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in greatly expanded form under the title of *The Growth of Brotherhood*, by the Rev. Arthur Dakin, D.Th. (S.C.M. ; 2s. 6d. net). It gives a clear and admirable sketch of the manifestations of the Christian spirit of brotherhood, first under the falling civilization of Rome, second amid the rising civilization of the Middle Ages, finally and much more fully in the expanding civilization of the modern world. The writer convincingly shows how brotherhood has succeeded where force has failed, and in his outlook upon the future he is optimistic enough to believe that the same force, under the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ, will work out a better world order. The whole treatment is most fresh and illuminating.

There have not been many volumes of children's sermons lately, so one by the Rev. W. J. May, *The Mother of Iscariot* (Teachers & Taught ; 3s. 6d. net), is specially welcome. But it is welcome for itself also. Mr. May's parables for children are already well known to the readers of this magazine. In his present book, however, he takes a new line in which he proves himself as much a master as in the old one. The method is to choose a Bible story and allow

his imagination play upon it, filling in the local colour—'local colour' is the expression used on the jacket of the book, a phrase which has become popular since the publication of *The Local Colour of the Bible*—and carrying the story a step farther than the Bible does, and so successfully that one feels that the conclusion is the inevitable one.

In *The Marvels of Modern Physics* (Watts & Co. ; 2s. 6d. net), Mr. Joseph McCabe continues his work of giving to the man in the street a vivid and understandable account of some of the wonders of modern physical science. In this book, avoiding mathematical formulæ and technical phraseology, he writes most instructively about the structure of atoms and electrons, the mysteries of light and wireless waves, and the ultimate constitution of the universe. The picture, he says in conclusion, 'is only an outline sketch. Our knowledge is still very superficial. But enough has been said to show that physicists have achieved a remarkable triumph in the course of the last hundred years. The living thing, which has been the toy of the elements for hundreds of millions of years, is becoming their master.'

Psychology and Religion.

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PSYCHOLOGY is—so to speak—in the air. It has left the halls of learning and descended to the pavement. It is now available in lecture form for all who are prepared to absorb it, and books on the subject—good, bad, and indifferent—are literally pouring from the press. No doubt there is a good deal of charlatanism connected with this popularizing of the subject, and not a few people are rapidly making fortunes from many who are only too willing to cast money into the lecturer's coffer, which once they quite as cheerfully bestowed upon the purchase of patent medicines. Such is the glamour of the subject that very few people stop to inquire the credentials of a would-be lecturer, and fewer still doubt his infallibility or question the potent magic of his ware. There is, of course, some gain in this

popularizing process, but it cannot be doubted that it is also attended by serious danger ; for people are acquiring a smattering of the subject without making any serious attempt to master it in its details. But be this as it may, the fact is that psychology is no longer a kind of luxury science which most people might neglect without serious loss, neither is it any longer to be classed with occult sciences—though much of the popular interest in it is unfortunately occult enough at bottom. Psychology is now no longer a subject to be studied by educationalists alone : it enters into the lives of the medical man, the economist, the criminologist, the minister of religion, and it meets us in our daily newspapers. Moreover, men everywhere have a sort of (very often vague) idea that

it has to do with religion and theology, and some even imagine (let it be admitted that they have not generally thought very deeply on the subject) that it has given, or is about to give, the death-blow to religion in every shape and form. But let us see.

Over fifty years ago Archbishop Temple declared that it would soon be necessary to rewrite theology, not in terms of metaphysics or logic, but in terms of psychology. We are not, therefore, surprised to find the following from the pen of his son, the present Bishop of Manchester: 'The true case for Theism does not rest upon general Philosophy alone, nor upon religious experience alone, but upon the coincidence and convergence of these two.'¹ That both the prophecy and the statement are profoundly true there can be no doubt, for in a very real sense psychology is a new science—in fact, it bids fair to be *the* science of the twentieth century, as biology was of the nineteenth—and undoubtedly theology will have to come to terms with it; for psychology deals with human experience of which religious experience is a real part. But in another sense psychology is not new (though a good number of present-day psychologists seem to be unaware of the fact). No one who has read Aristotle, or St. Thomas Aquinas, or the Old Testament, or the mass of literature constituting Roman moral theology, can doubt that psychology—the thing itself—has never been absent from the theistic argument. True, there are any number of forms of the argument which have ignored it and have preferred to rest their case solely upon logic and metaphysics; but there is a line of witness to the truth of theism which has never lost sight of the fact that religious experience is a real factor which cannot be neglected. Indeed, Schleiermacher preferred to rest the whole case for theism on religious experience, and not a few both sophisticated and unsophisticated Christians have been prepared to follow him. That he went too far in his claims there can be no doubt, and, as Dr. Temple shows, we should prefer to rest our case on the convergence of religious experience and philosophy. But on the other hand science, which has satisfied itself almost entirely with empirical methods and has, in the main, eschewed philosophy, has strangely enough adopted a cavalier attitude towards *religious*

experience, often dismissing it quite contemptuously as unreal. But the facts of religious experience are as strictly empirical as the facts with which the positive sciences deal, and they cannot be dismissed in this way. Psychology is bound to take account of them, and has already begun to do so.

