
Submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

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Table of Contents.


2. A Brief Survey of the Development of American Criticism During the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.


5. Illusion and Conduct in the Shelburne Essays.


8. Cosmos:
   (11) The Incarnate Word.

Appendices.

Bibliography.
1. Throughout the thesis, in referring to the *Shelburne Essays*, and to the *New Shelburne Essays*, I have given only the number and not the title of the volume, in order to maintain a certain uniformity of reference, since only the later series of the *Shelburne Essays* have titles. For the full titles, vide Appendix A. I have, however, used the titles of individual volumes of *The Greek Tradition*.

2. For purposes of economy, in referring to a work in a footnote, I have given only the place and date of publication, not the firm of publishers. Fuller particulars are included in the bibliography at the end.
Paul Elmer More was born on December 12, 1864 in St. Louis, Missouri, the son of Enoch Anson More and his wife, Katharine Hay Elmer. Both parents were of Colonial stock, his mother's family being able to trace back their descent to Saxon times. His father had started married life as a bookseller in Dayton, Ohio, but he and his wife later moved to St. Louis in order to be near a minister who had had a profound influence upon them. Enoch More had inherited from his New England ancestors a stern sense of religious duty. Rigid and literal in his piety, he was unfortunately not the sort of man to attract his own children to a love of religion once they came of an age to think for themselves. Fortunately his wife more than made up for the deficiency, for although Katharine More was not an educated woman in the strict sense of the word, she was a wide and voracious reader, with an open mind and a capacity for entering imaginatively into what she read, a gift obviously inherited by her son, who, at a very early age, was able to hold his small companions spell-bound by the wonderful tales he made up. Nor was Enoch More's piety without its effect, for Paul More's first literary effort to appear in print, unknown to the young author, was a sermon published when he was eight.

During the Civil War, Enoch More supported the Union and rose to the rank of Brigadier General in the Commissary

2. Ibid., p. 61.
3. More, Pages From an Oxford Diary, (Princeton; 1937), Section V.
Department; his records were considered models of neatness and accuracy in the Department of War. In civilian life, however, he was less successful. Naturally ambitious, he had suffered his first real frustration when his parents were unable to let him take up the architectural career upon which he had set his heart, and throughout his life, in spite of plenty of business acumen, he seemed unable to make a success of any of the various occupations he took up. As a result, the story of life in the More household was a chequered one. Paul Elmer was the seventh of eight children, and by the time he and his younger brother, Louis Trenchard More, (later Professor of Physics at the University of Cincinnati) were of age to go to school, the family fortunes had improved sufficiently, mainly through the self-sacrifice and ingenuity of their mother, to allow them to continue their education with a view to passing on to the university. Nevertheless, after he had finished his studies at the Public School in St. Louis, Paul More had himself to teach for three years before going on to Washington University, where he graduated in 1887. His eyesight at this time gave him a good deal of trouble, but he was able to go on with his studies through the help of his sister Alice who read his work to him aloud.

From the calm, slightly aloof dignity of his writings it is so easy to assume that he was one of a select and fortunate aristoc-

1. Louis Trenchard More was himself a contributor to the New Humanist symposium, *Humanism and America*, vide p. 67, and More frequently quotes his authority in support of his own views on modern science as he seeks to appraise the general trends of the day, e.g., *Shelburne Essays III*, *The Quest of a Century*, p. 244. (Boston and New York: 1905.)
cracy to whom scholarship came as a natural inheritance that it is salutary to pause and consider the handicaps, both financial and physical, which More had to overcome in his eager quest for knowledge, and which doubtlessly played their part in bracing and disciplining his spirit.

Upon leaving Washington University, he became Latin master at the Smith Academy, St. Louis, where he remained nominally five years, although he spent the last year in Europe. In 1891, he took his Master's degree in Washington with a thesis written in Latin, the result of independent study.

From his high school days, he had been aware of the strong discrepancy existing between the religion of his childhood, a Presbyterianism in the vein of Jonathan Edwards, and the discoveries of modern science as it was expounded by Darwin, Huxley and Spencer. He had therefore abandoned Christianity, not without a keen sense of loss, and had turned instead to romantic literature and philosophy, particularly to the German writers. His keenly 'analytical mind soon became conscious, however, that it was necessary to decide between romanticism and scientific naturalism, as he found it increasingly difficult to go on consenting to two mutually exclusive systems of thought. Later he was to stress the common descent and direction of both these forms of naturalism, Rousseausistic and Baconian, but at

1. Dr. A. Dakin of Amherst, who is working upon the official biography of More, has assured me that More's Master's degree dates from 1891, although More himself was under the misapprehension that he obtained it in 1892, and Professor Shafer gives the latter date. Vide Shafer, op. cit., p. 64.
2. More, Pages From an Oxford Diary, Section V.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
the time of his preoccupation with romanticism, he saw it in contrast to, rather than as complementary to, scientific naturalism. At one time he had begun to work out a rationalistic system of thought 'more consistent and comprehensive than Spencer's' which was to have been his magnum opus, but the project was abandoned and the manuscript destroyed, together with those of several romantic tragedies and a romantic epic composed about the same time. His intellectual doubts were aggravated by a naturally nervous sensibility, and this in turn was accentuated by his tendency to identify himself with the Romantic heroes of his reading. All the traits of the Romantic temperament were present in his first published work of any importance, *Helena and Occasional Poems* which appeared in 1890. Several of the poems had previously appeared anonymously in the *Washington University Magazine*. The volume as a whole is remarkable for little except the evidence it affords of how completely More himself was under the sway of Romantic emotionalism. In metre and structure several of the poems revealed the influence of his classical studies, but the spirit which informed them was unmistakably romantic in its wistful melancholy. The young lady who inspired the title-

2. More, *Pages From an Oxford Diary*, Section V.
3. I have received from Professor Shafer a copy of an article of his reprinted from *American Literature*, Vol. 20, No. 1, March, 1948, untitled 'Paul Elmer More: A Note On His Verse And Prose Written In Youth With Two Unpublished Poems'. I have based my observations upon that and upon Professor Shafer's own comments on More's juvenilia in his *Paul Elmer More and American Criticism*, pp. in which he publishes selections from *Helena* as an appendix. The actual volume itself is unobtainable in this country, nor have I been able to borrow it from any American source. At the last moment, Dr. More's daughter, Mrs. E. C. Dymond, of Edinburgh, has kindly lent me a personal copy, so that I have been able to include it in my bibliography.
piece was a Miss Clara Gardiner with whom More fancied himself in love at the time, although from the mild sentimentality pervading the volume it would seem he was rather in love with love.

This 'temperamentalism' persisted during the period at the Smith Academy, and it was his romantic sense of genius frustrated and his longing for solitude which made him throw up his post and go off to Europe. From this period dated the incident described by him in his essay on Hawthorne in Series One of the Shelburne Essays to illustrate the deep human sense of isolation which haunted the work of the American novelist. There he describes his visit to the little English church at Interlaken, and the sermon preached by the young Scottish minister of which the burden was the 'inevitable loneliness which follows man from the cradle to the grave'. To the visitors there that morning seeking release from the anxiety which oppressed them in town, at home, in the busy market place, he could offer no peace amidst the beauty of nature, for man's sin had come not only between man and man, but between man and nature. He could but advise them to return and bear bravely and patiently the primeval curse of separation. 'Think not, while evil abides alone; in you, ye shall be aught but immix for evil is the seeking of self and the turning away from the commonality of the world.' It would be interesting to know what the personal effect of those words were upon More himself, the young man who had gone to

1. Robert Shafer, Paul Elmer More: A Note On His Verse And Prose Written In Youth, with Two Unpublished Poems, p. 50.
Europe in search of solitude. That he quotes the episode at length suggests that it made more than an objective impression upon his mind. His presence in church at all suggests that he was still seeking for some satisfaction which his belated romanticism could not provide. His break with the traditional beliefs of his parents had left him without an anchor in religion. His interest in science had been inadequate to supply an alternative and now he was coming increasingly to see that romanticism was the source, not the consolation, of his own spiritual malaise, and as such was unlikely to afford him any true guidance.

This inner unrest reached a climax in an incident which More has described in Series Six of the Shelburne Essays, and which proved a vital turning point in his inner experience. 'Having dropped away from allegiance to the creed of Calvin, I had for a number of years sought a substitute for faith in increase of knowledge; like many another I thought to conceal from myself the want of intellectual purpose in miscellaneous curiosity. And then, just as the vanity of this pursuit began to grow too insistent, came the unexpected index pointing to the new way—no slender oracle, but the ponderous and right German utterance of Baur's Manichaïsches Religionsystem. It would be impossible to convey to others, I cannot quite recall to myself, the excitement amounting almost to a physical
perturbation caused by this first glimpse into the mysteries of independent faith. It was not, I need hardly say, that I failed even then to see the extravagance and materialistic tendencies of the Manichaean superstition; but its highly elaborate form, not without elements of real sublimity, acted as a powerful stimulus to the imagination. Here, symbolised by the cosmic conflict of light and darkness, was found as in a great epic poem the eternal problem of good and evil, of the thirst for happiness and the reality of suffering, which I know to lie at the bottom of religious thought and emotion.

This experience he could only compare to the 'Tolle, Lege' of St. Augustine's conversion, and it was undoubtedly the new interest engendered by Baur's work which made him determine to enter Harvard in order to equip himself linguistically for a study of comparative religions. Here his fellow student was Irving Babbitt, a year his junior, and in every way an admirable foil for More's still impressionable and more feminine genius. Babbitt was virile, dogmatic, rarely moving from his intellectual conclusions once his mind was made up. He had graduated from Harvard, had taught for a time in Montana, and had then spent a year in Paris, studying under Sylvain Lévi. He had a natural love of the classics which, according to his own account, had been born in him; the vaguely romantic enthusiasms of his fellow student were anathema to him. More says of himself that at the outset of the

3. Ibid., p. 29.
friendship he occupied for Babbitt the position later held by Rousseau. Irving Babbitt had already made up his mind on many of the major issues confronting the age, More was still in process of being shaped by the influences playing upon him. The friendship was therefore from his angle the more fructifying. What More was to become, for better, for worse, was largely determined by the impact of Babbitt's personality upon his during the three years at Harvard. This friendship may rank among the great literary friendships of the last two centuries which have decided the intellectual destiny of one, if not of both, of the two people involved; with the friendships of Wordsworth and Coleridge, Tennyson and Arthur Hallam, Arnold and A.H. Clough, and less widely known in this country, though perhaps more decisive in its effects than any of the others, Renan and the young French scientist, Berthelot. The friendship of More and Babbitt offers a striking parallel to this last example. More, like Renan, was passing through an acute religious crisis at the time of meeting, and for that reason, his naturally susceptible spirit was, just as Renan's had been, all the more susceptible to the new influences his companion brought to bear upon him. In his essay on 'Irving Babbitt' in On Being Human, More recalls at length the battles of words they waged during their peregrinations along the old North Avenue and Brattle Street, or in their respective rooms whenever wet weather or the lateness of the hour drove them indoors. 'And I can see, the first of these three years was when they were students together, the second when Babbitt returned to Harvard as instructor in French after an interval of a year at Williams, and a third in 1899-1900 when More was doing special work for Professor Lanman under whom they had both been students, cf. New Shelburne Essays,
almost hear, him now as he used to pace back and forth the few steps from wall to wall, arguing vehemently on whatever question might be breached, or recounting the adventures of his youth (a strange and mixed experience), pausing at every fourth or fifth turn to take huge draughts from the water jug on my wash-stand, and pretty well emptying it in the course of an evening. To Babbitt More, he was greater as a talker than as a teacher or as an author, a judgment borne out by Professor G.R. Elliott of Amherst. As a listener, he was a strange, almost terrifying phenomenon. He would gaze away from the speaker in a manner suggesting remoteness, but let the luckless individual utter one rash statement or a logical fallacy and he was likely to be caught up by a swift direct glance that seemed to shoot out tentacles, as it were, into his very soul. One such instance More recalls when, as they were strolling along North Avenue engaged in debate over I cannot remember what matter! Babbitt suddenly stopped short, faced about upon me, and, with both hands rigidly clenched, ejaculated: "Good God, man, are you a Jesuit in disguise?" The words may sound flat enough in the repeating; but as they were hurled out, with the accompanying gesture and glance of indignation, they made an impression not to be forgotten; and More adds, with a sudden stroke of whimsy, 'I have never been able to answer the question satisfactorily'.

* Cf. The American Review, April 1937, Vol. IX No. 1, G.R. Elliott, 'More's Christology', pp. 35-36, in which he contrasts More, 'the Hermit of Princeton' with his sheer joy in writing, with Babbitt, 'the Warring Buddha of Harvard' to whom writing was merely a duty, and who rejoiced when he might emerge from the study into the larger freedom of a bout of argument.


3 Ibid., p. 27.
The subjects of these debates were mainly literary. Babbitt encouraged More to leave the false glamours of romanticism for the sounder beauties of the Classics, and at the same time, to find in Oriental literature the calm and detachment from merely sensuous impressions which More sorely needed. But even in their mutual interest in their studies in Hinduism, there was a disparity of outlook. More's innate mysticism led him to concentrate upon the Sanskrit literature of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gītā and the Vedantic theosophy, while Babbitt's more positivistic and practical outlook led him to the Pāli texts which contained the most authentic record of the Buddhistic dhamma with its emphasis upon austere self-discipline. To this early preference Babbitt remained unswervingly loyal throughout his career, whereas More, as we shall see, evolved away from his early Brahminism to a Platonism supplemented by Christian theology of the Greek type. Thus, when their discussions were resumed during the academic year 1925-1926 when More was acting as a substitute at Harvard for an absent member of the Classical Department, the subject of their debate was changed, although its intensity was unimpaired by the long interval. Babbitt had lost nothing of his old confidence and aggressiveness, and night after night in the house which More had taken over for the year, he would sit on one side of the great fireplace, with More as his—shall I say, his glad victim—and pour

1. Ibid., p.33.
2. Ibid., p.32.
3. Ibid., p.35.
4. Ibid., p.34.
'out such a stream of argument, invective, and persuasion as had not, I am sure, been heard before in Cambridge and will never be heard again. It was magnifique, et c'était la guerre!'1

'Naturally', adds More, 'I thought at the time I was right, as I still think; but if victory ever lodged on my side, it was of a very private sort, known only to myself when I crept to bed. But oh the wonder and glitter of those defeats!'

Side by side with More's own impressions of these debates, it is interesting to set the anecdote he tells of a cultured Hindu's reactions to Babbitt. The had been in Harvard and had met Babbitt through More's introduction. When More later had occasion to ask him, at a dinner given by Frank Mather, another of the New Humanist group, what he thought of Babbitt, the Hindu replied, quickly and enthusiastically: 'Oh, Babbitt, he is a holy man, a great saint!' 'Now holiness', says More, 'is the last trait that most of us in the West would attribute to one of Babbitt's self-assertive character, but the word came quite naturally from an Oriental to whom the saint is a man notable rather for his will-power than for meek submissiveness. It was, perhaps, because I ventured upon some criticism of this kind that the Hindu visitor put me in my place: "You are not a saint at all, but only a philosopher"; and then answering a question of our host about himself added, with a twinkle in his eye:

"And you, my dear Frank, are the wickedest man I know".2

1. Ibid., p. 35.
2. Ibid., pp. 35-36.
3. Ibid., p. 42.
Such a story tells us almost as much about More as it does about Babbitt, but this is to anticipate. In 1893, More took a second Master's degree, and from 1894-1895, he acted as Professor Lanman’s assistant at Harvard. The growing influence of Indian philosophy upon his thought at the time may be seen clearly from his next printed work, *The Great Refusal*, published in 1894. This is obviously biographical, and records the development of his own spiritual beliefs and conflicts. The central theme is the love of a young man of considerable intellectual promise for a beautiful woman whom, eventually, he decides not to marry. The book consists of letters and poems sent to her, and Paul More is ostensibly just the editor. Actually the letters and poems were written by More himself during the year before he went to Harvard to a young lady with whom he had fallen deeply in love. The identity of the lady remained a secret for many years, but several years after Paul More’s death, Professor Louis Trenchard More informed Professor Shafer that she was a Miss Sadie Brank, daughter of a Presbyterian clergyman, whom More had met through her brother, a student at the Smith Academy while he was a teacher there. The love lyrics were of the same subjective tone as the poems in *Helena*, although F.J. Mather thought highly enough of it as a whole to liken it to a new *Vita Nuova*. To him, Paul More, like Dante, had embodied in the beauty and loveliness of a fair

1. *The Great Refusal, Being Letters of a Dreamer in Gotham*, (New York, 1894). This is another of More’s early works which I have failed to obtain. It would be, I understand, from Dr. Dakin, of considerable importance in an historical study of his thought in its earlier days, but it is less important for a systematic approach to his later thought. Mr. Raymond assures me that her father came

woman all his own lofty idealisms. The work is of further interest, it would appear, for the light it throws on the author's growing discontent with his position of intellectual agnosticism. He was trying to find refuge in an eclectic mysticism, drawn from Oriental, Manichaean and mediaeval sources, but throughout he remained at heart romantically introspective and melancholy. That he finally decided to abandon so tortuous a love-affair for a whole-hearted dedication to the quest for truth, we must give credit, suggests Professor Shafer, less to his own initiative than to the good sense of the lady in terminating the courtship. This was probably true in actual fact, as it appears Miss Brank precipitated More's decision no longer to divide his mind between love and letters by deciding herself to marry someone else.

