

GOD AND INTELLIGENCE
IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY

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GOD AND INTELLIGENCE

IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY

A CRITICAL STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF
THE PHILOSOPHY OF SAINT THOMAS

BY

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PREFACE

THIS book does not pretend to be exhaustive. The field which it covers is too vast and the literature of the subject too varied to admit of minute analysis. Its aim is rather to suggest solutions of modern problems in the light of the philosophy of St. Thomas. To this end it sets in contrast the modern and the Thomistic notions of God and Intelligence. The modern notions, particularly those drawn from contemporary English and American philosophy, are first exposed uncritically and objectively. Whatever disadvantages such a method may have, it certainly has the great advantage of allowing modern thought to state itself, both in its negative and, in its positive position, on the problem in hand.

A critical appreciation of the modern doctrines on God and Intelligence follows upon this exposition. The development of the Thomistic doctrine is prompted in almost every case by the line of thought of our contemporaries. There is no purely positive treatment of traditional doctrines. All this is presupposed. This work is merely an emphasis of certain points of view which have an interest for contemporary thought. It presumes that the Scholastic notions of God, His Nature and His Intelligence, as well as the criteriological and ontological problems of knowledge, have been already treated. Hence there is no attempt made in the course of this book to treat traditional theodicy in its entirety. Should the reader desire to read a classic presentation of the traditional thought on God and Intelligence, he can peruse with profit *Dieu, son Existence et sa Nature*, by P. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. It may also be

interesting to study another presentation in *L'Intellectualisme de St. Thomas*, by Pierre Rousselot, S.J.

The five arguments for the existence of God have not been treated, because they have been thoroughly dealt with by others, and also because contemporary philosophy calls rather for a treatment of their substitute notions, such as religious experience and hypothesis. Thus, while positive expositions of Scholastic doctrine look towards the traditional, this work looks rather to the solutions which traditional thought may bring to modern problems. *It seeks to make St. Thomas functional, not for a school, but for a world.* It is only accidentally that St. Thomas belongs to the thirteenth century. His thought is no more confined to that period of human history than is the multiplication table. Truth is eternal though its verbal expression be localized in time and space. If need makes actuality, then St. Thomas was never more actual than he is to-day. If actuality makes modernity, then St. Thomas is the prince of modern philosophers. If a progressive universe is a contemporary ideal, then the philosophy of St. Thomas is its greatest realization. Modern Idealism needs the complement of his realism; empiricism needs his transcendental principles; philosophical biologism his metaphysics; sociological morality his ethics; sentimentalism his theory of the intelligence; and the world needs the God he knew and loved and adored.

I wish to thank all those who have assisted in any way in the publication of this book. I acknowledge much indebtedness to Rt. Rev. Simon Deploige, Ph.D., LL.D., for his personal interest and kind encouragement. My deepest thanks are also due to Dr. Léon Noël, who not only suggested the problem but kindly inspired everything that is best in the treatment of it. I am also indebted to Dr. Nicholas Balthasar and Dr. A. Mansion for their valuable criticisms and suggestions; and to Dr. J. G. Vance, Vice-President of St. Edmund's College, Ware, England, for the

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F. J. SHEEN.

LOUVAIN, *June* 19, 1925.

PART I

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

MODERN philosophy has seen the birth of a new notion of God. There is nothing of greater importance, as there could be nothing more ultimate. Even the very attitude of one man to another or of one nation to another varies with the conception of God. The outlook on the world changes the moment the outlook on God changes. And if we had intellectual vigour enough to ascend from effects to causes, we would explain political, economical and social phenomena less by credit sheets, balance of trade and reparations, than by our attitude towards God.

The new idea of God has not burst upon the world with the suddenness of a new star. It has had its antecedents dating back over half a century. New scientific notions, increased faith in the philosophy of progress, birth of new values and interpretations of life, love of novelty, dissolution of dogmas—each has contributed its share to bring it into being.

Now that it is born, it stands before the world, not so much as a modified notion, as a new creation. Though coming from the past, it differs from all that has appeared in the past. It is, as it were, one of the novelties of evolution; it differs from the old even more than Aphrodite differs from the sea from which she sprang. Its face is set in another direction. It brings man into greater prominence. It exalts him even to the extent of giving him a "vote in the cosmic councils of the world." It is, in a word, the "transfer of the seat of authority from God to man."

But what is this new notion of God? It is God in evolution. God *is* not. He *becomes*. In the beginning was not the Word, but in the beginning was *Movement*. From this movement God is born by successive creations. As the world

progresses, He progresses ; as the world acquires perfection, He acquires perfection. He is therefore not the Alpha or the Omega of things, for His destiny and perfection lie hidden in the final evolution of the universe.

Man is a necessary step in the evolution of God. The divine shows in him as well as in God. One day it will manifest itself completely. Just as man came from the beast, God will come from man. The perfectibility of man implies the manifestation of the divine. "Men will be like Gods."

It is the purpose of this work to examine this new notion of God. But this problem cannot be adequately treated apart from another problem which is intimately bound up with it. This other problem is the value of the intelligence. As men lost faith in the intelligence, they acquired faith in the God of becoming. The modern God was born the day the "beast intellectualism" was killed. The day the intelligence is re-born, the modern God will die. They cannot exist together ; for one is the annihilation of the other.

But why the intimate relation between the two ? Apart from the purely technical reason which centres round the analogical notion of Being, there are two general considerations which englobe all others. The first is drawn from the universe, the second from God.

There is in all things a first perfection in virtue of their own specific nature. Because the specific being of one thing is not the being of another thing, one thing lacks the perfection of another. By the very fact that a lark is a lark, it must lack the perfection of a sunset. The perfection of every creature, then, is only relatively perfect, because it is only a *part* of the whole perfection of the universe, which includes the perfection of all particular things, just as one instrument in an orchestra is a part of the whole perfection of the harmony which issues from it.