It is often asserted, and more often assumed, that theologians are slow to take into consideration the results of scientific investigation and that this is the sole cause of the conflict between science and religion. Be this as it may—and it is a very doubtful assertion indeed—it cannot be denied that in the matter of psychology, far from being slow to take up the results, the very opposite has been the case. Theology has been for the past fifty years gradually restating itself in terms of psychology. The number of books on the subject which has issued from the press, written by theologians of repute, is sufficient witness to this. So much is this the case that it may be felt that some have rushed in where angels would have feared to tread. Every important book on the Philosophy of Religion, and not a few on the great doctrines, which has been written since the days of Martineau, has been full of psychology. Much has been gained, but not all. Many have been so confident that they have looked to psychology to heal—and that right speedily—all the quarrels of however long standing which stand to the account of science and religion. That psychology will eventually assist in this great task there can be little doubt. But we may question the over-confidence of such a statement as the following: 'Psychology has opened up lines along which one may look to see effected that reconciliation between science and religion, the attempt to secure which led to an *impasse* a generation ago.'² Rather we may anticipate a real conflict between psychology and religion, a conflict more severe than that between biology and religion. In fact, signs of the conflict are already evident and will become more so as the New Psychology, with its special methods of investigation—psycho-analysis and auto-suggestion—becomes more fully developed.

But when the conflict comes it will not really be new: it will be the old conflict between naturalism and theism in a new dress. There are signs of over-confidence on both sides. Some theists, as we have seen, are ready to assert that psychology

¹ *Christus Veritas*, 39. The book is perhaps the most complete statement of theism in terms of psychology that has yet appeared in English.

² Quoted by Professor H. R. Mackintosh in *Some Aspects of Religious Belief*, 200.

will heal all the festering sores and close all the gaping wounds which the nineteenth century has bequeathed to us; and many psychologists are already claiming that psychology is about to give to religion the final death-blow, which biology was unable to administer. But is psychology really capable of doing either of these two things? What is its proper function and what its proper domain? These are questions which need to be answered, and to a large extent they are being ignored. The simple fact seems to be that just as biology was able to give us a clearer understanding of how purpose and design are wrought out in the creative process, so psychology is attempting (and has already achieved a good deal) to explain to us how the religious consciousness works. Further, just as many self-confident naturalists and determinists imagined that to know how purpose and design worked was to rid ourselves once for all of a Purposer and Designer—that explanation meant final explanation—so the same class in the ranks of psychologists are asserting that to know how the religious consciousness works is to resolve all religion into subjectivism—to deny any outside influence on the human mind. That is, they are not satisfied to exploit the findings of their science to bolster up a mechanistic view of the universe, but they start their study of the subject with mechanistic preconceptions. They are prepared to beg the whole question from the start. From another point of view we may claim that they are treating psychology, not as a science able to supply data for philosophic discussion, but as a branch of metaphysics itself. And others who are not prepared to go so far as this, but who have the same presuppositions, are using the results of psychology—illegitimately, I think—to bolster up mechanism, much in the same way as men half a century ago were using the results of biology.

The fact is, as Professor McDougall has pointed out in his *Outline of Psychology*, that there are two classes of psychologists and two methods of studying the science.¹ We may start by regarding all events as links in a mechanical chain of causation—and that not merely as a methodology within the field of our science—but as a true and ultimate explanation of all things. Or we may start by admitting purposive striving as something entirely different from mechanical sequence. Professor McDougall himself started out along the first way

¹ See the Preface.