In 1894, More became an assistant in Sanskrit and Classics at Bryn Mawr College, and the following year contributed a short paper, *The Influences of Hindu Thought on Manichaeism*, to the sixteenth volume of the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. In preparing for this, he was amazed by the facility with which he found it possible to prove experimentally any point he desired, although to him the inherent truth of the proposition might remain in doubt. He had early seen the fatuousness of so-called scientific positivism, and had developed a distrust of purely specialist studies as opposed to a more general humane culture. Thus when he took up his studies at Harvard, he refused to

2. Shafer, *Paul Elmer More and American Criticism*, pp. 70-76.
work for a doctorate, knowing that that would have entailed a special study of linguistics, whereas he wished in the short time at his disposal to cover as wide and liberal a course as possible. Now, more than ever, he was convinced of the speciousness of applying the supposedly infallible methods of natural science to subjects concerned primarily with the habits and movements of man. He was thrown back more violently than ever upon the underlying dualism of life which his discovery of Manichaeism had revealed to him, and in his desire to think out his own position clearly and dispassionately, away from the distracting company of other men, he gave up his post at Bryn Mawr and retired to a quiet village, Shelburne, in the valley of the Androscoggin, where, with only a faithful dog for a companion, he sought to come to terms with life.

The dramatic nature of his withdrawal from what had appeared his life's work in the university world, the solitude of his retreat, the scope and insight of the work which resulted from it, have all focussed attention upon this one incident in his life. The ideas which matured during the two years' seclusion had obviously been fomenting for some time. Babbitt's attempt to eradicate from More's system all traces of a belated romanticism and to substitute for it the Buddhistic stress upon self-mastery and detachment from the thraldom of the senses was bearing fruit, although there is something ironically incongruous in one who was

to become the archenemy of Romanticism seeking refuge in such a typically romantic flight from the world. Moreover, More's growing interest in the Classics had led him to find a deep and vital satisfaction in Platonic philosophy. Here he found the same dualistic conception of the universe as that which had struck him in Manichaeism and which Babbitt found at the basis of Buddhism, the antithesis of the One and the Many. From the withdrawal to Shelburne onwards, this antithesis became the central motif of all More's work. It was to lead him beyond the confines of purely literary criticism, but whatever his subject, history, sociology, philosophy, theology, there is present throughout every aspect of his work a deep underlying unity lent it by the recurrence of the one perennial problem, the relation of the One abiding Ultimate to the multiform and changing phenomena of the natural world.

Prior to his withdrawal to Shelburne, within a year of the appearance of The Great Refusal, More had become engaged to his future wife, Miss Henrietta Beck of St. Louis. During his stay at Shelburne, he completed a small book on which he had been at work intermittently for several years, A Century of Indian Epigrams, which was published early in 1898. During the same period, he prepared for the press translations of the Apology, the Crito and the closing scenes of the Phaedo, which, with an introductory essay, appeared as The Judgment of Socrates. The following year, he

published a translation into prose and verse of Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*. In addition, he wrote the essays which were to become the First Series of the *Shelburne Essays*, and in which many of the ideas which had occupied both More and Babbitt during their college discussions were first to see the light of day. More knew now that his bent was critical, not creative. *Helena, The Great Refusal, The Century of Indian Epigrams*, had all been attempts to find the true nature of his talents, but for some reason deeper rooted even than Arnold's dread of the paralysing effect of the critical mind upon poetic inspiration, More was unable to realise his obvious ambition as a creative writer. This sterility Shafer attributes, in true Arnoldian vein, to the peculiar spiritual climate of the day which was producing men of genius who were nevertheless emotionally stunted and baffled by the lack of any genuine centre about which to organise themselves and so become persons in the true and full sense of the word. It is to the everlasting credit of More that he recognised in himself and in his generation this impotency, and although he emerged from Shelburne without resolving finally any of the problems which he had wanted to consider in solitude, he had made the most important of all his decisions, to devote his life to a critical analysis of the conditions making for the contemporary *Zeitgeist*. For this he was exceptionally well equipped by the study and mental discipline of the years from 1887-1897, and the complete

lack of all cultural tradition in the outpost society of his boyhood and youth had brought home to him in all its stark urgency the need of creating a conscience in intellectual things. His criticism grew therefore out of no remote and academic curiosity, but out of a real and passionate concern with the spiritual and intellectual requirements of men in his own generation. It was one of the cruel ironies of fate that More whose whole career was motivated by a deep-seated interest in humanity should have been regarded by so many of his contemporaries as merely indifferent to his fellow-men. In his Pages From an Oxford Diary, he complained that men, by a strange mischance, have insisted on regarding him, 'whose life has been a passage through storms of passion', as 'a cold and heartless individual.'

His articles were accepted by the Atlantic Monthly and other periodicals and he was able to leave Shelburne in the autumn of 1899 with a little money in the bank and the prospect of future work as a free-lance critic. He spent the winter in Harvard in order to work in the library there, and from 1899-1900, he held the minor post already mentioned in the University as assistant to Professor Lanman, which enabled him to engage in the task of translation from the Sanskrit. He was also producing a short life of Franklin for Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin and Co., to be included in the Riverside Biographical Series, and editing Byron for a volume.

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4. More, Pages From an Oxford Diary, Section V.
5. Cf. p. 81.
in the Cambridge Poets Series for the same firm. This was his position at the time of his marriage in 1900, but the precariousness of such a career soon began to make itself felt, and he was glad to accept, through the good offices of William Roscoe Thayer, a post as literary Editor of The Independent which he took up early in 1901. This was followed in 1903 by a similar post on the staff of the New York Evening Post which he held until 1909 when he took over the literary editorship of The Nation, then still conservative in outlook. Both the New York Evening Post and The Nation were then controlled by Oswald Garrison Villard, and were therefore closely connected. In the Preface to Series Ten of the Shelburne Essays, More recalls with zest his journalistic days, when, in the double role of editor and contributor he 'wrote with the pen in one hand and the blue pencil in the other'. Not infrequently he was accused unjustly of writing the more severe anonymous reviews, and subjected to the abuse of incensed authors. Nevertheless he was ready to defend the principle of anonymous reviewing, for there was to him something far healthier in anonymous mud-slinging than in the excessive laudation found in the signed review. Nor was the mud-slinging of critics as despicable as the more insidious jealousy of the university world which led members of the faculty to boycott works by any author unconnected with their own circle. In retrospect, More obviously felt a certain nostalgia for the joys of battle; rather

a different More from the austere llama of literature in whom Mencken would have us believe. Commenting upon this period of More's career, Stuart Sherman recalled his personal experience of More and Hammond Lament, 'two editors who taught their reviewers to fear nothing but deviations from the truth, and the insidious vices of puffery and log-rolling'.

The strenuous duties of his post were not allowed to interfere with More's own reading. By adopting a strict routine, he was able to complete his editorial tasks by Friday. Every evening was devoted to the particular critical problem which was engaging his attention. On Saturdays and Sundays, he spent twelve to sixteen hours a day on composition. In this way he was enabled to produce the monumental volumes of *The Shelburne Essays* whilst still, for the greater part, employed in editorial work. The First Series had appeared in 1904, and in the same year there was published anonymously *The Jessica Letters*, written in collaboration with a Mrs. Corra May Harris who had been a contributor to *The Independent*. Out of the correspondence which passed between her and the Literary Editor issued the idea of a romance in the form of letters exchanged between a New York editor and the daughter of a country preacher in Morningtown, Georgia. Mrs. Harris carried out her part of the project most successfully, and made Jessica a lively and charming character in whom it is possible to believe. More, on the other hand, was

not really suited to the task, and the editor-lover, Philip Towers, remains anaemic and unconvincing. The book throws light, however, on one important aspect of More's development, his decisive rejection of 'humanitarianism'. Jessica is full of lofty social sympathies, but her lover points out the dangers of an indiscriminate sentimentality which lays too exclusive an emphasis upon material well-being. It is worthwhile noticing More's attitude to the problem at a time when Babbitt had not yet published his

Literature and the American College. The distinction between humanism and humanitarianism is already implicit in The Jessica Letters.

More's connection with The Nation came to an end in 1914 on the eve of the Great War. I am grateful to Dr. Dakin for the details of the resignation. From a passing reference, I had gathered the appointment came to a 'stormy' close. It is clear from Dr. Dakin's fuller account that there was nothing at all stormy about the episode, although More had little in common with Oswald Garrison Villard, the power behind the paper. As long as More was given complete freedom in his own sphere, he could afford to ignore this lack of sympathy, and Villard realised More's value to the paper sufficiently to refrain from interference. More had, however, long been feeling the strain of doing his scholarly work with one hand

2. Cf. pp. 73-76.
3. This is the only other work of More's which I have been unable to obtain for purposes of reference.
and his editing with another. By 1913, an opportune legacy to his wife had made More sufficiently independent financially to retire if he chose, and he sent in his resignation in August 1913, to take effect when most convenient for the paper, which proved to be March 1914. The trustees of The Nation prevailed upon him to continue to act in an advisory capacity, which he did until 1917, by which time Mr. Villard had so changed the character of the magazine that More could no longer conscientiously subscribe to its views.

Weary of the noise and bustle of New York, More was glad upon his resignation in 1914, to withdraw to Princeton. Here his services were soon enlisted by Principal Hibben on behalf of Princeton University where he lectured on Greek philosophy and Classics until his retirement in 1934. These lectures occupied in the main one term of each academic year, and thus he was left with plenty of time for independent study. He now had the means and the leisure to become one of that small select body which America so sorely needed—an intellectual elite who, not having to work for a living, could dedicate their time to the pursuit of a liberal culture. 'He was', wrote W. L. Phelps, 'an independent scholar, completely untrammelled, free from committees and all the machinery of education. He loved learning for its own sake and might never have produced so many books if it had not been that he also loved humanity with equal passion; so that he felt it necessary to give to others the results of his learning and meditations.'

1 Ed. William Thorp, op. cit., p. 308  
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But his experience was not only of giving. He found he had also much to receive. The intimate contact with young minds at Princeton gave Paul More in turn a new stimulation. Unlike Babbitt at Harvard whose 'dynamism' had brought him hosts of followers over whom he ruled with unwavering rigour, More did not attempt to convert his students to his point of view. His great ambition was to make them think for themselves, that each student 'should forge for himself his conclusions, his convictions, his intellectual and spiritual integrations'. It seems that at times he was exasperated by their desire to reduce their immediate experience to a rationalistic monism, as in the case of the student to whom he remarked 'with a combination of acerbity and good humour: "What? You're not another damned monist, are you?", but on the whole, he found in these discussions the pleasure of personal contact with other minds which he had so long had to forego during the years of concentration when he was on the staff of The New York Evening Post and The Nation.

His habit of following a strict routine was, however, too deeply engrained for him ever to abandon it, and his days at Princeton were divided regularly and systematically between people and reading. During his later years, the first fifteen or thirty minutes of every morning were given to reading the Old Testament in Hebrew, a study he commenced at the age of sixty. Then came a period of work on whatever project he had on hand. After lunch and a rest, he would walk half a mile to the cent:

tre of the town to a restaurant called The Bait for his afternoon cup of coffee, There he met his friends, amongst them Dean Robert K. Root of the University Faculty, and Professor F.J. Mather of the Art Department, 'a lifelong friend with whom he waged an unending but amiable intellectual war', and presided over their many-sided conversation with the versatility of a modern Dr. Johnson.

The evenings were again spent amongst his friends, in playing bridge, talking, or entertaining them with the flute which it appears More played none too well. At one time he organised a theological discussion group where papers were read by Anglican and Roman Catholic laymen and clergy.

Whatever More was doing, reading, lecturing or discussing, he was still bent on the main quest of his life, the search for truth. As a younger man, he had read biography and literature always with the one end in view, that of learning the secret of existence from the experience of other men. Now in his later years he turned increasingly to philosophy and theology. He had, as he put it himself, come around in a great circle. He had a natural interest in theology, as his sermon at eight might prove. He had moved away from that centre, but throughout the various phases of his intellectual and spiritual evolution, he was still vitally concerned with attaining for himself a working philosophy of life and letters. When he left Shelburne, he had by no means succeeded in solving all the problems confronting

1. Ibid., p.315; cf. pp.11 and 139-40.
2. More, Pages From an Oxford Diary, Section V.
himself and his age. At the most, he had rediscovered a sense of direction, and the rest of his life was spent in exploring the path which opened up, step by step, ahead of him. But as he saw the frustration of so many of his fellowmen who, like himself, had set out to find truth, he came to ask himself whether the world was not after all an illusion, as the Hindus taught. In this frame of mind, his ardent curiosity and insatiable thirst for knowledge were gradually transformed into a sense of man's great need for faith. During the last twenty years of his life, he came increasingly absorbed in a critical examination of the grounds of Christian faith, and not unnaturally in one with his classical background, the medium through which he approached this growing religious apprehension was that of Greek philosophy. 'Then began a passionate search to discover the eternal verities behind the veil—the realm of Ideas which Plato taught, and in which my soul could move, some day if not now, in liberated joy. I can say simply and without reservation that to this goal I attained and that I shall end my days a conscious, as I was born, an unconscious Platonist. The visible world of things has contracted into comparative insignificance save as a symbol of that which is unseen; the Ideal world has become the vivid reality upon which all my deeper emotions are centred.' But even here More had no permanent resting place; he could not rest in mere abstraction, the realm of Ideas', 'a cold vacuum of inanimate images'. He needed the assurance of a living and personal God, and this he could find 1. More, Pages From an Oxford Diary, Section V1. (The italics are mine). 2. Ibid., loc.cit.
only in and through the doctrine of the Incarnation. This doctrine became for More during his last years the pivot upon which his whole world turned.

The development of More's thought during this period is contained in the six volumes of The Greek Tradition, ranging from Socrates to a vindication of the work of the Council of Chalcedon which finally defined the Church's attitude to the dual nature of Christ. He began work on the project as early as 1914. The nucleus of the study was present in 1917 in the Vanuxem Lectures which More delivered in Princeton, but this was enlarged and developed until at last it grew into a complete record of the stages by which More was able to pass from scepticism to a lively faith in the efficacy of Christianity. Finally in 1934 was published The Sceptical Approach to Religion, the second of the three volumes of the New Shelburne Essays, in which he concentrated the essence of The Greek Tradition into a single book, based on the Lowell lectures which he had delivered at Boston.

More was undoubtedly inspired in his attempt to work out his own credo by the influence of his wife, a devout Christian, but long before he had completed The Greek Tradition, Mrs. More had died as a result of heart trouble in 1928. That he had already travelled far along the road to belief by that time emerges clearly from his spiritual autobiography, Pages From an Oxford Diary, composed four years earlier, in 1924, during a visit with his own

2.F.J. Mather, Jr., op. cit., p. 371.
and his brother's family to Europe. The fiction of the Oxford Professor who records his reflections on his own inner life is sufficiently transparent for us to recognise the book for what it is, More's *Confessio Fidei*, written out of a deep personal need of faith and revealing the scope and intensity of his reading in the field of religion. He had intended the book for no eyes but his own, and to all intents and purposes, the work was forgotten, until, only a few weeks before his death, the manuscript was found among his papers. More was persuaded to allow it to be published. It was prepared for the press by the help of his daughter, Mrs. Harry Fine, *et al.* other friends who read it over to him, and it was eventually finished three days before his death.