To remedy this imperfection, by which one nature excludes the perfection of another nature, there has been given to some created things another perfection, namely, the *intellect*, in virtue of which it can know all things and possess within itself the perfection of other things, so that *the perfection of the whole universe can exist in it*. Man's ultimate end, according to Aristotle, consists in this knowledge of the order and cause of the universe ; and for the Christian it consists in the beatific vision

of God; for "what is there which may not be seen in seeing Him who sees all things?"¹

The intellect, then, is the perfection of the universe because it can sum up all creation within itself. In doing this, it becomes the articulate spokesman of the universe and the great bond between brute matter and Infinite Spirit.

What happens, then, when a philosophy rejects the intellect? It breaks the link between the world and God, denies a hymn of divine praise to the Creator, and knocks the world into an unintelligible pluralism.

There is yet another reason for the close relation of God and the intellect. Its point of departure is the fact that man is the image of God. "The nature of an image requires likeness in species; thus the image of the king exists in the son: or, at least in some specific accident, and chiefly in the shape; thus we speak of a man's image in copper. Whence Hilary says pointedly that *an image is of the same species*.

"Now it is manifest that specific likeness follows the ultimate difference. But some things are like God first and most commonly because they *exist*; secondly, because they *live*; and thirdly, because they *know* or *understand*; and these last, as Augustine says, approach so near to God in likeness, that among all creatures nothing comes nearer to Him. It is clear, therefore, that intellectual creatures alone, properly speaking, are made to God's image."²

"Since man is said to be to the image of God by reason of his intellectual nature, he is the most nearly like God according to that in which he can best imitate God in his intellectual nature. Now the intellectual nature imitates God chiefly in this, that God understands and loves Himself. Wherefore we see that the image of God is in men . . . inasmuch as man possesses a natural aptitude for understanding and loving God; and this aptitude consists in the very nature of the mind, which is common to all men."³

¹ *De Veritate*, q. 2 art. 2. (References to St. Thomas throughout this work are given without mentioning his name.) It is the Vives edition which is used, except for the *Summa*, when the Leonine edition is used. Cajetan (1468-1534), one of the most illustrious commentators on the works of St. Thomas, develops the above notion technically in his commentary on *Summa Theol.*, 1 q. 53 art. 3.

² 1 q. 93 art. 2 c.

³ 1 q. 93 art. 4 c. The image of God may be in man in a second and third way, both of which are proper to the supernatural order, viz. inasmuch as

What results from this image of God in man, in virtue of his intellect? This conclusion: that, intensively and collectively considered, the *human intelligence is more perfect than all other visible creation*, because in it, as in no other creature, is found the capacity for the highest good, viz. God.¹ Being spiritual, and capable of possessing the visible universe within it in a spiritual way, it is already in potency for a knowledge of God, who is the Supreme Good—a capacity which soon passes into act through reasoning on the visible things of the universe which reveal the invisible God.

Without the intelligence the universe lacks its perfection as without it man lacks his. Without it man ceases to be, not only the crown of visible creation, but even the image of God. We are like God inasmuch as we have an intellect; we are like beasts inasmuch as we have flesh. The denial of the intelligence is a denial of an infinitely perfect God, as a denial of an infinitely perfect God is a denial of the intelligence. The two problems are inseparable.

But why study this problem in the light of the philosophy of St. Thomas?

One reason, and that negative, certainly is the self-confessed bankruptcy of modern thought.² No philosophical congress is complete to-day without a lecture on the confusion amid philosophers. The world is full of thinking, but there is no agreement in thought. There are philosophers, but there is no philosophy. There are "distinguished men but no man; big heads but no head. Heads of schools without schools, leaders without followers, societies without members."³ Spencerian thought has been buried in the grave of the Unknowable; the history of Pragmatism is now being written

man habitually knows and loves God, and this image consists in the conformity of grace; and inasmuch as man loves God perfectly, and this image consists in the likeness of glory. Hence a threefold image of creation, re-creation and likeness. The first is in all men, the second only in the just and the third only in the blessed in heaven.

¹ 1 q. 93 art. 2 ad 3. "Id autem in quo creatura rationalis excedit alias creaturas est intellectus."—1 q. 93 art. 6 c.

² The word *modern* throughout this work is used not to designate a period of time but a state of mind. It is not chronological but descriptive, and applies particularly to all forms of philosophy which believe in *modernizing* the conception of God to keep pace either with the advance of science or with the needs of the age.

³ DR. LUDWIG STEIN, *Die philosophischen Strömungen der Gegenwart*. Translation by Maitra (1918), p. 7.

as an exaggerated reaction against Idealism. Italian Neo-idealism has dissolved philosophy into history and melted reality into mind; Bergsonian *becoming* is decaying, and a sort of philosophical *biologism* remains as its heritage. The hurry, the fever, the restlessness, the excitement which blind us to the divine in things leave nothing but a philosophy of action for men of action. . . . "Men are suffering from the fever of violent emotion, and so they make a philosophy of it."¹

It is not Neo-Thomism which is criticizing modern thought. It is modern thinkers. Those who have most contributed to philosophical chaos are now assuming a pessimistic outlook for the philosophical future which they have helped to create. Testimonies of modern thinkers are abundant on this point. Speaking of his contemporaries, George Santayana writes in his own excellent style: "There is much life in some of them. I like their water-coloured sketches of self-consciousness, their rebellious egotisms, their fervid reforms of phraseology; their peep-holes through which some very small parts of things may be seen very clearly; they have lively wits, but they seem to me like children playing blind-man's-buff; they are keenly excited at not knowing where they are. They are really here, in the common natural world, where there is nothing in particular to threaten or allure them, and they have only to remove their philosophical bandages to see where they are."²

Professor Lovejoy remarks: "What the public wants most from its philosophers is an experience of initiation; what it is initiated into is often a matter of secondary importance. Men delight in being ushered past the guarded portals, in finding themselves in dim and awful precincts of thought unknown to the natural man, in experiencing the hushed moment of revelation and in gazing upon strange symbols—of which none can tell just what they symbolize."³

¹ S. RADHAKRISHNAN, *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy* (1922), pp. 41, 46.

