused conclusions. Franz Werfel says the naturalistic point of

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9Ibid.
view is "nihilistic". Irwin Edman says that he does not
dismiss the hypothesis of the supernatural, but he objects
to the way Werfel dismisses the naturalistic viewpoint as
vicious, such as the statement that materialistic thinking
is nothing but emptiness of spirit. Hope in progress and
faith in human intelligence are not so easily dismissed.
Irwin Edman is alarmed that intellectuals should declare the
bankruptcy of human nature and science and hope and look be-
yond the facts before the eyes at a supernatural world to
give meaning to this life. He thinks it is too big a price
to pay for mysticism.

The great need at this particular period of history is
people of vision, intellectual acumen, power to catch, see,
and organize, so that a higher level of human existence can
be reached. Man will guide his actions by the answers he
accepts whether they be true or false, scientific or super-
stitious. An old Stoic proverb says that men are tormented
by the opinions they have of things, rather than by the things
themselves. There is more knowledge and ingenuity and mater-
rial resources to make a much better world, but there are many
adjustments to make socially. The biggest task is to recon-
struct man's opinions about man and his relations to his fel-
low man. These opinions were made and handed down by previous
generations who lived under conditions far different from the
conditions of the present time. In other words man must open
his mind and get rid of prejudices. Knowledge of the history of the growth of social and political ideas would raise discussions of them on a higher plane and give man more insight into the problems at hand. The scientists, as a whole, think and work with boldness and patience and, in the last few centuries, have given man knowledge of his universe that has revolutionized affairs. But the knowledge of human relationships has not made such advance in the last two thousand years. 10 The scientists did not have an easy time of it; the freeing of natural science from the current prejudices was not an easy thing and is not wholly free yet. Lord Bacon, Descartes, Galileo, and Huxley were thought to have committed offenses and had to suffer because of their so-called offenses against God or religion or morality. Human affairs are much more complicated than the affairs of natural science. If man defends and seeks to perpetuate the conditions that brought on two world wars, he will produce another and a worse one. "We should proceed to the thorough reconstruction of our mind, with a view to understanding actual human conduct and organization." 11 Man must face the facts and make needed readjustments. Brotherly love and preaching that men are children of one heavenly Father will not cure the situation. Capital is too selfish and the Fatherhood of God has been preached for two thousand

11 Ibid., p. 13.
years and the Stoics preached it before then. Kindliness shows itself in favorable auspices but cannot be promoted by moral exhortation. What is needed is education, not to enhance personal worldly success or culture but an education to become a better citizen. So-called controversial matters have been and are excluded from the curriculum of schools and colleges, and young people cannot form an intelligent opinion of race heredity, sex, and religion. All the material available on any subject should be presented, so says James Harvey Robinson in *Humanizing of Knowledge*.

What is needed, then, in this dynamic world of change is better informed people. "Life should not be presented to students as happily standardized but as urgently demanding readjustment." In 1837 Ralph Waldo Emerson, at a Phi Beta Kappa meeting at Harvard, said that the best moment to be born is always during a revolution and that life is just one revolution after another, a series of crises in which men say farewell to the past and, if they are wise, meet the future. So this time, like all other times, is a very good one, if men but know what to do with it. General Smuts, South African writer, wrote "the tents have been struck, the great caravan of humanity is once more on the march," which is a powerful figure of speech. So it is, and always will be. Humanity

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will be constantly uprooted in this changing, evolutionary, conflicting world, and men have to go on with different philosophies and interpretations. The process of change is constant. Men can never say, "This is it, the last interpretation."

In the present state of knowledge, is there such a thing as a final and complete explanation of any phenomenon? "Is not the search for final and complete explanations just as futile a task as the search for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow?" Is not the place where man decides to stop regarded as the final explanation and is not this place determined primarily by his particular interests? Is not the alleged finality and completeness of explanation merely relative to the field of man's psychological interests?

Two proposed explanations may be evaluated from the standpoint of their empirical truth. Of two proposed explanations, is not the better one that whose truth can be tested by experimental and correlational means? From this standpoint, are not the empirical types of explanation better than most theoretical ones, and are not theological and metaphysical types of explanations the worst of the lot?  

Man's concept of God throughout the ages has gone through many changes. If the modern idea of God could be presented to a person of another time, he would not understand. In fact a modern concept of God could not be presented to many people living today because they have a very primitive concept. The ordinary religious believer whether he be Buddhist, Christian,

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15 Ibid., p. 197.
or Mohammedan follows the conventional observances of his country. "His religion has been made for him by others, communicated to him by traditions, determined to fixed forms by imitation, and retained by habit."16 Herbert Spencer realized before he died in 1903 that religious beliefs and political movements are built upon needs and impulses, and "he felt it absurd and unkind to disturb the traditional faith where it seemed a beneficent and cheering influence."17 Looking down the vista of the ages, a person realizes that man's conception of God and his way of dealing with his cosmos are just systems or instruments for men to be able to get along. His needs gave him his interpretations. Mankind was in a bad way when the Christian idea came in. People were starving, suffering, and killing. The idea of the golden rule and the philosophy of salvation looked like a "cure-all". If there is such a thing as the human soul being converted where it was black and then made as white as snow, it would seem that this old world would have become better. After two thousand years of religion of salvation men have the most destructive war of all times. Reality with religion is a must. Philosophy can help religion, if religion will abandon metaphysics for criticism and make a science of religion and become useful. Philosophy can eliminate doctrines that are scientifically absurd. It can distinguish between overbelief and symbolism and what is to be taken literally.

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16James, op. cit., p. 6.
17Durant, op. cit., p. 435.
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