So absorbed had More become in the task of examining experientially the claims of Christianity that he had had little time to consider his own health until, in 1935, a serious operation became inevitable. This merely prolonged his life for two years at the cost of great suffering. From the time when he was no longer able to go out, the conversations over coffee took place in his living room, and then when he was confined to bed, one or two of his most intimate friends took turns to visit him every

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1. To this period belongs the anecdote related by More in his *Marginalia, American Review*, November 1936, Vol. VIII, No. 1, of how, after being reprimanded in the Bodleian for writing on a sheet of paper which was lying on an open volume, he asked 'the watch-dog' what would be done to the man who cut the pages of the ancient tomes where they were still uncut. 'Oh, says he, we thank him for that.' When next More went in he found at every desk in the reading room a paper-cutter attached to a long and shining chain. 'My epitaph,' says More, 'is prepared and ready to be engraved in marble.'


3. More had two daughters, Mary Debrah (Mrs. Harry Fine) and Alice (Mrs. E. C. Dymond), of Edin.

iron-gray aspect. There was in his face much strength and some nobility, but a curious absence of colour. The picture Wilson draws of More's manner likewise fits in with this absence of colour; even the room in which they met was 'sombre'.

'A common greyness silvers everything. All in a twilight!'—'All is silver-grey Placid and perfect',
at least for some time, until Wilson begins to detect an acerbity and censoriousness underlying More's outward calm, in contrast to the blandness and tolerance of Gauss.

It is such views as this which have gone to build up the impression prevailing generally of either a humourless, pedantic and acrimonious scholar, or of a remote and impassive high-priest of letters, pronouncing his verdicts ex cathedra. It is therefore significant to set beside Wilson's description of More, a short letter written by Dean Gauss himself in which he maintains a half-way position between the adulation of More's New Humanist followers and the unsympathetic impressions of the young man he himself took to visit More. 'One reason for the bitterness of the controversy about humanism is the fact that Paul More, who was fundamentally as honest and sincere a man as ever I knew, used his pen as a broadsword. On the personal side he was one of

2. Robert Browning, *Andrea del Sarto*.  
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\textsuperscript{2} Robert Browning, \textit{And re a_a d e 1_Lart.o.}
the finest people in the world and to talk to him in little
groups where we were all friendly, even though we disagreed was
a most profitable and gratifying way of spending an evening. In
the give and take of such meetings it was possible to check the
with a humorous remark a tendency on the part of anyone to crusade
or pontificate or run away with the ball, and it was possible
to discuss many of the points in controversy between More and
his opponents. Some of these meetings I remember with very deep
satisfaction and if there could have been more of them and more
people could have known More in his habit as he lived, much would
have been gained. No one that I knew ever left such a meeting
with the slightest doubt of the depth of More's convictions or of
his fundamental sincerity or integrity.'

'More', Gauss goes on, 'was to my mind a far abler
critic than Brunetière but both harmed themselves by always
writing what Brunetière called in one of his volumes "discours de
combat". This merely sharpens points of disagreement by arousing
emotional sensibilities involved in pride of intellect and vit-
iates the atmosphere in which fruitful discussion might take place.
I very much wish, in the interest of having More and his cause re-
presented aright, that this aura of controversy could have been
dispelled'.

This tendency of More's to espouse almost exclusively
one side of a controversial issue is well illustrated by the

1. Babbitt, it seems, was constantly taking More to task for his
tendency to alienate his opponents, cf. New Shelburne Essays 111,

2. The American Scholar, Autumn 1938, Vol. 7, No.4, Letter by Dean
instance of a lecture on Proust which he delivered at Princeton. This was to have been given originally to a small and informal gathering, but the news attracted a large audience, so that the room was full to overflowing. After handing out a brief tribute to Proust's literary powers, More plunged into a lively attack on the view of life presented in *A La Recherche d'un Temps Perdu* overlooking almost completely in the heat of controversy Proust's strong ethical purpose in exposing the corruption of French society. It was long before the passions roused by the lecture subsided, but More himself, in private conversation some time afterwards, admitted quite freely Proust's artistic merits for which he had not allowed at all in public. He was adamant, however, that 'in the perspective of a total view of life, traditionally Platon­ic and Christian, the artistic merits of Proust were irrelevant', and that further, his own role was to be concerned, not with aesthetic, but with the evaluating of the comprehensive philosophical issues. 1

More's problem and privilege was to have been born with a burning desire for the abiding and supernatural values of Beauty, Truth and Goodness in an age when everything, including critical opinion, had assumed the kaleidoscopic mutability of nature. Before we can fully realise the importance of his contribution to critical thought in his day, we shall have to consider the many forces at work making for anarchy and confusion in the world of literature.

It was generally accepted that, if one was educated, one was naturally on the side of the modern belief in a certain forward impetus which was sweeping everyone and everything with it in the direction of fuller individual freedom and self-expression. To pause to enquire what one was going to do with this freedom or to what ends one wanted to use one's right to self-expression was mere heresy to the majority of writers in More's day. It was More's peculiar mission to ask just those unpopular questions, and to bring to bear upon the answers the light of his almost encyclopaedic knowledge. There was nothing remote or academic about the questions, and if the vastness of the learning with which he supported the solution he put forward to the modern problem seemed embarrassing to men of lesser culture, the fault was not with More. He was simply being true to his understanding of the best that had been thought and said, and the underlying unity of purpose in applying this knowledge to the contemporary problem kept this knowledge from deteriorating into mere eclecticism.

"His reading---was inspired from the first by an absorbing search for God; and if that quest took him in strange directions, from German romanticism, through hard rationalism, and Hindu philosophy to Platonism, and finally to Patriotic theology, it imposed upon all his intellectual wanderings and upon all the writings in which they were reflected and recorded a singleness of aim of which he himself was, at the time of writing, only partly
This singleness of aim is what Thomas à Kempis called "purity of intention", and it renders its possessors, as he said, indifferent to the judgments of men.

It is this 'purity of intention', this absolute integrity which emerges most clearly from any picture of Paul Elmer More when he is judged by his peers, and not by men rendered uneasy and prejudiced by his superior knowledge. The important thing to him was to find the 'one thing necessary', and in a time of moral confusion, that one thing was to hold up before his audience clear and impelling standards of behaviour, supported by faith in an unseen world. So convinced was he of the urgency of this message and its power to meet the deepest needs of his generation that he made no attempt to tickle his reader's palate to induce him to accept it. This unwillingness on More's part to employ what Stuart Sherman described, after his secession from the ranks of the New Humanists, as 'the technique of ingratiating' has been attributed to his pride and general impassivity, as well as to lack of sympathy with the common man. The truth is that More felt too much, not too little. So intense was his feeling of the vital importance of what he was advocating that he was unable to realise that other men required a sugar coating around the pill upon which, to More, their immediate restoration depended. He could not see how any sensible man required persuasion to make him swallow what was so obviously necessary to his own well-being.

4. Ibid., p. 33-36.
Nevertheless, I do not believe for a moment that More was under any illusion about the type of reader his criticism was likely to touch. He made no pretensions to be writing for the man in the street. The danger of social disintegration he saw coming less from the ignorance and wilfulness of the masses than from the moral and intellectual confusion of those who should be their natural leaders, and it was to these 'blind guides', in university and pulpit and newspaper office that his criticism was directed. To realise this is to make Sherman's accusations irrelevant when he said: 'He (i.e. More) takes so little pains, I will not say to be liked, but to be comprehended, that I sometimes wonder whether he has ever broadly considered the function of criticism in a democracy as different as ours is from that in Athens. He writes as if unaware that our general reading public is innocent of the best that has been said and thought in the world. He writes at least half the time as if he contemplated an audience of Trenets, Coleridges, Johnsons and Casaubons! More was writing for the contemporary equivalents of these men. There was to him, even within modern democracy, need for a criticism which should be addressed primarily to the intellectual class in whom he believed ultimately the responsibility for the future of civilisation was vested. Nor can I see that such an aim was any different from that of Matthew Arnold

inspite of Sherman's readiness to contrast More's 'indifference' to the popular taste with Arnold's desire to diffuse his ideas and make them prevail by rendering them attractive "outside the clique of the cultivated and learned'.

Not that More was lacking, as a man, in any of the social graces. "Although his conversation lacked the spontaneity of his letter-writing, he cultivated in company something of the sprezzatura he held to be the hall-mark of the gentleman. 'In company', says Professor G.R. Elliott, 'he was very much the pleasant man of the world; carefully attired, physically and mentally, lending an ear to gossip, recounting in his turn amusing anecdotes; witty, urbane and even suave. He seemed at times anxious to display to his listeners a genial indulgence that he denied to his readers. He covered his severe philosophy with a conversational lid. This, now and then, would lift half a little to let out an acid phase accompanied by a sardonic smile; but quickly the lid went on again and the smile smoothed up its corners. Just because he was so much a hermit of the study he was not to be alone when he was in company." It was just this power of Paul Elmer More's to defy close classification which baffled his enemies and sometimes even his friends.

Mr. Whitney J. Oates in his chapter in The Lives of Eighteen from Princeton already cited, enumerates the many attempts to estimate his achievement, the majority of them hostile and carping.

1. Ibid., p. 332.
It is significant how often these hostile criticisms cancel each other out. The charge of intolerance and peevishness brought against More by certain of his antagonists is neutralised by the complaint of others that he will not descend to their level to engage in open battle, but instead dwells remote and serene, coldly detached from the passions of the war of criticism. Both charges can hardly be true, but his enemies, in their clamour for a victim, are not particularly interested in the consistency of their charges, and so More is left facing pairs of contradictory and irreconcilable indictments, of intolerance and indifference, of cold detachment and fiery partisanship, of excessive concern with the individual and of overlooking the claims of the individual completely in favour of the rights of law and property, of advocating a rigid and pedestrian conformity to New England morality, 'the gloomy gospel of tightness and restraint', and of leaving the standards he is advocating confused and merely implicit, to be determined ultimately by the thoroughly romantic procedure of individual and independent appraisal.

The very multiplicity of these accusations suggests the many-sidedness of More's thought. In an age of critical specialists, he was that rara avis, the general critic. 'But for each of these more or less unfriendly appraisals there is

6. Allen Tate, op. cit, pp. 127-88.
a powerful positive estimate to be made, each in turn reflecting only one aspect of this truly remarkable and many-sided man. And lying behind these aspects and fusing them indissolubly is the personality of a great human being—indeed a man whom the genius of our specialised age finds it virtually impossible to evaluate. The literary critic carps, the philosopher deplores, the theologian is suspicious, for More played all these parts, yet was greater than the sum of them.①

Perhaps no lines can sum up the impression this many-faceted mind and character of More makes upon the unbiassed reader than those lines he himself quotes from a poem of Lionel Johnson's written to 'A Friend':

'His are the whitenesses of soul
That Virgil had; he walks the earth
A classic saint, in self-control
And comeliness, and quiet mirth!'②

and if from time to time, in the face of the tragic splendour of man's eternal destiny, there escapes him a cry of wistful pity which links him with the Romantics whom ostensibly he is judging and finding wanting, is it not because the tension he seeks to sustain, the exacting, the balance so delicate, the line of demarcation between mediation and excess so tenuous and elusive that only a critic of extremely acute sensibility could ever perceive and hold to it so consistently in an effort to bring back to society the sanity, integrity and self-mastery in which he saw our true humanity to lie?

It is, I think, something of this contrariety of parts that posterity will find where a Stark Young could see only a 'frigidity which, as sleep may do on the sleeper's face, leaves the vital substance cast in the pallor and retreat of death',¹ for More's portraits are almost as eloquent of the man as his essays. Contrary to the modernist legend, they reveal a mellowing, not an atrophying, of the whole personality. The earliest does perhaps betray a certain complacency pervading the firm stocky figure, although the eyes have already their look of keen penetration. The mouth has its resoluteness too, but it has also a warm, almost voluptuous, curve which denies the impression of the thin-lipped ascetic given by his adversaries. By the time of the second photograph, the whole face has grown richer in expression. The eyes, although still penetrating, have taken on a more wistful look, the lips, still full, have a slightly quizzical curve. The whole face betokens, not so much a smouldering indignation with the evils of the world, as an infinite sadness and pity at the follies of men, tempered by an irrepressible humour which sees the ridiculous even in what it most deplores. The greyness Edmund Wilson noticed is there, but it is the integrity and clarity, not the hardness and coldness, of steel which predominates. In the third photograph, the wistfulness of the eyes, that almost baffled look, which found so

2. The three photographs I have in mind are from:
   (1) Putnam's Monthly, March 1907, p. 76.

3. The lighter side of More is suggested by his preoccupation for detective stories, to which a special shelf in his library was devoted; cf. New Shulburne Essays (Princeton 1928), p. 5.
much to wonder at in human eccentricity, has become softened into yearning tenderness which has, however, lost nothing of its direct and searching power. It is the expression of the prophet who has been rejected by those he sought to save, yet who goes on agonising for them inspite of themselves. But the sense of the present world seems to be growing increasingly unreal, and the face has the rapt mystical expression of one whose 'being's heart and home is with infinity, and only there.'

Of the stern, relentless critic, there is little in his portraits. It is as though the camera has pierced to the hidden depths of the man and brought out the deeper and richer personality which he revealed only to his more intimate friends. The other-worldliness, however, is there in his works for all who read to feel; that strong abiding sense that man is but a stranger and pilgrim on the earth, whose destiny is with the changeless heavens. With Paul Elmer More there returns to American literature a fourth and eternal dimension which lends once more 'an heroic proportion and a tragic mode to the experience of the individual'.
A Brief Survey of the Development of American Criticism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.

Although every period has appeared to those living in it an age of transition, men in the two centuries which have succeeded the French Revolution have been aware of a more rapid and radical change in prevailing ideas and traditions, resulting in a widespread disintegration of accepted standards such as had previously held sway in civilised society, irrespective of the lesser differences in thought and conduct which varied with time and place. The chaos of contemporary thought has, however, been accentuated in America by certain peculiar circumstances. Nowhere has the mechanisation of life been carried to such a pitch of speed and efficiency, but whereas technically, America has reaped the full benefit of modern scientific ingenuity, culturally and intellectually, American life and letters have suffered from their lack of the slow, tortuous development essential to the forging of a national heritage of tradition and criticism. This Frankenstein had emerged, physically, almost fully grown at birth, and soon there were at his disposal all the devices of science to ensure his economic well-being, but the only tradition to guide his course was that inherited from an England whose yoke he was all.

too ready to shake off. This he felt to be an alien and con-
fining influence, itself a patchwork gathered together from
a variety of sources, classical, Teutonic, Celtic, medieval,
French, Italian, German, and one therefore to be repudiated
as soon as he attained to a certain degree of intellectual
independence.

Moreover, this tradition had percolated to America
in its most attenuated form, for the early settlers were men
who had rejected, for its worliness, much of the art and liter-
ature available to their age. Their minds were set unwaveringly
upon the issues of a future life which involved the renuncia-
tion of every allurement of the senses which might tempt man
to substitute delight in his own creation for the worship of
the Creator. But if their outlook was seriously deficient in
breadth and urbanity, it partly compensated for this by the
intensity of their contemplation of man envisaged as the Pil-
grim of Eternity, and rising thereby to tragic heights in his
struggle against the encroachments of the world, the flesh and
the devil. Paul Elmer More has brought out forcibly this sense
of terror which dominated New England thought from the settle-
ment to the middle of the last century, as men saw themselves
living beneath the frown of divine displeasure, with the yawn-
ing abyss beyond waiting to receive those predestined to per-
dition. The very passion of their fears, an 'expression of the

1904), pp. 54-68.
agonised conscience', as Professor Santayana described it, lent to the writings of even mediocre authors a certain tragic grandeur; but with the gradual rejection of Calvinist theology under the influence of new modes of thought breaking in from Europe, notably Germany, the Calvinist imagination weakened, although echoes of it remained in the sensibility of Herman Melville, Emily Dickinson, and above all, Nathaniel Hawthorne whose Scarlet Letter is the very quintessence of the Puritan consciousness distilled from it at a time when it was already in decay.