² *Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies*, p. 210.

³ *The Practical Tendencies of Bergsonism*, p. 2. Cf. RALPH BARTON PERRY, *Recent Philosophical Tendencies*, pp. 20, 22.

"Modern philosophers have a message for the age, and that is the declaration of independence from the claims of the intellect. They pat the plain man on the back, and give him a philosophy which would justify his beliefs about the world. They tell him, we do not force on you any scheme of metaphysics, but give you only a method or a way of dealing with things, and you are free to fasten the system to any system of values. They fix no standpoints and

But where turn for sanity ? Professor A. E. Taylor has given his answer. "If philosophy," he says, "is ever to execute her supreme task, she will need to take into more serious account, not only the work of the exact sciences, but the teachings of the great masters of life. . . . For us it means that it is high time philosophy ceased to treat the great Christian theologians as credulous persons whose convictions need not be taken seriously. . . . If we are to be philosophers in earnest we cannot afford to have any path which may lead to the heart of life's mystery blocked for us by placards bearing the labels 'reactionary,' 'unmodern' and their likes. That what is most modern must be best is a superstition which it is strange to find in a really educated man. A philosopher at any rate should be able to endure the charge of being 'unmodern' with fortitude. . . . Abelard and Saint Thomas very likely would have failed as advertising agents, company promoters or editors of sensational daily papers. But it may well be that both are better fitted than Lord Northcliffe . . . to tell us whether God is or what God is.

"In short, if we mean to be philosophical our main concern will be that our beliefs should be true ; we shall care very little whether they happen to be popular with the intellectual 'proletarians' of the moment, and if we can get back to truth we shall not mind having to go back a long way after it." ¹

This opinion is becoming more general. There is even now a decided willingness to turn to *philosophia perennis*, and the long tradition of common sense. Over twenty-five years ago, when Neo-Thomism was born, it met with violent opposition. Rudolf Eucken wrote his *Thomas von Aquino und Kant, ein Kampf zweier Welten*, denouncing the menace of the new philosophy. In 1924, at the Philosophical Congress of Naples, the distinguished Neo-Thomist, P. Gemelli, occupied a platform with Professor A. Liebert of the Kantgesellschaft: the latter

profess no theory. They are philosophical anarchists doubting all thought and believing all facts."—S. RADHAKRISHNAN, *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy* (1922), p. 46.

¹ *Recent Developments in European Thought*, p. 48. Cf. *St. Thomas as a Philosopher*, same author : "But if we are not all of us professed Thomists, we are all, I believe, agreed to recognize in St. Thomas one of the great master-philosophers of human history, whose thought is part of the permanent inheritance of civilized Europeans, and whose influence is still living and salutary" (p. 1).

to recognize in the philosophy of St. Thomas a complement to critical philosophy ; the former to show the necessity of such a complement.

In other words, the time is at hand when modern philosophy, not only because of its own confessed bankruptcy, but also because of the inherent merits of the *philosophia perennis*, must take definite cognizance of the thought of St. Thomas. This brings us to the positive side of the philosophy of the Angelic Doctor, namely, the fact that he is the first of modern philosophers, as M. Étienne Gilson of the University of Paris has put it. "He is the first, not because he has created the principles and invented the attitude in which we live, nor because all the directions of thought by which the thirteenth century prepared the modern epoch were concentrated in his works ; but because he is the first occidental of whom the thought is neither enslaved to dogma nor to a system." ¹

But there is yet another reason why the philosophy of St. Thomas is particularly useful at this moment. What are the two great problems with which modern philosophy is struggling ? Are they not the immanence of God in the universe and the subjectivity of thought ? All religion hangs on the first and all science on the second. The divine and the human are in the balance with these two problems.

But there is no philosophical system in existence which so completely and thoroughly treats and solves these questions as the Thomistic. In recent years deep students have taken out of St. Thomas the fundamental principles which underlie his whole work. One of them is the real distinction between essence and existence ; the other is the doctrine of realism in knowledge. The first has been called the "fundamental truth of Christian philosophy" ; ² the second the "corner-stone of philosophical reconstruction." ³ Both of these fundamental principles are the solutions of the two vexed problems of modern thought.

If solution of modern problems is a recommendation for a philosophy which, in the strict sense, is neither ancient nor modern, but *ultra-modern*,⁴ then the philosophy of St. Thomas

¹ ÉTIENNE GILSON, *Études de Philosophie médiévale* (1921), preface, p. v.

² N. DEL PRADO, *De Veritate Fundamentalī philosophiæ Christianæ* (1911).

³ LÉON NOËL, *Saint Thomas et la Pensée moderne* (1925), p. 12.