and found it very inadequate. He tells us that this 'mechanical psychology naturally and almost inevitably adopts the atomistic or mosaic theory of mental processes. . . . When it seeks to explain the clusterings and sequences of these elements, it does so by imagining each one to be attached in some manner to an elementary brain process; and it seeks to explain the conjunctions and sequences of the elementary brain processes in a purely mechanical fashion, by aid of laws of the physical and chemical sciences.'² He further claims that such psychology is decidedly preponderant at the present time, and frankly admits that his own work is a polemic against it. As he says, nothing is to be gained by slurring over the issue: there can be no real advance until it is resolved, until there is general agreement upon fundamentals. The fact is that psychology touches the issue between mechanism and teleology far more closely than ever biology did. Biology, dealing as it did with the principle of life, came nearer than the physical sciences; but psychology, dealing as it does with psychical states, comes nearer still; and that is why it is that the conflict between psychology and religion will be fiercer than any that has yet been. Professor McDougall regards mechanistic psychology as resulting from oversimplification. 'This tendency to simplification is in fact the root of the mechanistic mosaic psychology, that which describes mental processes as made up of static elements, units of feeling, atoms of sensation, particles of mind dust, neural entities or what not. And this type of psychology is still with us and still predominant. Its latest exponent, Mr. Bertrand Russell, has performed the service of reducing it to the lowest level of banality in his *Analysis of Mind*. Recently it has begotten upon psychology a most misshapen and beggarly dwarf, namely, Behaviourism, which just now is rampant in this country (America).'³ He is, however, hopeful for the future and sees welcome signs of something better in the work of such men as Henry Head in England, and Pierre Marie and Bergson in France, as well as in the turn of the tide in Germany since 1900.

What we have said so far will serve to show clearly that psychology is not all of one type, and we must not be blind to this fact. Both theology and philosophy have greatly benefited from the results already achieved; but the real question at issue is

² P. viii.

³ P. ix.

whether these results are patient of a mechanistic interpretation, or whether they demand a purposive explanation of the universe, and I submit that this is a question which psychology, *qua* psychology, cannot answer. It can supply the necessary data for the discussion, but the discussion itself must be carried out in the field of philosophy, to which field psychology—it may be admitted—is related more closely than any other science.

Further, we must remember, when discussing the bearing of psychology on theism and religion, that psychology only deals with one phase of human activity. The psychological interpretation of religion is not, therefore, in itself complete. It must be supplemented both by philosophy and history. Religion, especially the Christian religion, is grounded in history, and so far as Christianity is concerned, it has more than once successfully combated attempts to wholly absorb it in philosophy, as it will equally well resist any attempt to finally explain it in terms of psychology.

The study of the psychology of religion naturally brings into prominence the subjective element, and this has led many to suppose that it resolves all religion into pure subjectivism. Religion, they say, is merely the 'projection' of human desires, hopes, and fears. The real question, then, is whether religious experience is a mere projection of the subliminal consciousness, or whether it is the result of genuine intercourse with a higher Being. Is it just the product of auto-suggestion, or is it real communion with a spiritual world? Here, again, it is necessary to emphasize that psychology, *qua* psychology, cannot answer this question. Psychology is concerned with processes and their results and not with final explanations.¹ Because I know as a result of psychological investigation *how* the mind works, say, in the process of conversion, I am not therefore able to say *why* the mind so works.

¹ Dr. Selbie in his recent book, *The Psychology of Religion*, points to two modern German psychologists who maintain that it is the proper province of psychology to pronounce on the truth or falsity of religious ideas, Georg Wobbermin and W. Stählin. Of this position he himself says: 'While psychology naturally and properly indicates the part played by the intellect in religion and insists on its usefulness in purifying our intuitions and selecting among them those which have a right to dominate the mind and heart, it cannot pronounce definitely on the truth or falsehood of religious ideas, or on the reality or validity of the objects of religious faith or worship' (p. 62). He justifies this position throughout the book.

Psychology cannot deal with the objective reality which may or may not lie behind the experience. It may supply new and important data, but the question as to objective reality is, strictly speaking, a philosophical one. It is quite inadmissible to deny on the ground of psychology that there is any objective reality behind religious phenomena, and to conclude, as many do, that psychology justifies the view that religious experience is purely subjective and the result of auto-suggestion or hetero-suggestion on the human level. Such a conclusion altogether neglects philosophical, ethical, and historical considerations which must be taken into account, and, moreover, passes over in a most shallow fashion the tremendous results which, in the course of the world's history, have sprung from religious experience. With some psychologists it would appear that auto-suggestion has become a kind of universal solvent with which religious experience may be quite safely treated. Unfortunately this is a case of 'biting off too much,' for the solvent will be found to be equally potent with all other forms of experience. In this connexion we may claim that that form of Pragmatism which justifies the idea of God as useful, but will not allow that it is in any sense true, that is, that it corresponds to any reality, is not really justifiable on psychological grounds. At any rate, if the idea of God corresponds to nothing objective, but is merely the result of auto-suggestion, we are in no better case with the rest of our ideas, whether in the fields of philosophy or science. It may be difficult to make the plain man see this, but it is nevertheless true that this kind of Pragmatism lands us pretty much in the same place as Hume's scepticism: it strikes at the roots of science equally as at the roots of religion; for it really means that we can be certain of nothing beyond our own individual existence. As Professor Pratt says: 'Important as is the pragmatic element in the God-idea, it is not the only element. And any attempt to prove it such is both bad psychology and bad epistemology. Bad psychology because it neglects altogether certain real elements in the religious consciousness, whether found in philosopher, priest, or humble worshipper,—men who through all the ages have truly meant by "God" something more than the idea of God, something genuinely transcendent. Bad epistemology because based ultimately upon a viciously subjective view of *meaning*, a view which would identify our objects with our