Professor Santayana in his 'The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy', points out that such a theology as Calvinism flourishes normally in a small nation with immense vitality, beset by impending ruin and doom. Life is seen outlined in stark distinctions of black and white, and the consequences of one's choices are exaggerated to a point where they become of infinite and eternal importance. But as the crisis passes, this element of existentialism is relaxed, and men forget the judgment which has not fallen, and repudiate the God whom formerly they dreaded. The spirit of man cannot long sustain the tension of 'the agonised conscience', and seeks some relief in a less dramatic, more mundane mode of belief and expression. Faith in social morality succeeds, by an inevitable dialectic,

1. George Santayana, op. cit., p. 188.
to the anguished craving for grace, and the pendulum swings from an urgent stress on theology to a less urgent and less exacting stress on ethics derived from, but also divorced from, the theology it superseded.

By a strange paradox of conscience, the Puritan belief in predestination which made one's ultimate salvation or damnation dependent on the arbitrary choice of God, and not on anything the individual did or did not do, left man free to turn his energies to more secular, and more remunerative, pursuits. In so far as he had no longer any need to concern himself primarily with good works, he could concentrate the more upon material ends, and, with a creed approximating to Samuel Smiles' Doctrine of Self-Help in Victorian England, he naturally found that the industrious and vigilant—in other words, 'the Saved'—amassed fortunes, while the feckless apparently went to the wall. There was thus a logical connection between salvation and prosperity; and by the middle of the Nineteenth Century, generations of hard-working, God-fearing Puritans had built up sufficient reserves of material wealth and doctrinal wisdom for their descendants to feel they could enjoy their inheritance without adding to its sum, providing they observed certain moral principles which they felt were somehow connected with it.

The feeling of uncertainty and impending doom
Victorian England
which had beset the early settlers in the face of unknown dangers had given way to a new sense of well-being and security, and accordingly, Calvinism gave way to a new belief in man, no longer envisaged as an outcast, fleeing in terror from the Wrath-to-Come, but as the pride and crown of the whole process of Nature, himself the Over-Soul, who could not therefore do anything amiss. Emerson became the prophet of the new religion whose ostensible purpose was to substitute for rigid dogma and sombre preoccupation with the Here-After a spontaneous idealism and a delight in the Here-and-Now. Man looked upon the universe as a glorious multiform extension of himself, Nature was the mirror in which he saw reflected his own face, and through Nature and humanity alike pulsed one vast benevolent Soul, knitting both into a cosmic harmony. This sense of the mystery and ecstasy of life was undoubtedly sharpened by Emerson's contact with German Transcendentalism, but it grew quite naturally too out of the circumstances of an America attaining to self-consciousness, aware of its own teeming resources and restlessness in its awakening response to a whole gamut of sensations which Puritanism had excluded from its world.

But the edge of a sensibility diffused over a vast range of inter-toned and nuances of experience becomes easily dulled. Moreover, with the emancipation of the American imagination from the stern discipline of Calvinism there coincided the widespread discovery of scientific processes for lightening labour and increasing leisure. It seemed that America was about to enter into
an abundance of life hitherto undreamt of. But ironically enough, the mechanisation of society which bade fair to usher in a more varied and exhilarating civilisation was to give rise to a uniformity and banality which laid their deathly chill upon the mounting spirit of man, and reduced the less virile among them to a stereotyped dreariness.

'Where the old order, formidable as it was, had held all this personal experience, this eclectic excitement, in a comprehensible whole, the new order tended to flatten it out in a common experience which was not quite in common; it exalted more and more the personal and the unique in the interior sense. Where the old-fashioned puritans got together on a rigid doctrine, and could thus be individualistic in manners, the Nineteenth Century New Englander, lacking a genuine religious centre, began to be a social conformist. The common idea of the Redemption, for example, was replaced by the conformist idea of respectability among neighbours whose spiritual disorder, not very evident at the surface, was becoming acute. A great idea was breaking up, and society was moving towards external uniformity which is usually the measure of the spiritual sterility inside.'

As men came increasingly to put their faith in the accumulation of wealth and property, the old sense of a communal standard of values gave way to the ruthless pursuit of

1. Allen Tate, op. cit., pp. 6-7.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.
individual success, achieved in whatever way worked best. Thus a huge chaotic welter of ends and means replaced the common centre of faith which had drawn together men of previous generations; and yet, haunted by a sense of their defencelessness and isolation in a world without any such inner centre, men now sought as a substitute an outward centre in a code of social respectability, the Genteel Tradition. By a supreme stroke of irony, Emerson who was the sworn enemy of a merely superficial conventionality, became himself involved in furthering the very trends he most desired to counteract. Aware of the prevailing external conformity, he mistook the effect for the cause. He held the Puritan theocracy responsible for this soul-destruction influence, whereas it was only the decline of true evangelical religion which had made possible this descent into banality; and he turned to vent his anger upon Puritanism, thus giving its death-blow to what was already a moribund tradition, and leaving American life defenceless against an ever-encroaching tide of industrialism.

Beneath the icy surface of external respectability there yet eddied a maelstrom of incoherent and conflicting currents of thought drawn from a variety of strange, often incompatible sources. With the immigration of new settlers came new modes of sensibility, new traditions, new ideas, all pouring into the one common stream of American civilisation.

1. Ibid., p. 7.
where they remained, isolated and unsynthesised elements con-
tending against each other and ready to erupt at any moment
into strange erratic forms, the primitive vitality of a Walt
Whitman, the grotesque humour veined with pathos of a Mark
Twain, the lyric elusiveness of an Emily Dickinson. Their
presence helped America to throw off the yoke of a second-
hand culture such as Calvinism had represented; she now had
to evolve a tradition of her own, stimulated by indigenous
subjects, instead of imitating English, or even European, models.
It seemed that everything warranted the birth of a great nation-
al literature; the sense of freedom and aspiration which attends
the spiritual adventures of a young nation; the vital impulse
towards creation which the unbounded span of her territories
and the inexhaustible wealth of her resources could inspire;
above all, the proud confidence in the marvels of science which
were revolutionising the world of men and making them as Gods.
One thing only was lacking—a great central idea of things which
could alone act as a focus-point and save these lesser ideas
from breaking up into innumerable jarring fragments. Inspite of
her technical maturity and prowess, in matters of culture America
remained several decades behind Europe, and on religious, social
and literary issues, the United States were still, generally
speaking, at the end of the Nineteenth Century, where England
had been in the 'Sixties when Matthew Arnold sallied forth in the
name of Culture against the hordes of Philistia. His chief weapon
in this unequal struggle had been his theory of Criticism, the creation of a 'conscience in intellectual matters'\(^1\) whereby one might discriminate between essentials and mere periphery decorations in literary matters. To Arnold, the failure of modern Romanticism had been due to the confusion of a tumult of new sensations and exciting \textit{idees} with the \textit{best ideas}; and unfortunately the nascent American literature made the same mistake. Because they were living in an age of expansion and movement when strange winds of doctrine were abroad, American writers of the 'Sixties and the 'seventies imagined they had only to draw on the intellectual atmosphere of the times and they would of necessity produce the mighty Epic of the modern world. But by the 'Eighties, a new spirit of disillusionment was abroad. It was becoming evident that the outcome of the Civil War was not only the discomfiture of the Southern States and the triumph of the cause of Negro freedom; it had far-reaching and insidious effects in the upheaval of individual fortunes and the substitution for original pride of democracy in producing men of character, of a callow and often unscrupulous ambition to get rich quick. It might have seemed to many a Yankee businessman, growing rich in New York at the expense of those of his fellows who could not keep up with him in the financial race, that the Age of Gold had come, but at the best such prosperity was a precarious blessing. Fortunes were made and lost overnight to the West new towns were springing up, offering to the keen speculator still further opportunities of wealth, but involving

the less fortunate in financial hazards which plunged them into ruin.

Such an atmosphere was far from conducive to the true literary artist. In a society given over to the worship of Mammon, he was driven increasingly into spiritual isolation, having to draw entirely upon his own inward resources for his inspiration. He thereby escaped himself the mediocrity of the Genteel Tradition but because of his divorce from society, he was unable to supply anything to supplant it in others. Further, the commercialised boosting of inferior writers aggravated his scorn of a society to which he felt no personal responsibility, thus establishing the now long-standing feud between the artist and the bourgeois civilisation against which he had rebelled. This isolation was not, however, without its advantages in that it drove the more sensitive writers to examine critically their own creeds and standards. Lowell had said, 'Before we have an American literature we must have an American criticism', and it so happened that the first American critics were themselves literary artists seeking to understand the ways of their own craft. Whereas, on the one hand, they faced the disadvantage of having to combine or alternate between the synthetic and analytical moods, there was on the other hand the advantage of their greater intimacy with the springs of creativity within their own experience. But although in the sphere of creation, American

3. Quoted Paul Elmer More, Shelburne Essays 1, Title page.
artists believed they had shaken themselves free from European influence and could depend upon native inspiration, it became increasingly clear that in matters of criticism, the most acute and lucid judgments came from those who were most conversant with the great classical literatures of the world.

There were thus two facets to the literary rebellion against the sterility of the Genteel Tradition, one in the name of Nature, seeking to exalt the primitive and indigenous elements of American life, the other in the name of Culture, seeking to build up an eclectic tradition drawn from the great literature of all times and places. On the one hand stood the New Barbarians Whitman and Mark Twain and Emily Dickinson; on the other, Henry James, maintaining in the teeth of the proud self-sufficiency of his rivals the need of fertilising indigenous matter with an infusion of ideas drawn from other literatures. Between the Barbarians shaking off the past and seeking to build up their lives and works from the primitive elements of consciousness, regardless of the critical faculty in man, and the lovers of Culture seeking to pass on to the future the best that had been thought and said in the past, there surged the huge self-satisfied acquiescent mass of those to whom civilisation was at the most a mere code of social respectability. They espoused it in so far as it threw a cloak of conventional decency over their impulses of self-aggrandisement and self-indulgence, but the working ethic of the newly-arrived was as primitive and uncritical as that of the most emancipated of the Barbarians.

The anomaly of the bourgeois compromise which amalgamated
strict social conformity with individual abandon in all that
pertained to business and finance offered the first American
critics, Emerson, Oliver Wendall Holmes, Lowell, Poe, and later,
WiD. Howells with an ample scope for their scrutiny, and it is
not surprising that American criticism should from the beginning
have been predominantly ethical rather than esthetic in its ap­
proach. Its interests have lain more frequently on the side of
social, philosophical, historical or psychological issues than
in the realm of pure art. In an essay on 'The Esthetic Judgment
and the Ethical Judgment' in The Intent of the Critic, Profess­
or Norman Foerster has stressed the interdependency and insepar­
ability of these two sets of values inherent in literature.
Unfortunately, however, it is rarely feasible to discuss both
together, and in the process of analysis, they are liable to
become dissociated and even to appear antagonistic. Logically,
if not practically, esthetic values, to Foerster, should come
first, as it is they which determine whether a piece of writing
deserves to be called literature. Here it is interesting to com­
pare a remark of Mr. T. S. Eliot's, that although 'the greatness of
literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards',
'we must remember that whether it is literature or not can be
determined only by literary standards.' Mr. Eliot's use of the term 'literary' obviously corresponds to
Professor Foerster's use of 'esthetic'. The dialectic between

1 Ed. M. D. Zabel, op. cit., p. XVI.
2 Ed. Donald Stauffer, The Intent of the Critic, Norman Foerster,
these two aspects of literary values has dominated the whole of American criticism since the time of Poe and his contemporaries, always with the balance tipped in favour of the ethical. Frequently the critic, as in the case of Henry James, set himself the task of reconciling the two. 'He saw', writes Zabel, 'the modern creative problem in its two essential aspects; its oppression by social conflicts and theories of scientific and moral determinism, and its acute subtilisation by the defenses which the esthetic techniques of the modern sensibility had set up against these oppressors. He saw modern criticism confronting the task of reconciling the real and the esthetic, human life in "its unprejudiced identity" with the form and laws of art'.

The new and growing concern with criticism as a branch of literature sufficiently important and influential in itself to warrant certain writers dedicating to it all their time and energies did much to tip the balance in favour of a preoccupation with the purely esthetic, although it was not until the early years of this century that it at last succeeded in gaining the ascendancy to such an extent that a distinction of form seemed to have usurped the place formerly occupied by significance of content. But even the rise of Formalism did not entirely stifle the ethical element in American criticism, although this became implicit rather than explicit under the changing conditions of art and society.

1. Ed. F. D. Zabel, op. cit., p. XXI.
'In the history of American civilisation,' writes Lewisohn, 'there is no more important event than the rise of the critical spirit during that quarter of a century between the publication of the first volume of Paul Elmer More's *Shelburne Essays* in 1904 and Joseph Wood Krutch's *The Modern Temper* in 1929! Inspite of previous attempts to stimulate the American literary public to a vital interest in criticism by writers as varied in outlook as W.D. Howell, W.C. Brownell, and James Huneker, the year that first marked America's awakening to such an awareness of the significance of criticism was, in Lewisohn's opinion, 1910. Paul Elmer More had published by then the first seven series of *The Shelburne Essays*, of which the first volumes at least had passed practically unnoted. In 1908 Irving Babbitt's first book, *Literature and the American College*, had appeared, followed in 1910 by his *New Laokoon*, an attack upon Romanticism, particularly in its later guise of Symbolism, for fostering a confusion of the senses by the use of synesthetic appeal, and also for destroying the genre tranché in literature in favour of a approximating on the mélange of types one hand to the static arts and on the other to pure music. The impact of More and Babbitt upon contemporary thought had by 1910 begun to attract attention. As keen an observer of the literary scene as Charles Eliot Norton wrote to a friend in 1908: 'It is a great misfortune for us nationally

that the tradition of culture is so weak and so limited. In this respect the advantage of England is great. But I hail a book of Mr. Babbitt's as an indication of a possible turn in the tide of which another sign is the literary essays of Mr. Paul More from time to time in the Nation.

About the same time there was delivered at Columbia University, J.E. Spingarn's famous lecture on The New Criticism, in which he gave voice to an esthetic profoundly influenced by the Italian philosopher, Benedetto Croce. The all-important thing was to emphasise that every individual work of art was an entity complete in itself, which had to be studied in the light of the law of its own creation, and not of any extraneous rules or systems. Form was an intrinsic and inextricable part of the work of art, not an embellishment superimposed upon content; and therefore to change the form, however slightly, was to create a new work of art. So far many thinking men and women would have been prepared to go with him, but his wholesale rejection of many well-proven aspects of criticism in favour of a pure cult of art for art's sake alienated them from a doctrine as fatuous in its bigotry as the most didactic extreme didactic criticism. The appearance of The New Criticism was, however, a signal for the malcontents to rally their forces against the existing literary tradition, rooted as it was in the New England consciousness, with the Concord pioneers for its models, and More and Babbitt for its chief exponents.

For the moment, issue was not joined. Spingarn moved in a different circle from More and Babbitt, and so far, each party was concerned only with developing the line of thought which seemed to it best suited to the literary needs of the day. Around each there gathered, however, a band of followers, led, on the one side by Stuart P. Sherman, and on the other, by the vociferous, if somewhat incongruous, figure of H. L. Mencken. Neither section read the work of the other, but a general feeling of antipathy was in the air. The 1914-18 War served to accentuate the already existing tension, and to lend acridity to the gathering contention; and by the end of the war, the struggle had reached a climax. In 1918, Babbitt answered Spingarn's New Criticism, and Mencken published in the Evening Mail his Criticism of Criticism of Criticism. In 1919, Babbitt's Rousseau and Romanticism appeared and Mencken published the first volume of his Prejudices, followed in 1920 and 1922 by the second and third volumes. The voice of mediation represented by the more disinterested critics such as Van Wyck Brooks or Lewisohn went unheeded. It became increasingly apparent that this was war à l'outrance, that there was at stake more than the attitude of the respective schools to purely literary problems.

'It was profoundly, if not always consciously understood that criticism cleaves deep, and that the battle joined between, let us say Stuart Sherman and Henry Mencken, was no squabble between rhetor-

2. Ibid., p. 431.
icians, but a philosophical warfare over all that men hold dearest and over the future of our civilisation itself."

It is important to recall that much of Paul More's finest criticism was written before the struggle had reached its height. Only in the later volumes of the Shelburne Essays, notably from Aristocracy and Justice (Series Nine) onwards, does the note of a more personal polemic creep in. Hitherto he had been attacking general movements of thought in their wider context. It is not until the New Shelburne Essays of 1928, 1934 and 1936 that we find those references to contemporary authors which have given such offence to liberal critics. By the time of the New Shelburne Essays, the dust of the first round of the battle had died away, and More was able to see clearly the general direction of the conflicting trends of fifteen or twenty years earlier. If at such a distance of time, his tone assumed an unwonted asperity in speaking of living individuals, it was because he saw the tendencies they represented still very much alive and still threatening the integrity of the values he cherished most passionately in life and literature alike.