⁴ JACQUES MARITAIN, *Antimoderne* (1922), p. 16. M. Maritain was at one time a disciple of M. Bergson, and at present is one of the leaders of the Thomistic restoration in France.

is pre-eminently suitable to modern times. It is *ultra-modern*, because it is spiritual and is not subject to decrepitude and death. "By its universality, it overflows infinitely, in the past as in the future, the limits of the present moment; it does not oppose itself to modern systems, as the past to that which is actually given, but as something perennial to something momentary. *Anti-modern* against the errors of the present time, it is *ultra-modern* for all truths enveloped in the time to come." ¹

Intellectual restoration is the condition of economic and political restoration. Intellectual values are needed more than "cosmic imaginings," and God is needed more than "a new idea of God." If we look to the foundations, the superstructure will take care of itself. Thomistic Intellectualism is the remedy against anarchy of ideas, riot of philosophical systems and breakdown of spiritual forces. "The Intelligence is life and the greatest thing there is in life." ² This Thomistic principle is at once an expression of the ideal of modern philosophy and the very preventative against its decay.

This work is divided into two parts. The first is an exposition without criticism of the modern grievances against an intellectualist philosophy along with its attacks on any intellectual knowledge of God and the substitute notion—the God of becoming. The second part is a critical examination of the modern doctrines of the intelligence and God in the light of the philosophy of St. Thomas.

¹ JACQUES MARITAIN, *Antimoderne* (1922), p. 16.

² *Contra Gentes*, lib. 4 c. 11.

CHAPTER II

THE MODERN ATTACK ON THE INTELLIGENCE

(A) CONSIDERED AS A FACULTY

WHAT is the purpose of the intellect? Is it the faculty of the divine, the transcender of the contingent, the plaything of the contemplative, or is it merely a primitive tool used crudely by men for want of a better instrument? Does not science itself demonstrate the truth of the latter alternative? At what age do we fix the appearance of man on earth? Is it not at the time when he manufactured tools and arms? The old quarry of Moulin-Quignon is the remotest scientific evidence we have of this fact. Man first showed intelligence in manufacturing tools . . . further than this we know nothing about intelligence on this earth. Though it be a long stretch from this day and age to the quarry of Moulin-Quignon, is it not true that even to-day we find men still making and utilizing instruments, not exclusively instruments of necessity, it is true, but those of luxury and comfort? "If therefore we could strip ourselves of all pride, and if, in order to define our species, we hold strictly to that which history and prehistory present us as the constant character of man and intelligence, we would not say perhaps *Homo sapiens*, but *Homo Faber*."¹ "Speculation is a luxury, action is a necessity."²

To the latter the intelligence is destined. It is the great right arm of mechanics, but, being practical, it is alien to the needs of the thinker. It exists solely for human needs and is limited by them.³ It serves man for a time in his upward march of evolution, but sooner or later it is destined to be replaced by a faculty of the spirit. As men get out of the practical the

¹ HENRI BERGSON, *L'Évolution Créatrice*, 21st edition, p. 151.

² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

³ J. B. BAILLIE, *Studies in Human Nature*, pp. 36, 149. WILLIAM KINGSLAND, *Our Infinite Life* (1922), p. 187. "So strong is the bent of the intellect towards matter . . . etc."—H. WILDON CARR, Litt.D., *The Philosophy of Change*, p. 176. For the intelligence considered as a unifier of discordant knowledge, see GEORGE SHANN, *Evolution of Knowledge* (1922), p. 94. For the intelligence

intelligence ceases to have value for them. Its "imperialism of principle and mechanism of means"¹ stamp it as geometric and rigid. Everything which is evil is to be attributed to the intelligence, not only in the field of philosophy, but in that of politics and economics. Even the defeat of the German army, it has been said, was due to its intellectualism.² In any case its practical character excludes it from philosophy. To some other faculty than the intelligence the philosopher must make his appeal.

(B) ATTACK ON THE INTELLIGENCE CONSIDERED IN ITS OPERATION

If the *purpose* of the intellect as a *faculty* has been exaggerated in the past, it would seem true also that *the value of its operations* has been grossly misrepresented. Here a few elementary facts may help to fix the misrepresentations.

The three operations of the intellect are, it will be recalled, apprehension, judgment and reasoning.

Apprehension is the act by which the intelligence sees or perceives something without affirming or denying it.

Judgment is the act of the mind by which it unites in affirming and separates in denying certain predicates of a given subject; *e.g.* Peter is mortal or Peter is not a quadruped.

Reasoning is the act of the mind by which it passes from a truth already known to another truth not previously known.

(a) ABSTRACTION.

The absurdity of abstraction is said to be evident, once its process has been explained. According to the modern conception, abstraction may be represented as either additive or subtractive. Additive abstraction is the consideration of the elements which are to be found common in phenomena

considered as the faculty of cataloguing all things under one of four possible relations, see J. C. THOMAS, D.Sc., *Life, Mind and Knowledge* (1921), p. 66. The relations, according to this writer, are: (1) the relation of a sense impression to previous ones as to whether it is like or different; (2) relative disposition of objects and events in space; (3) the relative order and sequence in time; (4) their physical descent or parentage, *i.e.* out of what collocation of condition and forces did they emerge, and to what changes in time can they give birth?

¹ PAUL GEMAHING, *Le Procès de l'Intelligence*.

² *Ibid.* (1922), p. 22.

without any regard for their differences. "It is essentially a human production; it is obtained by considering some special aspect in which certain experiences resemble one another, as mentally isolated from the aspects in which they differ."¹ The additive abstractive process, thus understood, applied to any army passing in review would be the consideration of the most common element in it—the uniform, for example. The poverty of the abstractive process, then, is immediately revealed in the scantiness of the knowledge it gives us.

In the words of Professor Stout, "Abstraction is the name given to the method by which the universal is found, that method being, we are told, to leave out what is different in the particular instances compared and to add together what they possess in common. If we look at the actual procedure of thought, we do not find this account confirmed. Gold, silver, copper and lead differ in colour, brilliancy, weight and density, but their universal which we call metal is not found on comparison by simply leaving out these differences without compensation."² "Life does not proceed by the association and addition of elements."³ Abstraction at bottom is therefore essentially unlikelike.