ideas of our objects, and which, carried to its logical conclusion, would result in solipsism.'¹

We may safely reject all those theistic arguments based on the religious consciousness, which rest their case *solely* on intuition or on isolated individual emotions, and which renounce both logic and metaphysics. They are not of themselves broad enough for us to base our belief in God on them. We may therefore refuse to follow both Schleiermacher and the modern exponents of intuitionist theories, who are constantly urging us to forsake intellect for instinct. But when we have done so we have to reckon with the fact that religion is a normal thing in man's experience—it is universal. And it is not sufficient to explain this in any of the ways common to mechanistic psychology, and say, for example, that it is due to man's tendency to personalize—to give flesh and blood, so to speak, to his ideas. For, apart from the doubtful truth of this assertion, when we have accepted it we cannot in any sense regard it as a final explanation. It only tells us *how* man's religious consciousness works. It does not tell us *why* he has a religious consciousness. After all, the real question is why does man have the tendency to personalize—to give objective value to his ideas, and why does he have such ideas at all? Or again, if we accept the dogma that man's religious experience arises by the process psychologists call projection, that it springs from the subliminal consciousness, that it is merely the result of his giving reality to the objects of his desires, his hopes, and fears (all, again, a very doubtful explanation and not at all adequate): we have not in any sense reached a final explanation. Again, we have only stated *how*, and have still to explain *why*, man universally possesses these hopes and fears, and why universally he tends to clothe their objects with reality. Neither will it do to say that man creates God in his own image, just as a child personalizes its playthings. Nor do we really get anywhere by pointing to anthropomorphisms (blessed word) in primitive conceptions of God, and then going on further to say that if it could a cow would make a cow-god and worship it.

¹ *The Religious Consciousness*, 209. The whole work should be read. See also Rudolph Otto's epoch-making book translated into English under the title *The Idea of the Holy*. So far as this book is concerned, its importance cannot be easily overestimated. For the next generation at any rate, no one will be able to write on psychology and religion without coming to grips with this book.

We may here be describing the process by which man comes to worship God, and some may be able to accept such a simple description; but it is in no sense an explanation; for we have yet to inquire *why* men do make God in their own image, and why everywhere they seek after Him if haply they may find Him. The simple fact is that cows do not worship cow-gods, while men everywhere—at whatever stage we find them—do worship a supreme being or beings. And this fact needs explanation. It is either due to chance or it is natural to man. But chance explains nothing, and we are therefore shut up to the conclusion that man is by his very nature religious. However different the idea of God may be at different levels, there is an underlying similarity which testifies to the fact that it is neither artificial nor manufactured, but a normal possession of the human race. Man even when he acts instinctively reaches the same goal as when he consciously reflects. Reflectively his reason finds God necessary to explain the universe, but at the lowest stages he finds the same necessity to rest in powers outside himself. Moreover, it is out of this attitude of man that the development of conscience has sprung and the evolution of society in general is no less dependent upon it. If the religious consciousness be not real, how are we to explain development within its own field? If the religious idea be not valid, if it corresponds to nothing real, then so must everything which has been built upon it be invalid, and we may as well relinquish ourselves to complete scepticism in the field of knowledge and sarcastically inquire with Pilate, 'What is truth?' For the religious consciousness is never a matter of pure feeling; even at the lowest stages there are elements of knowledge as well as of will and emotion, and wherever there is knowledge there is some distinction between subject and object; there is no such thing as purely subjective knowledge.

We may claim, therefore, that psychology is not only passing outside the limits of its own domain, but pronouncing on a matter on which it is not capable of giving judgment, when it states categorically that religious experience is purely subjective and the result of suggestion; and we may look forward to work of real value being done in the field of religious psychology providing psychologists will rid themselves of this *a priori* supposition, which is little more than a superstition.