Similarly the unprejudiced reader, looking back upon the heats and furies of the battle from the vantage point of time, is bound to feel that there was more involved in its fortunes than the defence of tradition against the clamours of literary

1. Ibid., p. 426.
dissent. Mencken may have joined in the mêlée because it offered him an opportunity of hitting out at opponents by whom he felt instinctively repelled. But he would have felt equally repelled had he thought out the logical implications of linking himself to the new esthetic. The real antithesis was not between More and Babbitt, and Mencken. Mencken was as concerned with ethics as they were, although while the 'Professors' chose New England ethics, Mencken preferred those of Bohemia. The contention was not, in the last analysis, between good ethics and bad ethics, but between primary emphasis on esthetics or on ethics.

In his Introduction to *American Critical Essays*, Professor Foerster who edited the volume, divided American critics into two categories; those who concerned themselves with the literary foreground, and those who concerned themselves with the background of the ideas which sustain literature. In the first category he placed the Impressionists, including both those who continued the romantic tradition of wide sympathy and those who went further and asserted that criticism is itself mere creation, and the Expressionists who held that the critic's task was complete when he had repeated in himself the creative experience expressed by the work of art and had shown just how completely that experience was expressed. The first type of critic was represented by Professor Lewis E. Gates of Harvard, the second by Professor J.E. Spingarn of Columbia. In contrast to both these, I. Ludwig Lewisohn, op. cit., p. 430.
stood a second category, also made up of two groups: on the one hand, the New Nationalists, concerned with the problem of adjusting the course of the national literature to the existing conditions of national culture, and, on the other, the New Humanists, interested in ideas of universal and perennial validity. In the first group Professor Foerster placed the naturalists, both romantic and realist, including the psychological and sociological critics of the period. These are the spiritual heirs of Whitman and Melville; here Mencken would belong, together with Van Wyck Brooks, Lewis Mumford, Joseph Wood Krutch, H. S. Canby and others.

The division made by Professor Foerster between the romantic critic's recording of the adventures of his soul among books, which he calls 'Impressionism', and the Crocean doctrine of Spingarn and his followers, which he calls 'Expressionism', is made also by A. C. Ward in his American Literature 1880-1930, whereas Granville Hicks uses the term 'Impressionism' indiscriminately to describe the two phases of criticism. Obviously there is a substantial difference between these two points of view, although frequently in practice the distinction is blurred. The 'impressionistic' critic pure and simple is concerned with the effect of the work of art upon himself, the ideas, sensations, associations evoked in him by what he

has read. This is the manner of Pater, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Symons in England, of Huysmans and Anatole France in France, and of Huneker and Lewis Gates in America. The Spingarn doctrine claims, on the other hand, to be concerned not with the critic himself, nor with the author, his family, environment, race or age, any more than with external standards or rules of composition, but with the work of art in and for itself. 'What has the poet tried to do, and how has he fulfilled his intention? What is he striving to express and how has he expressed it? What vital and essential spirit animates his work? What impression does it leave on the receptive mind, and how can I best express this impression? Is his work true to the laws formulated by others?' ---But it involves a tremendous effort for the critic to project himself imaginatively into the artist's mind in such a way that he sheds his own personal prejudices. Thus in practice, Expressionism does frequently merge into Impressionism, as A.C. Ward implicitly admits. 'The method and its working must ultimately be subject to the critic's own mind and conscience: it is dependent upon the moral character of the critic, upon whether his integrity in relation to the work of art is above suspicion.'

It is therefore essential, as Donald Stauffer has pointed out in his introduction to The Intent of the Critic

1. Ed. M.D. Zabel, op. cit., p. XXV.
4. Ibid., p. 244.
to know something of the critic as well as the work criticised, in order to be able to separate what is personal and peculiar in his judgment from what is universally valid. Above all, it is essential that every critic should recognise the partiality of his response to a work of art, and not set up as an oracle, considering his own or his school's views as absolute in validity. With these provisos, we must, I think, accept the fact that the response evoked by a work of art, in passing to the reader through the medium of the critic's mind, becomes stamped with his impressions, so that even the work of the least Impressionistic of critics bears to some degree the mark of the critic's personality.

'The work of art, writes Stauffer, 'is un fait accompli which it is beyond the power of the critic to modify. The critic's judgments cannot change the actual objectification in time and place which is the work of art, but they can influence its reception by the audience to which it is being introduced.' The aim of every work of art is to produce in each reader an experience as near as possible to the original experience which the artist wished to communicate. To this end, the critic must frequently intervene by using the discursive reason in order to help the reader to approximate to the original intuition. The critic himself begins by responding to a work of art, and this

2. Ibid., pp. 8-9.
response is intuitive, immediate, natural. But in his second role as interpreter, he continues by analysing, explaining, scrutinising his own original and intuitive apprehension. Thirdly, the critic must act as judge, estimating the respective values of works of art. Upon the inter-relation and proportion of the three phases of the critic's role, as reader, interpreter and judge, depends the nature of the criticism. Whereas in the work of a Lewis Gates, the first, the impressionistic element, predominates, in the criticism of a T.S. Eliot, the second, or intellectual, element holds in check the first, and the final judgment grows out of a fair synthesis of intuitive response and intellectual research into matters pertaining to the creation of the work of art. The true exponents of the Spingarn esthetic are not, in the last resort, the mere rebels against tradition of the Mencken-Hackett type, but that school of highly serious and reputable criticism which includes many of the most earnest of the younger writers, such as Allen Tate, R.P. Blackmur, and to some degree, Yvor Winters. These men are completely cut off from the ordinary 'Impressionists' and 'Sensationalists' by their thorough mastery of formal esthetic theory, a study in which they were preceded by T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound.

One unfortunate feature of Spingarn's theory has however, been inherited and rigidly maintained by the young-

1. Ed. M.D. Zabel, op. cit., p XI.
2. Ibid., p XII.
er esthetic critics as well as by the creative writers of the same school, the doctrine of the moral irresponsibility of the artist. Whatever disintegration of beliefs may have been threatening from the outset of the Romantic period, it was still possible for Wordsworth to write with the knowledge that he would be read and understood by a public whose standards were not unlike his own. But as the Nineteenth Century wore on, the creative artist in Europe and in America was plunged in an ever increasing spiritual isolation. The majority of men were absorbed in purely material pursuits; they were comfortable in their everyday apprehension of the world around them and had no wish to be disturbed by having their eyes opened to the power of the poetic imagination. When they read at all, it was something on the level of their ordinary understanding which flattered their pride, dallied with their senses and demanded no great effort of the intuitive reason. The artist, his imagination fired by a vision he was no longer able to communicate, withdrew more and more into his ivory tower, writing simply to satisfy his own desire for self-expression, or, at the most, for a small and select coterie of like-minded men. He sought to heal his wounded pride by cultivating a sense of his own innate superiority, and regarding the vulgar and uninitiated throng with a mixture of contempt and indifference. His conception of his art, no longer controlled by the demands of communi-

2. Cf. pp. 48,
cation to his public, became essentially esoteric, and in its more extreme forms, found expression in the eccentricities of Surrealism, Dadaism and, in visual art, of Cubism.

There was good reason why, on the morrow of the Great War, those writers who had upheld the cult of artistic self-sufficiency should be in high repute. They had not allowed themselves to be betrayed into prophecy or partisanship where international issues were at stake, nor had they given vent to the transitory passions of war. Remote from the conflict, they had maintained their own artistic integrity, and their work could not be aged or belied by the shifting tides of events. James Joyce, Proust, T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound became the models of a generation of younger writers who repudiated all too gladly the claims of a society perplexed by the aftermath of war, and who sought in their world of symbol and associationism to revive the keenness of apprehensions which had by being worn dull constantly grasped through the medium of a language grown stereotyped and unevocative. But the continued isolation of art from the larger currents of life is bound eventually to paralyse the creative imagination. The full circle of the evolution of Symbolism has been traced by Edmund Wilson in his *Axel's Castle* where it is seen to reach its logical conclusion in Rimbaud's rejection of his visionary illusions for the more concrete life of a trader in West Africa. It is not perhaps without significance that Wilson himself was to reject the cult of artistic irresponsibility.

for a creed which took more fully into account the relation of literature to society, particularly in its economic aspects. The depression of the Nineteen Twenties served to make even the most detached of littérateurs realise the acute interdependency of life and letters, and many, like Granville Hicks in *The Great Tradition* were prepared to feel that the unsatisfactory position in which American literature found itself was in no small measure due to the failure of criticism to point out what was wrong in society as a whole. The financial débâcle of 1929 brought home from exile many of the younger generation who had frequented the more advanced literary circles of Paris and who now found themselves confronting the harsh realities of a tottering economy. It was no longer possible to dissociate the visions of Parnassus from the facts of Wall Street, and in their criticism, Hicks, Wilson, James Farrell, Joseph Freeman, Upton Sinclair, V.F. Calverton and others came increasingly to demand a unifying idea, based on Socialism. From a preoccupation with the purely esthetic and formal, criticism reverted once more to an emphasis upon ethics and ideas, notably in their relation to modern society.

In addition to the forementioned trends in criticism, pure Impressionism and esthetic Formalism, on the one hand, and economic socialism, on the other, there was also to be reckoned with, in the second category, a new element introduced by the

growing interest in naturalistic psychology. Of this, one of the earliest exponents had been Professor George Santayana whose Sense of Beauty had, as early as 1896, claimed to be nothing but a new arrangement of 'the commonplace of criticism into a system under the inspiration of a naturalistic psychology.'

The new method reached its apogee with Joseph Wood Krutch's life of Edgar Allan Poe, and with Van Wyck Brooks' Ordeal of Mark Twain. Whilst frequently throwing interesting light on biographical problems, it ran the risk of reducing the author studied to an accumulation of complexes and inhibitions, and his work to an expression of all that was abnormal in his make-up. The noble term 'catharsis' was brought down from the lofty sphere of classical tragedy to describe any process by which the psychologist's specimen gave vent to his pent-up passions and instincts.

One thing all these currents of criticism, whether primarily esthetic or ethical in their emphasis, had in common. Their conception of the universe was essentially monistic. They believed it was possible to resolve the human paradox of mind and matter by absorbing the one term in the other, usually the former in the latter. Their attempt to reduce the multitudinous elements in man to a unity could, they believed, be effected without any far-reaching revolution in the nature of man himself.

1. Quoted M. D. Zabel, op. cit., p. XXVII.
A changed social economy, a psychological analysis of man's mental problems, a new esthetic principle, these were in themselves sufficient to bring order where at present there was conflict and chaos. It was man's way of looking at his universe that was wrong, not man himself.

In direct opposition to the monistic view of man and nature stood the dualism of the New Humanists with its emphasis on the division in man. Taking its stand upon its belief in three planes of experience, the supernatural, the human, and the natural, it saw man's twofold relationship to his world, to the supernatural through the higher immediacy, and to the natural through the lower immediacy. The higher self was in communion with all that was permanent and abiding, the ultimate principle of Being, the Ideal Good of Platonism, whereas through his lower self, man was the victim of the eddying currents of instinct and desire which make up the flux of Becoming and subject him, like the rest of the animal world, to the forces of change and decay. Naturally, the religion of Becoming, had persuaded men that their affinity was with the world of flux, and had brought about the dissolution of much that men through the ages had considered of constant and perennial worth. Not only had moral standards lost all absolute value in a generation obsessed with the relativity of

all truth, but the latest development of the thought of phil-
osophers such as Bergson and physicists like Einstein and
Whitehead had resulted in a conception of matter itself as
part of the ever-flowing stream of change. Man had no perman-
ent resting-place amid the flux, no single goal, no eternal
destination. It was small wonder that a generation convinced
of the transitoriness of all experience should plunge deep
into the maelstrom of sensation in order to break down the
last vestiges of a static moral code which had stood between
them and their self-identification with the dynamic processes
of nature. Literature turned away from the study of the conscious
and rational elements in man to give expression to the subconscio
the vast, inchoate whirlpool of impressions and desires which
eddied beneath the surface calm of human conduct and was waiting
to break through into wild and phantasmal modes of being when-
ever reason was off its guard. James Joyce's *Ulysses* became
the key-work of the age. The psychology of dreams reclaimed for
itself, under a very different guise, the prominence it had
before enjoyed during the Middle Ages, whilst under the influence
of Bergson's philosophy, time itself ceased to have any object-
ive reality and became a pure dimension of the mind, elastic
enough for past, present and future to be co-existent in the
mind of the individual, or transposed and intermingled with

each other through the action of memory and anticipation.

But sooner or later, such a philosophy of flux was bound to evoke a reaction. Although More and Babbitt have tended to dismiss him indiscriminately with the rest of Rousseau's followers, Wordsworth was one with the New Humanists in perceiving that there is in man an element which calls for stability: "The immortal mind craves objects that endure," and it was this aspect of the immortal mind which now reasserted itself in the demand for a permanent point of repair. The mood of a liberal criticism which had dissolved into a defence of licence and irresponsibility was at an end, and was replaced by a growing desire for authority, order, responsibility. After the financial crisis of 1929 with its abrupt shattering of so many dreams of artistic freedom and irresponsibility, some of the younger men began to remember the writings of More and Babbitt, austere and unpopular as they were, and set out to re-discover the stern self-control they had advocated over two decades before. The 'Thirties saw a violent counter-reformation directed against modern literature in the name of the New Humanism. In 1930 there appeared a symposium of Humanist essays, entitled Humanism and America, edited by Professor Norman Foerster. This provoked a response in A Critique of Humanism under the editorship of C. Hartley Grattan, to which many of younger creative writers contributed. Superficially it seemed that the Zeitgeist

1. Wordsworth, Sonnets, Composed after a Journey across the Hambleton Hills, Yorkshire.
was on the side of the moderns, for most of the contributors to *A Critique of Humanism* had themselves produced work which their generation recognised as possessing qualities which entitled it to be classed as 'literature', whereas the followers of More and Babbitt were, with the exception of T.S. Eliot — whose allegiance to New Humanism was at the best a very hesitant one — mere critics. But we can imagine the voice of a spectral Matthew Arnold objecting that there is a time to write and a time to refrain from writing, an epoch of expansion and an epoch of concentration. In an epoch of concentration, the *Zeitgeist* is with the critics whose task it is to create a living current of noble and stimulating ideas to nourish the genius of the creative writers of the epoch of expansion when it arrives and not with the writers who seek, in despite of the *Zeitgeist* to force their genius into modes of expression whereby it becomes merely eccentric and *outre*.

To the New Humanists of the 'Thirties, Sewald Collins, Allan Reynolds Thompson, Gorham B. Munson and others, there was no doubt that they were living in an epoch of concentration when the need of the times was to find a central point of agreement where men of good will could draw in and consolidate their spiritual resources. Even as unsympathetic a judge of New Humanism as Alfred Kazin admits that there was in the midst of so much uncertainty and disorder a deep hunger for some prin-

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principle of unity and stability. He reminds us repeatedly that the New Humanists had no share in contemporary imaginative literature and were completely out of sympathy with modern writing and the achievements of democracy. 'But' — and it is a large 'But' — 'they had, if not an applicable standard, a sense of standards, a conviction of the necessity of order, a belief in some exterior authority and discipline, and it was the assurance with which they inveighed against naturalism in literature and impressionism in criticism, the deliberation with which they propounded the need of a literature based on human responsibility and aristocratic dignity that gave them their importance.'

Unfortunately, as Kazin points out, there was the tendency among some of its younger exponents to carry its demand for authority and concentration to its logical conclusion, politically in Fascism, religiously in Roman Catholicism, and thereby to belie two of the primary principles of New Humanism, its mediatory nature and its distrust of an intellectualisation which seeks to raise a single tendency into an Absolute philosophy of life. The irony of More and Babbitt's position is that their names have come to be associated with one of those extremes of thought and conduct against which New Humanism was, in its purity a protest, and their work has been dismissed as the merely ill-

3. Ibid., p. 293.
4. Ludwig Lewisohn, op. cit., p. 444.
natured abuse of the moderns by two resentful reactionaries. It is the contention of this thesis that there are, on the other hand, in the thought of the New Humanists, particularly of Paul Elmer More, elements of a wider and perennial validity which lift it out of the arena of the conflicting passions of its day and commend it to the needs of our generation, as it seeks some permanent point of repair for the spirit of man amongst so much that speaks of frustration and change and despair.