Besides the *additive* abstraction there is also the *subtractive* abstraction of which Taine spoke. Here the mind considers the common elements not directly but indirectly. The additive abstraction adds the common notes, the subtractive abstraction strips off common notes. It is the concave side of additive abstraction. It may be represented as a "peeling process." Imagine an essence in the centre of an onion by which it is intelligible. In order to get to the essence the onion must be peeled, each peel corresponding to an individuating note.

¹ GEORGE SHANN, *The Evolution of Knowledge* (1922), p. 54; also chap. iii.

² STOUT, "Nature of Universals," *Mind* (April 1922), p. 189. For Professor Stout, the universal is "distributive unity of a class."

³ *L'Évolution Créatrice*, p. 97.

"La blancheur d'un lis n'est pas la blancheur d'une nappe de neige."—H. BERGSON, *Matière et Mémoire*, p. 171.

"If we are asked how we arrive at the description of an apple, for example, assuming now the apple as part of the already accepted world of real things to which we react, we should naturally say that we note by the abstracting eye the redness of the apple, the taste, the shape, and ignoring the fact that these are embodied in a particular existential form, we hold them before the mind in their own right just as characters."—A. W. ROGERS, *What is Truth?* (1922), p. 62.

"The botanist who wishes to describe the artichoke describes the stem, the root, and the leaves. The metaphysician eliminates all that and studies the rest. This manner of procedure, exposed in this form, seems absurd; it is, however, that of the metaphysicians. When it is a question of living beings, they eliminate all the physico-chemical phenomena. This elimination made, they suppose that there still remains something."¹

If the poverty of the intellectual method be revealed in the mere consideration of its abstractive process, its complete uselessness is said to be revealed in the idea or the concept which it gives us.

In most recent years the attack on the concept has become less marked, it now being accepted as a foregone conclusion

¹ DELBERT, *La Science et la Réalité*, p. 117.

"L'Intelligence d'après lui (conceptualisme) resout l'unité superficielle de l'individu en qualités diverses, dont chacune, isolée de l'individu qui la limitait, devient par là même, représentative d'un genre."—*Matière et Mémoire*, p. 171.

"We begin with the whole continuous given reality; in order to deal with it, we have to analyse it, to isolate the elements with which we are to deal. This isolation must of course remove those elements from their setting in the rest of reality . . . we may presumably remove the lack of sunshine during the summers 1912 and 1913 from its relation of simultaneity with Mr. Asquith's Premiership without affecting its nature at all in any other respect. . . . The point which I wish to emphasize in this connection is that there are some relations whose removals make no difference to the related term other than the removal itself."—WILLIAM TEMPLE, *Mens Creatrix* (1923), pp. 73-78.

The American philosopher William James has delivered himself of a critique of conceptual knowledge, but has openly confessed it to be Bergsonian in character. He has dedicated Chapter VI. of *Pluralism* to his French colleague's attacks. M. Bergson, he writes, made him more bold in his anti-intellectualism (*Pluralistic Universe*, p. 212). And in the letter of congratulations which Professor James sent to M. Bergson on the occasion of the publication of his *L'Évolution Créatrice*, we find the following:—"O my Bergson, you are a magician . . . to me at present the vital achievement of the book is that it inflicts an irremediable death-wound upon Intellectualism. It can never resuscitate. . . . But the beast has its death-wound now, and the manner in which you have inflicted it (internal versus *temps d'arrêt*) is masterly in the extreme. I feel that at bottom you and I are fighting the same fight, you a commander, and I in the ranks. . . . I am so enthusiastic as to have said only two days ago . . . I thank heaven that I have lived to this date . . . that I have witnessed the Russo-Japanese War, and seen Bergson's new book appear . . . the two great modern turning-points in history and thought."—(*Letters*, vol. ii pp. 290-4.) Two days after he wrote this letter, he sent another to Doctor Schiller of Oxford, who also shares his views, as the letter indicates:—"But have you read Bergson's new book? It seems to me that nothing is important in comparison with that divine apparition; all our positions, real time, a growing world, asserted magisterially, and the beast intellectualism killed absolutely dead."—(*Ibid.*, vol. ii p. 290.)

that it has been proved worthless. There is no use in beating a dead dog. Whatever philosophical criticism is given to-day is in greater part a repetition of that made by the great French Academician Henri Bergson. It is under his leadership that the intellectualist position has met its severest attacks, and it is round his arguments that all modern anti-intellectualists rally. Not only to his anti-intellectualism but also to his positive doctrine English philosophy is profoundly indebted. The greater portion of English and American philosophy which has appeared in recent years is Bergsonian in inspiration. In giving the critique of M. Bergson we are giving one which is original, forceful and sincere.

(b) CONCEPT.

The general criticism of the concept, under which fall all particular criticisms, is that the concept is "naturally unsuited for life."¹

It is unsuited for life, for three reasons:—

1. It substitutes a symbol for reality.
2. It solidifies movement.
3. It breaks up what is continuous and successive.

1. The primary condition that a concept must fulfil, if it is to be suited for life, is that it give reality itself and not a mere symbol of reality. Life deals with realities and not with figures, with substances and not with shadows. But a concept gives merely figures, shadows and symbols, and is consequently unsuited for the purposes of life. At best it gives us merely "a rubric under which we write all living beings,"² or a "frame in which we place an infinity of objects one alongside the other."³ The concept "man," for example, is such a scheme under which all the individual men in the world are grouped. It has the advantage of extension, it is true, but it reveals nothing about the nature of the reality. It lacks comprehension, and in lacking that it fails to attain reality.⁴ The mind in the face of reality merely stamps out a ticket or gives a receipt which is valuable for all objects of that class, but this ticket or receipt is in no way representative of reality. It is a mere symbol or a *suc-cédané* that is no longer remembered as such.⁵

¹ *L'Évolution Créatrice*, p. 179.

² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

⁵ M. BLONDEL, *Le Procès de l'Intelligence*, p. 228.

In generating concepts the mind "generates signs, institutes relations and analogies, substitutes its representations and its disconnected language, for the direct voice of all simple things."¹ Concepts give us a "world of representations as in a cage of glazed glass, where we are in contact with products of industry, *artificiata*, very much as in a museum, where, under the pretext of a lesson on things in themselves, we know the field of wheat only by a dry straw glued to a pasteboard along with other dead samples."² To accept this symbol or substitute, the *succédané* of the real, as the real itself is no less foolish, according to M. Blondel, than for a young lover, in the presence of his fiancée, to continue to look at her photograph instead of looking on her.³

And furthermore, if the concept is a mere substitute for reality there is necessarily an unbridgable distance between mind and object. How can the subject ever know the object if a mere rubric or frame or symbol insists on putting itself between the two? It would seem, therefore, from the mere consideration of the concept considered in itself, that the intelligence is characterized, as M. Bergson has told us, by a natural unfitness for life.

2. *It solidifies movement.*—The first characteristic of life is movement. So fundamental is this characteristic that immobility is often taken as the first apparent sign of death. Not only is the individual life in movement, but the whole universe with it, whether it be organically or biologically considered. Evolution is in the background of all modern science.

What does the intellect do in the face of movement? First of all, to seize movement it must break it up, by taking snapshots of it. The multitudinous photographs which are quickly run through a moving-picture machine introduce an extrinsic and impersonal movement, but in themselves they are not photographs of the movement. Neither is the concept expressive of movement, but merely snapshots of it. While it

¹ M. BLONDEL, *Le Procès de l'Intelligence*, p. 231. Cf. *L'Évolution Créatrice*, p. 97.

² *Ibid.*, p. 237.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

"The danger of this conception (stratification of sedimentary ideas) is that when a new problem presents itself to the thought, or a new reality presents itself to be studied, there is the irresistible temptation for it, in place of laboriously creating the original method or concept which is necessary for the reality, to try to seek in the old arsenal of ready-made ideas that which can dispense it from this intellectual effort."—*Ibid.*, p. 20.

is busy at this work, life which is fluid is passing away all the time.¹

Then, again, to represent movement it must fall back on a juxtaposition of these snapshots as is done in the moving-picture machine. It represents the becoming as a "series of states, of which each one is homogeneous with itself and consequently does not change." Life is liquid, abstraction is solid. One therefore cannot represent the other. The Humpty Dumpty that fell from the wall, with the help of all the king's horses and all the king's men could never be put together again. So neither can life be constructed in its liquid wholeness, once it has been solidified by thought. "Out of no amount of discreteness can you manufacture the concrete."²

In virtue of this tendency to solidify, which is proper to the intelligence, it remains incapable of ever seizing novelty and creation. "Our intelligence is satisfied with a consequence determined in function of determined antecedents, or means determined in function of determined end." But novelty and creation have no antecedents. The intelligence, therefore, remains incapable of ever grasping them.³

Furthermore, since all life is in evolution, and since an eternal *devenir* is at the bottom of all things, is not the intelligence itself a mere emanation of this evolution, and just a product of its process? To say, therefore, that the intelligence can grasp evolution is to say the part can grasp the whole . . . and obviously this is absurd.⁴

¹ *L'Évolution Créatrice*, pp. 323-55.

"Life appears to intellectual apprehension as an extension, as a succession of states."—H. WILDON CARR, Litt.D., *The Philosophy of Change* (1912), p. 29. Concepts enable us "to catch hold as it were of certain positions of our changeful stream of presentations."—C. H. RICHARDSON, *Supremacy of Spirit*, p. 19.

² W. JAMES, *Pluralistic Universe*, p. 253.

"Concepts are merely a limit and a mean zone to the total superior life."—*Le Procès de l'Intelligence*, article of PAUL ARCHAMBAULT, p. 20.

³ *L'Évolution Créatrice*, pp. 177-8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Introd., p. 2.

"Our intellect takes views of movement, frames it and moulds it in rigid concepts, but lets the movement itself escape."—H. WILDON CARR, *The Philosophy of Change*, p. 36.

"Intellect is only a function of life, not life itself."—WILLIAM KINGSLAND, *Our Infinite Life* (1922).

"The nature of our intellect is to know reality in the static form we call matter, and not in the flowing form we call life."—*The Philosophy of Change*, p. 176.

3. *It breaks up what is continuous and successive.*—The universe is a continuum; it is an organic whole; its growth is biological, not crystalline. The senses reveal this continuity. If we but run our fingers over a surface, we are in contact with it continuously. But what does the intelligence do in the face of this continuity? It breaks up the continuous into discrete parts. It represents time by a constant, instead of representing it as a continuous succession or flux.¹

This analytic static character of the intelligence is due to its very nature. From the moment it came from the hands of nature, it was destined for inorganic solids.² It can better handle reality for its practical uses by splitting it up, and for this reason it has been the ideal faculty for mechanics. Every division of matter into independent bodies of absolute determined shapes is artificial.³ This the intelligence does of necessity.

The conclusion which contemporary thought draws from this critique is that the intelligence is smitten by a general incapacity to understand life. It gives only dead conceptual symbols instead of living realities; it reveals the dynamic as static, the concrete as abstract, the fluid as a solid, and the living as inert. Following it, we are "brought to ease only in the discontinuous, the immobile and death."⁴

An additional word about judgment and reasoning may be desirable.