(111) The Ethical Basis of American Humanism.

Few terms have been used so widely and so elastically as 'Humanism'. It was therefore necessary for those who adopted such a label in a specific way to define very clearly what they meant by it. For such a contingency no one was better suited than Irving Babbitt. By the time of the appearance of his first book, Literature and The American College, in 1908, he had already reached middle life and had behind him several years' experience as lecturer in French at Harvard University. Like his friend, Paul More, he had read widely in both Oriental and Classical studies and had formed his basic attitudes quite early, whilst still a student at Harvard and, unlike More in this respect, veered comparatively little from his original opinions. His mind was forthright and vigorous, concerned with large currents of thought rather than with


'The Century Dictionary defines humanism as "A system of thought in which human interest predominates or any purely human element is made prominent. But in the Renaissance itself what the Humanists came to stress was the principle of mediation between extremes which they found in Aristotle's Ethics and Poetics based on his psychology and exemplified in Cicero. The power to discriminate between extremes and therefore to choose judiciously distinguishes man from the rest of Nature. He has a capacity of reason and will, a will to do or to refrain from doing.' (Mercier, op. cit.)
its subtler nuances, and his style was correspondingly trenchant. In every way Babbitt was equipped to become the leader of a movement of literary revolt - a revolt against the forces of anarchy and heterodoxy which he felt were undermining the strength of American character, both individual and national. No small part of his campaign was directed against the indiscriminate use of phraseology in literary criticism, and it therefore behoved him to set down unequivocally what he and his fellow Humanists meant by many of the terms they used repeatedly in their work. For that reason many of the definitions used in this chapter will be given in the form in which Babbitt couched them rather than in the words of More. Babbitt was the theoretician of the American Humanists, whilst More was more concerned with illustrating the function of Humanism in action. The former is, therefore, on such questions as the Ethical Imagination, reason, instinct, intuition, illusion the more explicit of the two. Not infrequently he gives his reader the impression that he enjoys dallying with definitions more than applying them in concrete instances. His naturally analytical mind tends to emphasize distinctions, whereas More appears less eager to dwell on the analysis of ideas for its own sake than to apply it to the experience of individual writers in his attempt to find a dux vitae philosophia, a new synthesis of ideas which should satisfy his own deep-rooted love of order and wholeness. It is, however, vital to an understanding of the relative roles of the two men to
note that frequently an idea or theme originates with More, although it is afterward expressed more pungently if less imaginatively, by Babbitt. The general trend of two of Babbitt's best known works, *Rousseau and Romanticism*, and *Democracy and Leadership*, which appeared in 1919 and 1924 respectively, had been anticipated by More's *The Drift of Romanticism* (1913) and *Aristocracy and Justice* (1915), and the famous phrase, 'the inner check', which was to become the pass-word of the New Humanists, had occurred in *Seres Two of the Shelburne Essays* as early as 1905. Whenever an idea originated with More, I have tried to give him the credit for it. Again, whenever he modified or departed from the position taken up by Babbitt, I have mentioned the fact; otherwise it may be assumed that the two men held similar, even identical views, in which case I have quoted from the one who expresses the more crisply and crucially the point at issue, whilst mentioning in passing any notable parallels in the writings of the other.

It was definitely Babbitt, however, who first set down unequivocally at the outset of his literary career what he accepted as a working meaning of the term 'Humanist' in contrast to the widely used 'Humanitarian' for which it was popularly considered to be a synonym. 'The humanitarian', wrote Babbitt, 'lays stress almost solely upon breadth of knowledge and sympathy. The poet
Schiller, for instance, speaks as a humanitarian, not as a humanist, when he would 'clasp the millions to his bosom', and bestow 'a kiss upon the whole world'. The Humanist, on the other hand, is more selective in bestowing his affections. His is the philosophy of that which is peculiar to man per se, as distinguished from the animal creation, on the one hand, and on the other, from the supernatural world. He has therefore to take into account the whole nature of man, intellect, emotions and imagination, in contrast to the emphasis of the humanitarian which lies almost exclusively upon the emotions.

The distinction between the two terms was not original to Babbitt. The late Latin writer Aulus Gellius had complained of an indiscriminate use of the word 'humanitas', which was taken in his day to denote a 'promiscuous benevolence, what the Greeks call philanthropy', instead of its true meaning which involves both a doctrine and a discipline of conduct. 'It was some inkling of the difference between a universal philanthropy and the indoctrinating and disciplining of the individual that led Aulus Gellius to make his protest. Two words were probably in his time; they are certainly needed today. A person who has sympathy for mankind in the lump, faith in its future progress and desire to serve the great cause of this progress, should be called

not a humanist, but a humanitarian, and his creed may be designated as humanitarianism. From the present tendency and convenient to regard humanism as an abbreviated form for humanitarianism there must arise every manner of confusion'. As an instance of this confusion, More, in *Aristocracy and Justice*, cites R.W.Livingstone's *The Greek Genius and Its Meaning to Us* in which the author appears to him to identify humanism with universal sympathy and the impressionism of the individual. More had previously paid tribute in passing to Babbitt's distinction between the two terms in a footnote to the essay on Rousseau in Series Six of the *Shelburne Essays*, and as we shall see later he traces in several essays the descent of humanitarianism from a marriage of the two erstwhile antithetical motives of human conduct, altruism and egotism.

In Aulus Gellius himself, a man whom Babbitt confesses to have been of a somewhat crabbed and pedantic temperament, there was little room for sympathy of any kind. His 'humanitas' was confined to 'aura et disciplina' for which he cited the authority of Cicero. In the latter, however, Babbitt finds a fuller and rounder conception of humanism, combining both sympathy and discipline in just proportion, 'like the admirable humanist he was, he no doubt knew that

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1 Ibid., loc. cit.
4 Cf. esp. Appendix B.
what is wanted is not sympathy alone, nor again discipline and selection alone, but a disciplined and selective sympathy.\textsuperscript{1} Sympathy without selection tends to grow flabby, selection without sympathy, disdainful. The Ancients, aristocratic by temper, erred on the side of the latter; the modern age, democratic in outlook, errs in the opposite direction.

The change has been generally attributed to the influence of Christianity. More, for example, sees in the transition from Classical to Christian art, a whole series of new values being introduced, with a consequent confusion which has never been properly resolved. Humility replaced magnanimity, an exaltation of the weak and suffering succeeded the praise of honour, nobility and strength: private virtues were confused with public duties, the service of God with the service of Caesar. Nevertheless, even More would agree, that the peculiar emphasis on sympathy as the supreme principle of conduct, sufficient in itself, apart from any doctrine or discipline, is something essentially modern. Historically, the Christian Church reserved its sympathies for those accepting its doctrines and discipline, and unhesitatingly excluded all others from the enjoyment of the privileges reserved for the elect. Even at the Renaissance, when under the impetus of the rediscovery of Classical wisdom, men threw off the yoke of a theology which had had become too exigent in its demands upon man, and set up in

\textsuperscript{1}\textit{Babbitt, op.cit.}, pp.7-8; cf.\textit{Babbitt, Masters of Modern French Criticism}, (Boston and New York, 1913), p.114.

its stead the purely human authority of the Ancients, there still remained an accepted discipline implying its own doctrines. If, in the first flush of enthusiasm, Men's imaginations assumed wild and grotesque proportions, they still accepted a deep underlying code of conduct as the norm, and though momentarily, they might exceed it in fantastic ways, they were still unmistakably aware of what being human involved. When eventually the reaction set in, and to an epoch of expansion there succeeded an epoch of concentration, during which the hitherto spontaneous overflow of mental energy became canalised within the narrow limits of formal codes, the ideal remained the same, the formation of the 'complete man; although the methods of achieving it differed from what had gone before.

The New Humanist, however, sees a law in the universe or, as St. Paul put it, in man's members, which militates against this attempt to become the complete man. To him, there are three levels of existence, the divine, the human, and the natural. Such a division, More suggests in his article, 'The Humility of Common Sense' in Humanism and America, is now generally held to be out of date, but it is none the less grounded in universal experience and corresponds to the profound division the thinking man finds

1: Cf. P.S. Richards, op. cit., p.120 ff.
3. For an interesting discussion on the validity of this division of human experience into three planes, see P.S. Richards, op. cit., pp.156-58.
within himself. Man normally lives on the middle plane, the human which, as such, is liable to invasion from the other two, and he thus becomes the battle-ground for warring tendencies besetting him from the two extremes of naturalism on the one hand and supernaturalism on the other. In The New Shelburne Essays More points out that no man is purely religious or purely naturalistic. Both the 'religious man' and 'the natural man' as such are pure abstractions. Man's true humanity consists of holding the balance between the two, a matter of delicate and repeated adjustment. Unlike most religious teachers, the Humanist does not advocate that man should place his main emphasis on his affinity with the divine. Too rapid a transition from the human to the divine or supernatural plane may breed eccentricity or fanaticism, a problem with which More deals at length in 'The Religious Ground of Humanism' where he seeks to discriminate between those virtues which belong to the kingdom of God and those that pertain to the rule of Caesar (i.e. to the divine and to the human planes respectively), and to point out the chaos that ensues from a confusion of the two orders.

The world would be a better place if more people were sure they were human before aspiring to the superhuman: too many

3 Cf. p. 329.
pass abruptly from the naturalistic to the religious level, and fall victim to endless self-deceptions. Man's peculiar dignity consists in knowing himself and abiding by the law of measure which applies specifically to the human plane.

The Greeks in their day had grasped fully the dangers that attend man's proneness to run to excess, and had expressed figuratively a vital truth when they warned men that the invisible powers were jealously observant of human thoughts and actions, and were quick to take vengeance on those who, through folly or arrogance, forgot to 'think as mortals'. Upon such Nemesis descended in the form of the fury Ate, bringing madness and ultimate destruction in her wake. To learn this truth was the paramount need of the modern world which, to More, had, for the past hundred years, been 'floating in a haze of arrogant unreality'. 'To think as a mortal is to compromise, to mediate, to find the golden mean; whereas we have been hearkening, now to one, and now to another of two extreme and utterly opposed philosophies of life'. This theme More developed at length in two essays in the Second Series of the Shelburne Essays, 'Delphi and Greek' and 'Nemesis, or the Divine Envy', in which he sought to show that the two proverbs on the Delphic temple, 'Know thyself' and

3. Ibid., loc. cit.
'Nothing too much', supposedly Apollo's greeting to pilgrims to his shrine, represented the essential spirit of Greek temperance and restraint.

Such a law of measure, or decorum, as Babbitt calls it, may however easily degenerate into empty formalism, unless man's conception of it is constantly renewed by a living apprehension of its inner meaning. It must, according to Babbitt, be shown to be one of the laws unwritten in the heavens of which Antigone had the immediate perception, laws that are 'not of today or yesterday', that transcend in short the temporal process. The final appeal of the Humanist is not to any historical convention but to intuition.'

This statement of Babbitt's was sharply criticised by Edmund Wilson in The New Republic for March 1930, in which the latter claimed that Antigone's action in burying her brother contrary to Creon's edict was an act, not of self-control or of disciplined compliance with the laws of the universe, but of passionate personal loyalty and defiant self-assertion. Had the law of measure been universally observed even in Greece there would have been no titanic passions for the great dramatists to depict.

With the second part of Wilson's assertion More and Babbitt would be in partial agreement. The Greeks did frequently transgress the law of measure. The Humanists were, however,

2. E. Foerster, op. cit. (Babbitt, 'Essay at Definition'), p. 27.
less immediately concerned with the results of this transgression in art than in life; from such a failure to maintain a just balance of the natural, the human and the divine came the decline of Greece. The Sophists allowed themselves to be overwhelmed by their sense of Man's kinship with the physical universe with its change and instability, and so undermined man's faith in his own peculiar mediative position. The New Humanists, on the other hand, held as a basic tenet of their creed— a tenet to which they were confident all the greatest thinkers, both ancient and modern, subscribed—that there were in operation in the universe two distinct laws, a law for man and a law for things. On the very first page of his Literature and The American College, Babbitt quotes from Emerson the stanza:

There are two laws discrete
Not reconciled—
Law for man and law for thing;
The last builds town and fleet,
But it runs wild,
And doth the man unking.

This division is confirmed by a study of the Classics, particularly Aristotle who, throughout his works, recognised that man was a creature of two laws: the law of his physical or natural self, and impulse and desire, and the law of his human self which is known practically as a power of control over impulse and desire. If man is to be truly human he must not let impulse and desire run wild, but must oppose to everything.

excessive in his ordinary self, whether in thought, deed or emotion, the law of measure. The Sophists erred by weakening the law for man in favour of the law for thing which sees in life only movement and flux and calls for man to live on the natural plane.

Before man free himself from this law of change to which, on the physical side of his being, he, like the rest of creation is subject, he must find some centre to which to refer the manifold aspects of his experience in such a way that he may become a rounded and coherent personality, and this the phenomenal world of nature does not supply. This centre is found in the standards by which the individual seeks to impose order upon the multitudinous eddy of his impressions and sensations, and such standards are to be found either in our inherited tradition or in the individual's own intuition of an abiding and universal reality behind the material forms he can see and touch and handle. The Humanist allows that the standards held by tradition may in course of time grow stale and lose their authority, and in that case the individual has to depend entirely upon his personal intuition of an underlying reality, as Socrates had to do in an age, like ours, when recognised standards were breaking down and man had only the authority of his inner spiritual

affirmation. The charge was quite understandably brought against the Humanists that in the last analysis their doctrine rested on as subjective and individualistic a principle as any form of the Romantic philosophy of life, just as Socrates was charged with being one with the Sophists in making man the measure of all things. How they defended themselves against this charge of impressionism we must see later. Here it is sufficient to say that they asserted that all men who consider their experience honestly, in the light of the corporate wisdom acquired by mankind through the centuries, will be aware that that experience is not simple, but dual. On the one hand one is aware of 'the touchings of matter, the many forms and individuals that arise and perish, that swim in the flux of time, and the feeling that we too, or some part of us, are illusions in the great illusion.' On the other hand, there come moments when he is also aware of an inner reality which abides, 'the one invisible, eternal, incorruptible, imperishable' the phenomenal forms are but a shadowy and imperfect reproduction. This is the dualism of The One and the Many, a motive which runs right through the thought of More and Babbitt, but whereas in the work of the

3. Cf. p. 86
6. Ibid. to c.cit.
latter, it remains Oriental in tone and derivation, in More's later thought it assumes a new complexion as a result of his growing absorption in Platonism. From Series Six of the Shelburne Essays onwards, it furnishes him with a connecting motif. There the Oriental and Platonic elements are fairly evenly balanced, but the scale is increasingly tilted in favour of the Greek conception, seeing matter not as the enemy of spirit, a mere illusion which seduces man from a knowledge of truth, but rather as the material upon which spirit seeks to work. This idea becomes almost the raison d'etre of The Greek Tradition, and there in the volume on Platonism, he gives the fullest explanation of his peculiar use of the phrase.

Plato recognised that men move about in a world of shifting impressions, and are constrained to base their judgments drawn from an observation of facts which can never be complete. In our practical life, so far as it is concerned with the world of phenomena, we have only the guidance of opinion, i.e. our impressions of the Many. But he also asserted that, beside opinion, we have knowledge, an intuition of the One. 'The operation of this faculty we may not be able to analyse, but there it is, within our souls, giving us certain information of the everlasting reality of righteousness and loveliness in themselves as things apart from the flux, and bidding us look

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to the God of these realities for the measure of our nature.¹

The identification of the One with God is a late development in More's thought. During the writing of The Shelburne Essays, he was prepared to affirm only the existence of a supernatural order of Ideas, the eternal pattern, one and immutable, underlying the manifold and vacillating copies of it in the physical and human worlds. It is to this supernatural and ideal order that man, on one side of his being, is related. 'In one direction we tend toward unity and the absorption of separate desires and energies in the knowledge of our own completeness. The sense of ourself as a being different in composition from other beings is lost in the recognition of a higher Self which leaves no room for the antagonism of individualities; and the following of that ideal we call the spiritual as opposed to the material life. As the goal of this tendency we speak of an eternal changelessness, of a self-sufficient joy, and of eternal life—meaning words if passed through the analysing intelligence, but to the foresight of experience, nay, to the remembrance of those who at moments have risen to the heights of contemplation, the great reality without which one half of our nature is left halt and impotent. In the other direction lies the sense of our personality as concerned with variety and

¹More, Platonism, p. 113.
variety and change and that world of phenomena, which is a
reflection, it may be (who shall say?), of a dissipation within
ourselves. In this way we come to distractions and restlessness,
to self-seeking, competition, envy, jealousy, and strifes; to
misery, devouring egotism, lust, and violence. Its end is despair
and the irreparable decomposition of death.

'In its philosophical form this difference of direction shows itself as the antinomy of the one and the many'.

Few men, however, are prepared to accept the paradox
of such a dualism. The majority seek to explain the universe
in terms of either spirit or matter. The sages of Ancient
India were seduced by the calm imperturbability of the divine
and so lulled their followers into spiritual stagnation,
devoured by an overpowering sense of the One. The Sophists
on the other hand fell victim to the vacillating influence
of the Many. The true dualist, however, will allow for the
existence of both and seek to discriminate between that which
pertains to the One and that which is associated with the
Many by means of a Socratic dialectic: otherwise, he runs the
risk of being swept along with the prevailing current of the
day, the victim of time, mutability and decay, or of acquiescing
inertly in a dead order which mistakes formalism for reality.
He has thus to mediate between a chaotic impressionism and a
stagnant authoritarianism. In our day the chief danger is from

the former in its modern guises of Pragmatism, Behaviourism, and other philosophies which connect man with the flux. In the New Humanists' own day, the writings of Bergson and William James, in their reaction against scientific positivism, were drawing men's attention once more to the Platonic problem of the One and the Many, but unfortunately, to More and Babbitt, they adopted not the Socratic, but the sophistical side of the argument, thus sinking below the level of reason instead of rising above it as they might have done, had they adopted the Socratic-and Platonic-method of definition. Above intellectualism lies the Platonic intuition with its own peculiar type of imagination and enthusiasm; below lies the 'Rousseauistic intuition,' (so called for reasons we must consider later), which is faith in mere instinct or impulse, also involving its own type of imagination and enthusiasm.

At this juncture it might be well to pause and consider the New Humanists' use of certain recurrent terms. 'Intellectualism' is obviously the action of the discursive reason, for which frequently the word 'reason' alone, with a small 'r', is used, in contrast to 'Reason' with a capital letter, which denotes the divine faculty of control operating intuitively. Further, 'insight' or the 'higher', or 'super-rational', or 'Platonic' intuition are all

2. Babbitt, Masters of Modern French Criticism, pp. 1X-X.
used in contrast to the discursive reason. Much of the confusion of human thought throughout the ages has arisen from the isolation of the discursive reason and its exaltation into the supreme faculty, thereby usurping the place which belongs by right to the intuitive Reason, and giving birth to a vast brood of metaphysical interpretations of life which, to More in particular, are anathema. To the intuitive Reason corresponds the Ethical, or Religious, or Qualitative Imagination possessing a centre of reference in the apprehension of the One, whereas the discursive, or as it is sometimes called, the scientific reason judges quantitatively in accordance with its teeming impressions of the Many. As there is a form of intuition above reason, so there is also an intuition below reason, the "Rousseauistic" intuition, dependent not on insight but on impulse. For the sake of clarity throughout this thesis, I refer to the higher power as 'intuition' or 'insight', to the lower as 'instinct', although More himself does not hold consistently to this antithesis of terms. The part of man that is under the control of intuition is the 'higher self'; that which is swayed by the dominion of instinct is the 'lower self'. To both More and Babbitt, this distinction between the higher and lower selves is concerned, not with the traditional division of body and soul, but with an inner dualism of consciousness dependent on

an awareness of the One or of the Many. Further, the contrast is not, as it appeared to the Eighteenth century, between reason and instinct, an antithesis which has persisted with only a change of emphasis down to the present day. Instead the New Humanists adapted the Classical division between reason and instinct on the one hand, classed together as the natural faculties, and intuition, on the other. It was this intuition which Pascal described as 'the heart' when he sought to contrast true religious insight with the perceptions of the discursive reason. But in popular parlance, the term 'heart' has been used for the passions or desires and therefore relates to the lower self, an instance of the necessity of clearly defining one's terms. This confusion of terms facilitated in no small measure the blurring of the distinction between the Ethical and the Rousseauistic Imaginations. The general error of the Romantics to More and Babbitt was just this assimilation of the rebellion of the lower element of our nature with the control that comes from above nature. For the infinite spirit which makes itself known as a restraining check and a law of concentration within the flux of nature this new aspiration of liberty would substitute the mere endless expansion which ensues upon the denial of any restraint whatsoever; in place

2. Cf. pp. 163, 112.
of the higher intuition which is above reason it would commit mankind to the lower intuition which is beneath reason."

On the one hand, Babbitt would group together all those who had this higher intuition, the sages of the world, including Christ and Buddha and Socrates, and, amongst moderns, just a few who have entered rather more uncertainly into this inner wisdom, Burke, Dr. Johnson, Joubert, and to an even less sure degree, Emerson, whilst, on the other hand, he would place all the Romantics and Naturalists from Rousseau down to Bergson and William James.

'Possibly the contrast between the intuitiveness of Joubert and the sages and that of M. Bergson may be brought out most clearly by comparing their attitude towards time. Reality is a pure process of flux and change according to M. Bergson, and this change takes place in time, so that time is thus the very stuff of which our lives are made. We should strive to see things not sub specie aeternitatis, but sub specie durationis.' With this Babbitt contrasts the insight of the sages: Buddha's 'The sage is delivered from time; Michel Angelo's 'Happy the soul in which time no longer courses' Joubert's own 'Time, measured here below by the succession of beings which are constantly changing and being renewed is seen and felt and reckoned and exists. Higher up there is no change or succession or new or old or yesterday or tomorrow', and

and Emerson's description of 'the core of God's abysm':

'There Past, Present, Future shoot
Triple blossoms from one root'.

Whereas in the sage the spiritual intuition must predominate, in the critic or the creator of art or literature there is need of both kinds of intuition. 'Perhaps the wisest man is he who has both orders of intuition and then mediates between them; who joins to his sense of unity a fine perception of the local, the individual, the transitory. Joubert's quality as a critic is revealed especially by the fact that he not only had standards, but held them fluidly. His insistence on the fixed and permanent is nearly always tempered by the sense of change and instability.'

Foremost amongst Joubert's intuitive perceptions is his view of illusion as an integral part of reality, a necessary condition of a working philosophy of the One and the Many. Without illusion, natural phenomena are seen in hard isolation and not in their interconnection with the whole. In this way one arrives at the false disillusion of the decadent who sees not only in the outer world but in himself also nothing but isolated phenomena, who has no countervailing intuition of the One to oppose to his perception of the Many, and who therefore after the manner of Arthur Symons, Wilde, Anatole France or

1. Ibid., pp. 55-56.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.
3. Ibid., pp. 196-97.
Humeke, seeks to distil from each experience the maximum of sensation. To succumb to such a philosophy of relativity is, according to Babbitt, to forfeit all claim to be truly modern, as opposed to being merely modernist, for it is to refuse to take into account the whole of man's immediate experience in which the man who is truly positivistic or critical must recognize and mediate between two separate orders of perception.  

'Life does not give here an element of oneness and there an element of change. It gives a oneness that is always changing. The oneness and the change are inseparable. Now if what is stable and permanent is felt as real, the side of life that is always slipping into something else or vanishing away entirely is; as every student of psychology knows, associated with the feeling of illusion. If a man attends solely to this side of life he will finally come, like Leconte de Lisle, to look upon it as a "torrent of chimeras," as an endless whirl of vain appearances. To admit that the oneness of life and the change are inseparable is therefore to admit that such reality as man can know positively is inextricably mixed up with illusion. Moreover man himself is caught up in the process; he is a oneness that is always changing, the same person yet infinitely different at the ages of six weeks and seventy years.

From all this it follows that an enormous element of illusion—and this is a truth the East has always accepted more readily

1. Babbitt, Rousseau and Romanticism, (Boston and New York: 1924)  
2. Ibid., p. XIV  
pp. X1-X11.
than the West—enters into the idea of personality itself. If the critical spirit is once allowed to have its way, it will not rest until it has dissolved life into a mist of illusion. Perhaps the most positive and critical account of man in modern literature is that of Shakespeare:

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

But though strictly considered, life is but a web of illusion and a dream within a dream, it is a dream that needs to be managed with the utmost discretion if it is not to turn into a nightmare. In other words, however much life may mock the metaphysician, the problem of conduct remains. There is always the unity at the heart of the change; it is possible, however, to get at this real and abiding element and so at the standards with reference to which the dream of life may be rightly managed only through a veil of illusion. The problem of the One and the Many, the ultimate problem of thought can therefore be solved only by a right use of illusion.

These two themes of illusion and conduct— or character— form the main motives of the Shelburne Essays. As we shall see later, the theme of true and false illusion exercised a profound influence upon the first five volumes of More's critical writings, and although tempor-

1. Ibid., pp. Xlv-V.
arily overshadowed from Series Six on by his more explicit concern with the 'Inner Check', it remains as an undertone to all his criticism, becoming its dominant idea again towards the end of his life. He developed the theme first in detail in the essay on 'Arthur Symons: The Two Illusions' in the First Series of the Shelburne Essays in 1904, whereas Babbitt's first reference to the subject is, I believe, in Masters of Modern French Criticism, published in 1913. As early as Series Two of the essays, More had anticipated the illustrations of illusion which Babbitt found in Shakespeare and Buddha; i.e. he was using in 1905 examples first occurring in Babbitt in Rousseau and Romanticism (1919).

To the natural order of the Many corresponds the élan vital, the vital impulse of nature, while to the supernatural order of the One corresponds the frein vital, the principle of vital control. Right conduct to the Humanist, is the mediation between expansiveness and concentration, rather than an exclusive emphasis on either order of intuitions. Nevertheless, Humanism has become known almost exclusively as the philosophy of the Frein Vital or the Inner Check, not only among its opponents, but also among its advocates.

1. Cf. infra.
3. Ibid. 56-60.
The higher will in man, or the higher immediacy, is distinguished from the lower immediacy, the merely temperamental man with his impressions and emotions and expansive desires, by this power of vital control which likewise distinguishes man from the animals and is thus the characteristic feature of man. 'Humanism', says Foerster in his Preface to *Humanism and America*, conceives that the power of restraint is peculiarly human, and that those who throw down the reins are simply abandoning their humanity to the course of animal life or the complacency of vegetables. Indeed the moment of human supremacy is not that of expansive sympathy, but of concentration and selection, and the chief use of any widening out of knowledge and sympathy must be to prepare man more fully for that moment. 'Now to select rightly a man must have right standards, and to have right standards means in practice that he must constantly set bounds to his own impulses. Man grows in perfection proper to his own nature in almost direct ratio to his growth in restraint and self-control.'

The term 'inner check' was first used by More in the Second Series of *Shelburne Essays* in the essay on Kipling and Fitzgerald in which he claimed to have found it used on one occasion by Emerson. It became more frequent in his work, however, after Series Six, and the fullest definition and analysis of its operation is given in 'Definitions of Dualism'.

1. Foerster, op. cit., Preface, pp. XIX-IV.
The idea, if not the term, is present in Babbitt's *New Laokoon* (1910), and in *Masters of Modern French Criticism* (1913) in which he calls attention to Brunetière's *principe refrérent* equivalent to his own *frein vital*. The actual term 'inner check' occurs more frequently in *Rousseau and Romanticism*. Oriental in its origin, the term was connected by Babbitt, and by More during the earlier volumes of the *Shelburne Essays*, with the Buddhistic discrimination between vital impulse and vital check, 'the Buddhistic equivalent of the 'civil war in the cave'; but gradually More came to give it a content which drew more on Platonic than on Buddhistic, thought.

From a practical point of view, the inner check is identified with the conscience, and envisaged as a power which sits aloof from and in judgment upon the expansive desires. It is distinct from man's lower and natural self, and constitutes that higher immediacy through which man is in communion with the supernatural. But such an affirmation presupposes the existence of a power set above the flux of nature on which, nevertheless, the flux depends—on what Aristotle termed an Unmoved Mover. Otherwise conscience becomes a part of the very flux and element of change which it is supposed to control.

'In proportion as he escapes from outer control man must be conscious of some such unmoved mover if he is to oppose a

4. Ibid., p. 150.
5. Ibid., *loc.cit.*
definite aim or purpose to the indefinite expansion of his desires. Having some such firm centre he may hope to carry through to a fortunate conclusion the "civil war in a cave". He may, as the wise are wont to express it, build himself an island in the midst of the flood. The romantic moralist, on the other hand, instead of building himself an island is simply drifting with the stream.

Such a drifting is, to the Buddhist, "pamāda, the unforgivable sin of spiritual indolence, whereas the man who curbs his expansive desires is displaying the greatest of all virtues, appamāda, spiritual vigilance or strenuousness. Similarly in Greek philosophy, evil is envisaged partly as spiritual insubordination, but even more as that spiritual indolence which makes such insubordination possible, "rhathymia. Moreover, without some centripetal power such as the Inner Check affords, man falls prey to lusts which make him not merely supine but dangerous. Unlike the other animals, man's appetites know no bounds, and this infinitude of desire makes man necessarily either better or worse than other creatures. The Humanist accepts the traditional Christian classification of the three lusts, libido dominandi, libido scienti and libido sentiendi, and of these three, he would agree with Ernest de Seilliére that the libido dominandi is the most

exigent, whether it be conceived, as in Hobbes, as a perpetual and restless desire after power, or, as in Machiavelli, as a law of cunning. With the removal of the check upon personal ambition imposed by the authority of the Church in the Middle Ages and the growing emphasis upon the supremacy of the individual, these three lusts assumed ever increasing sway over mankind, driving him from one extreme of behaviour to another in his search for an ever elusive satisfaction, and culminating in that form of rampant imperialism which More sometimes designates Napoleonism and sometimes Nietzscheism.

The position of the Humanist on the contrary is one of moderation, of mediation. 'We have seen that the humanist as we know him historically, moved between an extreme of sympathy and an extreme of discipline and selection, and became humane in proportion as he mediated between these extremes. To state this truth more generally, the true mark of excellence in a man, as Pascal puts it, is his power to harmonize in himself opposite virtues and to occupy all the space between them (tout l'entredeux). By his ability thus to unite in himself opposite qualities man shows his humanity, his superiority of essence over other animals'.

Few men have attained to so exacting a form of

excellence. The aim, as Matthew Arnold saw, was to 'see life steadily and see it whole', but no one, not even Sophocles to whom Arnold applied the phrase, had to Babbitt, attained to that goal. 'Man is --- a living paradox in that he holds with enthusiasm and conviction to the half-truth and yet becomes perfect only in proportion as he achieves the rounded view. The essence of any true humanistic method is the mediation between extremes, a mediation that demands of course not only effective thinking but effective self-discipline; and that no doubt is why true humanists have always been so rare. We are not to suppose that because a man has made some progress in mediating between opposite virtues and half-truths he has therefore arrived at the truth. The Truth(with a capital T) is of necessity infinite and so is not for any poor finite creature like man. The most any man can do is to tend toward the truth, but the potion of it he has achieved at any given moment will always, compared with what still remains, be a mere glimpse and an infinitesimal fragment. If he attempts to formulate this glimpse, the danger is that it will thus be frozen into a false finality. Any one who thinks he has got the Truth finally tucked away in a set of formulae, is merely suffering, whether he call himself theologian, or scientist, or philosopher, from what may be termed the error of intellectualism or the metaphysical illusion'. This is the error which More, borrowing the phrase from Bacon, calls the Intellectus sibi permissus, or reason run amuck;

1. Ibid., p. 23
into such excesses man is betrayed by the wiles of the Demon of the Absolute. And yet although reason is so prone to fall victim to an extreme rationalisation, man, in so far as he is human, is bound to depend for his understanding of the world upon the workings of reason, which needs to distinguish and to analyse. 'Though the truth cannot be finally formulated, man cannot dispense with formulae. The truth will always overflow his categories, yet he needs categories. He should have formulae and categories, but hold them fluidly; in other words he must have faith in law, but it must be a vital faith'.

This passage I consider of vital importance to a fair and adequate understanding of what Babbitt and More were seeking to effect through Humanism, as opposed to the grotesque caricature of their work given by so many of their opponents. They were at one with the Humanists of the Ancient World, as well as of the Renaissance and the Seventeenth Century in so far as they were in search of the 'complete man', and they saw such completeness to consist, not in the absorption of one term of man's dual nature in its opposite, but in the holding of the two terms in just proportion.