The elements which enter into a judgment are concepts. But the concepts, according to the findings of contemporary thought, are not representative of the real—but mere substitutes for it. The judgment, then, will share the shortcoming of its elements and fail in like manner to reach reality.⁵

The consequence is that we will henceforth be less interested in the truth of judgments than in their value. The fundamental importance of this philosophy of value will be clearly seen in our treatment of religious experience.⁶

The third operation of the mind is reasoning, by which the mind passes from the known to the unknown truth.

¹ *L'Évolution Créatrice*, p. 10.

² *Ibid.*, p. 167.

³ H. BERGSON, *Matière et Mémoire*.

⁴ *L'Évolution Créatrice*, p. 179.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 330-32.

⁶ "At the present time philosophy is carried on more explicitly in terms of value than at any previous time."—A. SETH PRINGLE-PATTISON, LL.D., D.C.L., *The Idea of God* (2nd edition), p. 39.

But what is reasoning but the combination of concepts and judgments? Both of these, according to the modern position, are inadequate for life. Reasoning based on them must then of necessity be worthless. Mr. Bertrand Russell tells us that "reason and analysis are blind gates leading to the morass of illusion."¹

So far the first headlong attack upon the reasoning powers. We turn to pass rapidly in review some of the philosophies that have contributed to the anti-intellectualist assault by disparaging all proof, and by discarding truth.

A philosophy without proofs is what is wanted for men of action who "propose something and do not want to be restrained by the necessity of giving reasons for it."² "It would seem that knowledge concerning the universe as a whole is not to be obtained by metaphysics, and that the proposed proofs, that, in virtue of the laws of logic, such and such things *must* exist and such and such others cannot, are not capable of surviving careful scrutiny."³ "We find an assumption that was the soul of Scholasticism, the assumption, namely, that anything that is necessary in the way of belief must be susceptible of articulate proof, as rampant as it ever was, in the religious agnosticism of to-day; and we find it, moreover, blossoming out into corollaries, as for instance that to believe anything without such proof is to be unscientific, and that to be unscientific is the lowest depth to which a man can fall."⁴

Professor James, thanks to the influence of M. Henri Bergson, came to emancipate himself completely from all logic. "For my part, I have found myself compelled to *give up logic*, fairly, squarely and irrevocably. It has an imperishable use in human life, but that use is not to make us acquainted with the essential nature of reality. . . . Reality, life, experience, concreteness, immediacy, use what word you will, exceeds our logic, overflows and surrounds it." Vision, then, and not proof is the supreme way of attaining truth. "A man's vision is the great fact about him. Who cares for Carlyle's reason, or Schopenhauer's or Spinoza's? Philosophy is the expression of man's most intimate character, and all definitions of the universe are but

¹ *Mysticism and Logic* (1918), p. 9.

² RALPH BARTON PERRY, *Present Conflict of Ideals*, p. 296.

³ BERTRAND RUSSELL, M.A., F.R.S., *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 221.

⁴ W. JAMES, Preface to PAULSEN's *Introduction to Philosophy*.

the deliberately adopted reactions of human character upon it. . . . Philosophy is only a matter of passionate vision rather than of logic—logic only finding reasons for the vision afterwards.”¹ “Emotional congeniality and social prestige” precede it.² Demonstration attaches itself to consistency. But consistency is an attribute of the intellectualist position. Proofs therefore must be made less exacting. “Abstract consistency,” Dr. Bradley tells us, “is a superstitious idolatry”;³ and when speaking of the subject of religion and the need of logic and consistency in treating of its subject-matter, he asks, “Is there any need for us to avoid self-contradiction?”⁴ Sir Henry Jones would not go so far, but he would stop at contraries. “We cannot rest in contradiction, but we can be content with opposites.”⁵ What all philosophy up to this time has called contradiction, is now really only a choice of things more or less satisfactory. Not merely in theory, but in the very act of philosophizing itself, the fundamental principles of thought are removed from their lofty and absolute position and made something relative and changing.⁶ Thus in the free philosophy of vision, loosened from the strait-jackets of Intellectualism, we must not be shocked to find such statements as this: “The contradiction of a conation co-existing with fruition must be realized.”⁷ The modern mind is not long in choosing between the “apparent discord of healthy moral sentiment” and the artificial moral symmetry of a philosophic system.⁸

¹ *Pluralistic Universe*, pp. 212-14, p. 20, p. 176.

² JOHN DEWEY, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), p. 20.

³ F. BRADLEY, *Essays in Truth and Reality*, p. 445.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 430.

⁵ *A Faith that Enquires*, p. 317. He admits, however, that we are all consistent. The difficulty a philosopher will have in objecting to Bradley is made quite clear by himself: “If you are willing to be inconsistent you cannot be refuted.”—*Truth and Reality*, p. 235.

⁶ F. C. S. SCHILLER, *Humanism*, p. 188.

“The trained Scholastic, if you are so ill advised as to enter into argument with him, will break down all your miserable modern criticisms of Saint Thomas and will prove to you logically the existence of all his medieval entities. You remain speechless and unconvinced. For his entities no matter how logical will not fit in with our modern view, and in spite of logic we can no longer get from them any sense of reality.”—PRATT, *Religious Consciousness*, p. 199.

⁷ B. BOSANQUET, *Individuality and Value*, Appendix, p. 248.

“See the reasoning process by which a transition is made through contradictions, thanks to the magic word ‘nevertheless.’”—A. SETH PRINGLE-PATTISON, *The Idea of God*, p. 317.

⁸ J. B. BAILLIE, *Studies in Human Nature* (1921), p. 10.

Not only will consistency and logic cease to be the ideal of modern thought, but even truth itself will cease to be the ideal. Professor Radhakrishnan in enumerating the characteristics of modern thought points this out as important: "Now we do not care," he writes, "to ascertain whether an opinion is true or false, but only whether it is life-furthering, life-preserving. We start with a certain view of life, think of a few things as necessary to it, and conclude that they are true and objective. . . . Impulse to knowledge and love of truth cease to be the motives of philosophy, and some moral ideas or religious prejudices which we wish to defend even at the cost of consistency take their place." ¹

So true is this, that one of the modern thinkers explicitly states that the condition upon which you accept his conclusion is that you cease to use the criterion of truth. "No one is likely to content himself with the doctrine which I advocate, if he believes there is no truth except the truth which is self-consistent and ultimate." ² Truth is not an end of dialectics; it is merely a "preliminary means to other vital satisfactions." ³ "There is no reason to set up a peculiar process of verification for the satisfying of an intellectual interest, different in kind from the rest, superior in dignity and autocratic in authority. For there is no pure intellect." ⁴ M. le Roy goes even further than his English colleague: "It is not a question of being right or wrong. It is a mark of great coarseness to wish to be right. . . . It is a testimony of a great want of culture." ⁵ Even the source of Truth itself is to be suspected of being polluted. We are bound to conclude, one recent author tells us, "that in the cosmic ordering of human life the Spirit of the world must have something else to do than to be reasonable as we count reasonableness. It is possible that not reasonableness but dramatic completeness may be the chief unifying quality of man's life." ⁶ If the term "truth" is to be retained it is merely to mean that which "works well," or the "satisfyingness of a conclusion," or its "cash value in terms of particular experience." ⁷

¹ *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, p. 13.

² F. BRADLEY, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 437.

³ W. JAMES, *Pragmatism*.

⁴ F. C. S. SCHILLER, *Studies in Humanism*, p. 7.

⁵ *Revue de Philosophie* (1906), vol. ii. p. 417.

⁶ J. B. BAILLIE, *Studies in Human Nature*, p. 11.

⁷ W. JAMES, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 448, p. 443.

Briefly, Intellectualism, according to the modern doctrine, is an enemy of life. It is cold, inert, unsympathetic. Its symbol is the "cold and perfect image of Minerva at the top of the Parthenon, the serenity of whose visage expresses all the certitudes, and the folds of whose marble robes have all the symmetric rigidity of the syllogism—those tranquil Roman ways of the intelligence." ¹

The science of metaphysics, which has reared itself upon these lifeless foundations, must therefore cease to claim a worth for itself. "It must always take in its final form an idiosyncrasy," ² and in its final form it is "a work of imagination superimposed upon other works of the imagination," or, in the well-known words of Dr. Bradley, the "science of giving bad reasons for what we believe on instinct." ³

Intellectualism is consequently a highly defective philosophical method; it is a "besetting sin," ⁴ even "the very original sin of thought," ⁵ and a "beast." ⁶ Imagination is superior to the intellect, and this for no less than sixteen reasons.⁷ Aesthetics surpasses it as a clue to reality; the artistic vision of Apollo is superior to the logic of Socrates, "Marguerite is worth more than Aristotle." ⁸ Belphegor is superior to Minerva.⁹

'But yesterday the word of reason might
Have stood against the world; now lies it there,
And none so poor to do it reverence.'

¹ GAETAN BERNOVILLE, *Minerva ou Belphégor* (1921), p. 153.

² F. C. S. SCHILLER, *Studies in Humanism*, p. 18.

³ *Appearance and Reality*, p. xiv.

⁴ W. JAMES, Preface to PAULSEN's *Introduction to Philosophy*.

⁵ H. BERGSON, *Matière et Mémoire*.

⁶ *Letters of William James*, vol. ii. p. 296.

⁷ D. W. FAWCETT, *Divine Imagining*.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

⁹ GAETAN BERNOVILLE, *Minerva ou Belphégor* (1921).

CHAPTER III

REJECTION OF THE DEMONSTRABILITY OF GOD'S EXISTENCE, AND SOME NEW APPROACHES

IT follows from the preceding train of thought that the "theism of philosophical research in which the idea of God is arrived at by a process of reflective thought must give way to the theism of religious consciousness for which God is in some way an immediate object."¹ The system which, "starting with the intellectual standpoint, moves along with the intellectual action of man," must give way to the other which "begins from the standpoint of religion and moves along with the religious and spiritual experience."²

Contemporary thought is practically unanimous upon this point. In 1904 Professor James Pratt sent to William James a list of questions on the subject of religious belief. In answer to the question, "Why do you believe in God? Is it from argument?" the Harvard Professor answered, "Emphatically No."³ All arguments for the existence of God he regarded as illusory.⁴ In his work on Religious Experience he made his answer clearer: "Can the existence of God be proven? No. The book of Job went over this whole matter once for all and definitely. Ratiocination is a relatively superficial and unreal path to the Deity. I will lay my hand upon my mouth, I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye seeth Thee." Then in his own graphic style he goes on to tell us what has happened to the proofs: "That vast literature of proofs for God's existence drawn from the order of nature, which a century ago seemed to be so overwhelmingly convincing, to-day does little

¹ W. R. SORLEY, *Moral Values and the Idea of God* (2nd edit., 1921), p. 302. Cf. R. ALFRED HOERNLÉ, *Studies in Contemporary Metaphysics* (1921), p. 294; G. FONSEGRIVE, *L'Évolution des Idées* (1921), p. 218; S. ALEXANDER, *Space, Time and Deity* (1922), vol. ii. p. 343.

² W. N. CLARKE, *An Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 155.

³ *Letters of William James*, vol. ii. p. 213.

⁴ "Not by the intellect can we enter into this absolute, this inner sanctum of life."—W. KINGSLAND, *Our Infinite Life* (1922), p. 187.

⁵ E. BOUTROUX, *Science and Religion* (Eng. trans.), p. 318.