From the Sixteenth Century onwards, there have been ar work influences militating against this Humanist concept-

notably scientific rationalism and sentimental romanticism. These the Humanist sees as two aspects of a single heresy, the denial of man's dual nature, the attempt to envisage him as an extension of, not something in contrast to, the physical universe around him. This new sense of man's unity with the cosmos came as a result of Copernican astronomy, bringing with it a sense of emancipation from the tyranny of mediaeval theology and of confidence in man's powers to penetrate the secrets of the universe. Moreover, with the gradual development of scientific knowledge, there came into the world for the first time a new aspect of consciousness, the belief in human progress. Naturalism or Naturism, this tendency to regard man as part of the physical universe, and humanitarianism had co-existed before in the classical period, but without this idea of perfectibility of man which, with the decline of orthodox religious faith, came increasingly to be exalted itself into a religion. Already in the Sixteenth Century, this new spirit of scientific naturalism was represented in all its vigour and optimism by Francis B. Bacon, after whom Babbitt names this one particular aspect of the 'Romantic' heresy. In some respects, Bacon remained the Renaissance humanist, in others the traditional Christian, but to Babbitt, the main drift of his career was unmistakable: he tended to scientific positivism, the setting up of purely quantitative and dynamic standards, which were to become the norm of judgment amongst his followers.

The scientist no longer advocated the training of the 'complete man', but of the specialist, concentrating on a single branch of study with a view to becoming proficient in it. The Humanist and liberal education of the Renaissance, aiming at a general culture, yielded place to a narrow and detailed analysis, now bearing its fruits in the present American educational system. 'What a Baconian understands is training for power, training with a view to certain practical or scientific results. In getting his technical or professional education the student is often, of course, immensely stimulated by the plain relation it has to his future livelihood.' The Baconian therefore, like his modern descendant, the Pragmatist, bends all his energies to a given object and expects his progress to be in direct proportion to the strenuousness of his efforts. Here he differs fundamentally from the Humanist who seeks primarily to work, not on the world, but himself. 'By right selection even more than by right the fullness of knowledge and sympathy, man proves his superiority of essence, and shows that he is something more than a mere force of nature. The humanist will insist on the distinction between energy and will, however much the present age seems to have forgotten it. A man may be a prodigy of energy and yet spiritually indolent.' The Humanist lays his stress upon spiritual effort, and the disciplining of the

3. Ibid., pp. 56-57.
inner life. Only if a man can control himself can he hope to control his physical environment. His main aim must be the Socratic quest for self-knowledge.

Beside scientific naturalism, the Humanist sets sentimental naturalism, both offshoots of the same monism which seeks to fuse the human with the natural. For the embodiment of this second spirit, Babbitt turned to the Eighteenth Century and Rousseau. Rousseau was for him, even more than Bacon, the fountain-head of all subsequent error and anarchy. Admittedly the arid rationalism and pseudo-classicism of the period immediately preceding Rousseau had made reaction inevitable. For a living faith in God it had substituted a vague and desiccated deism, for the Aristotelian canon of art as an imitation of nature, it taught that art was the imitation of an imitation, the modelling of a poem or a drama upon a previous poem or drama by the application of certain rigid and irrevocable rules. It had driven a wedge between emotion and imagination on the one hand and reason on the other; and whilst the latter was enthroned as the sovereign power of life, the former had been banished into the outer darkness of sternest obloquy. This simple, but fallacious antithesis was adopted in turn by Rousseau who merely inverted the process. Nothing resembles a swelling as much as a hollow, in Sainte-Beuve's words, and with Rousseau imagination and emotion were reinstated, and reason banished from power.

With Rousseau, certain new ideas began to dominate man's consciousness. Few men have been more wretched and maladjusted to their universe than he was, and in order to make life tolerable for himself, he seized on certain modes of thought which he then proceeded to foist upon other men as basic principles of life. That they took root so rapidly and widely was a testimony, not to the universal validity of the ideas themselves, although, be it admitted, they did correspond to the experience of men generally once they had begun to tire and cast aside the stern discipline of self-control, but rather to the widespread weariness and maladjustment of men everywhere during the closing years of the Eighteenth Century. First and foremost was his advocacy of the natural goodness of man. In contrast to the teaching of the Classics, stressing man's tendency to excess, and of the Church, with its emphasis on original sin and man's dire need for grace, humility and penitence, Rousseau asserted the intrinsic innocence and virtue of man who had only to follow the spontaneous bent of his nature to find harmony and perfection. The present division and dissidence rife amongst men spring, not from any evil inherent in man, but from a source of corruption outside of man, in the artificial restraints and barriers imposed upon him by society. Remove these restraints and man will revert to his primordial

For the dualism within man, Rousseau therefore substituted an external dualism, between man and society. Man, according to Rousseau, had fallen away from nature in somewhat the same way as in the old theology, he had fallen away from God, and salvation depended upon a return to nature. This change in outlook both More and Babbitt traced back to Shaftesbury and the English deists to whom conscience had ceased to be 'a power which sits in judgment on the ordinary self and inhibits its impulses.' It tended, as far as it was recognised at all to 'become itself an instinct and an emotion'—'a moral sense, a sort of expansive instinct for doing good to others'. Throughout the Eighteenth century, side by side with its rationalism, ran an underlying current of strong sentimentality, advocating altruism in direct opposition to the previous teaching of philosophers like Hobbes that egotism was the basis of human conduct. Those capable of feeling such expansive emotion were a select company of 'beautiful souls', Rousseau's 'belles âmes', distinguished from the insensible herd by the keenness of their emotions and therefore doomed to be misunderstood by them. Here we are at the root of the doctrine of artistic irresponsibility and isolation. It is obvious that according to such a view morality becomes a matter of mood; man merely has to let himself go in order to find his

2. Babbitt, Rousseau and Romanticism, p. 130.
3. Ibid., pp. 130-31.
true self. But feeling not only shifts from man to man, it is continually changing in the same man. At the time of doing anything, says Mrs. Shelley, Shelley deemed himself right, and Rousseau asserts that in the act of abandoning his own children, 'he felt "like a member of Plato's republic".'

'The man who makes self-expression and not self-control his primary endeavour becomes subject to every influence, "the very slave of circumstance and impulse borne by every breath". This is what it means no longer in practice to keep a firm hand on the rudder of one's personality, but to turn one's self over to nature'.

This natural drift of Rousseau's new morality was reinforced by the peculiar character of his imagination. Himself a misfit in society, he turned for consolation to an imaginary Arcadia in the past, an idyllic vision of primitive man, free, happy and virtuous. Such a dream of a Golden Age in the past was not essentially different from the myth-making of former generations. Where Rousseau differed from them was in his belief, coloured by the faith of the scientific naturalist in the perfectibility of man, that such a state might be realised again if only man could throw off his artificial shackles. Moreover, whereas in the past, dreams of a Golden Age had been but an occasional solace from the serious business of living, an imaginative dalliance which was not allowed

3. Ibid., loc. cit.
to interfere with the claims of reality, in the Rousseauist
they become a substitute for living. The present no longer
has any meaning for him; he hovers between an impassioned re-
collection of past bliss or an impatient anticipation of
delights to come. 'The essence of the mood is always the
straining of the imagination away from the here and now,
from an actuality that seems paltry and faded compared to the
radiant hues of one's dreams'.---'In Shellyan phrase he
"looks before and after, and pines for what is not".---
"Objects make less impression upon me than my memory of
them", says Rousseau. He is indeed the great master of what
has been termed the impassioned recollection.' This highly
developed emotional memory is closely allied to the special
quality of the romantic imagination, its wistful yearning
after vanished joys of childhood, as well as of primitive
life, and its consequent exalting of the child as well as of
the noble savage as the personification of true wisdom.

More, however, in seeking to trace the derivation
of the Romantic imagination, finds its roots much farther
back in history, in a fusion of the Oriental conception
of infinity and the Occidental conception of personality.
'To that alliance, if to any definite event of history,
we may trace the birth of our sense of an infinite insat-
iable personality that has brought so much self-torment

1. Ibid., p. 90; cf. L. H. Hough, Evangelical Humanism, (London: 1925),
3. Ibid., 234.
4. Ibid., loc. cit.
and so much troubled beauty into the religion and literature of the modern world! Whereas in orthodox Christianity, the more eccentric aspects of the new spirit were counterbalanced by a true sense of infinity, dependent on belief in the supernatural and a sense of man's responsibility to a personal God, in certain of the heresies which were soon to disturb the Early Church man's infinite aspirations took on a crude and fantastic shape. Of these the most grotesque were Gnosticism and Manicheism, both flourishing in Alexandria, the hotbed of cosmopolitan superstition. Already in the Second Century, More could see in the creed of the Gnostic, Valentinus, as in a gulf, 'like dim shadowy portents some of the ideas that were germinating amidst the decay of the old world. In the identification of the intellect with desire and its divorce from the will, in this vague yearning of the intellect for the infinite fulness of the Father, and the birth of the world from emotion (pathos), I seem to see into the real heart of what after many centuries was to be called romanticism—the infinitely craving personality, the usurpation of emotion over reason, the idealisation of love, the confusion of the sensuous and the spiritual, the perilous fascination that may go with these confusions. It is like a dream of fever, beautiful and malign by turns; and looking at its wild sources, one can understand why Goethe called romanticism disease and classicism health. He might have added that disease is infect-
ious, while health must be acquired or preserved by the effort of the individual.  

More allows, in common with other critics as far removed from his own philosophy of art as Jacques Barzun, Middleton Murry and F.L. Lucas, that there are two romanticisms, a perennial phase of the human spirit found wherever poetry rises from the common level to the climaxes of inspiration, 'when we are thrilled by the indefinable spell of strangeness wedded to beauty, when we are startled by the unexpected vision of mystery beyond the circle of appearances that wrap us in the commonplace of daily usage, and suddenly "the immeasurable heavens break open to their highest";' and a spurious phase which More finds represented most clearly by that historical period known specifically as the Romantic Movement, of which the distinguishing feature, to him as to Babbitt, is in opposition to the true mystery and wonder of classic art, 'that expansive conceit of the emotions which goes with the illusion of beholding the infinite within the stream of nature itself instead of apart from the stream'.

'Romanticism is a highly complex movement and has contributed largely to the world's sum of beauty and sublimity. It has been defined as the sense of strangeness

1. Ibid., p. 30
and wonder in things, and such a definition tells us at least half the story. But strangeness and wonder may be qualities of all great literature; in so far as they are peculiar to romanticism and distinguish it from the universal mode which we call classic, they will be found to proceed from, or verge towards, that morbid egotism which is born of an intensely felt personality with the notion of infinity as an escape from limitations.  

In ancient Greece, the conception of beauty depended on order, balance, harmony, but this did not mean that Greek art was deficient in a sense of the divine. It did mean, however, that it expressed this sense of the divine through the controlled and concentrated, unlike Eastern art in which the attempt to express the divine as the infinite assumed grotesque and exaggerated forms. Unfortunately it was the more disordered of the two conceptions of divinity which passed into the nascent romanticism, combining with the Western idea of personality as the expression of an active emotional Ego. Had the Greek idea of the divine merged with the Oriental conception of personality, voluntaristic and self-renunciatory, More held that the history of Christian civilisation would have been very different. Humanism as envisaged by both More and Babbitt is an attempt to

1 Ibid., p. 36.
2 Ibid., pp. 22-28.
reinstate a comparable union of the divine as a centre of control and the personal as the expression of an ethical will, in opposition to the romantic fusion of the vast and the vague with an inflated egotism. In so far as Humanism, in the present state of mankind, is a voluntary acceptance of the control of a divine inner check which entails the submission of the personality to those very limitations from which romanticism seeks to escape, it follows that as a historical phenomenon at least, romanticism is inevitably at variance with the Humanist ideal. That there is, however, no inherent conflict between Humanism and the spirit of 'essential' romanticism comes out quite clearly from the balanced and reasonable statement of their relation given by one of the most competent exponents of the Humanist position, P.S. Richards in his Belief in Man.

Whereas the growth of the critical and scientific spirit in the Baconian gave free rein to the libido sciendi, the Rousseauist by allowing his impulses full and free expression has turned life over to the rule of the libido sentiendi. Both are, however, in the last resort but aspects of that even more fundamental appetite, the libido dominandi, that ever restless urge after power which drives man on from one extreme of conduct and desire to another. insatiable he is. The more imaginative a man is, the more likely to become, for it is the imagination that holds open a door to the infinite.
It is therefore all important that the imagination should be under the control of the inner check, as well as for the inner check to be illuminated by the inner check. For both to function at their highest and best, it is essential to realise that there can be a truly spiritual enthusiasm, as opposed to the merely impulsive enthusiasm of the Romantics, and in this inner check and inner light are practically identical. This conception of the imagination controlled and chastened by the inner check, Babbitt calls the Ethical Imagination in contrast to the uncontrolled and eccentric Romantic Imagination.

The original Greek use of the term 'imagination' or 'fancy' applied to the impressions of the senses, and then to that faculty which stored those impressions. The imagination was, therefore, primarily the power that perceived. Only later, in the West, was the idea of the imagination as a power that conceived grafted on to the original idea. The imagination now came to be envisaged as itself a creative power, acting in despite of physical reality and making a world of its own which had not of necessity any relation to the external world. This is the Romantic conception of the imagination which in its flight from reality was seeking to fashion a universe over which the reason had no jurisdiction. Both Neo-classicism and Romanticism erred by divorcing imagination and emotion from reason, and the latter, in vindicating the power of the imagination, had come to look askance at reason as the false secondary power which multi-

1. Ibid., p. 258.
plies distinctions. But there are various ways of being imaginative, and analysis is needed not only to build up some abstract system, but also to discriminate between the actual data of experience, in order to determine the way it is expedient to follow if one wishes to be wise and happy. It is therefore necessary to discriminate between different types of imagination: the Romantic Imagination seeks to express the strange, the marvellous, the exotic, whereas the Ethical Imagination seeks to be true to both the universal and the local. To More the determining factor in distinguishing between the two imaginations is an awareness of dualism: the apprehension of the One and of the Many lifts the work of the higher artistic intuition above that of the lower level of inspiration. Although later in the Greek Tradition, he seeks to define the two terms more accurately, to all intents and purposes in the Shelburne Essays, the Ethical Imagination is identified with the Religious Imagination which he describes in 'Studies in Religious Dualism', as 'the faculty by which we unite the broken and dispersed images of the world into an harmonious poetic symbol'.

3. Ibid. p. 200.
Humanism sees the problem of civilisation itself bound up to no small extent with that of the Ethical Imagination. In a civilisation based on dogma and external authority, there is a lothness to face up to the full implications of imaginative insight, but in a society where traditional standards have been undermined by the positivist and critical spirit, it becomes imperative to examine afresh the role of the imagination. The Humanist sees man moving in a vicious circle. Man, himself a being ever changing, living in a world of constant change, is cut off from immediate access to anything abiding and condemned to live in an element of fiction or illusion. Yet civilisation has to rest on the recognition of something abiding. It follows that the truths on the survival of which civilisation depends cannot be conveyed to man directly, since he has no immediate access to them, but only through imaginative symbols. But man finds it difficult to recognise this disability, and to submit his imagination critically to the necessary control. He consents to limit his expansive desires only as long as he believes that the truths symbolically presented to him are literally true. Thus his ethical control is won at the expense of the critical spirit which, sooner or later, reasserts itself, as in the person of a Voltaire, but which, in banishing credulity, gives rise to an anarchic individualism which threatens in turn to

2. Ibid., p. 359.
destroy civilisation itself. But it is not absolutely essential to run through this whole cycle. The man who has recognised the illusion of physical nature is not bound to fall into imaginative dissoluteness. Buddha was as natural evanescence as Anatole France, yet he had ethical standards even keener than those of Doctor Johnson who, to Babbitt, was one of the few modern exemplars of the Ethical Imagination. Such a combination has been rarely realised in the west, where the critical has generally been the negation of the ethical, yet it is in such a mediation between imaginative disenchantment and ethical austerity that one finds the quintessence of humanism which, like Buddhism, is to Babbitt, a 'spiritual positivism'. Established on an intuition of the true nature of reality on a level far above the analytical intellect, in contrast to the Rousseauist imagination operating on a level below reason, the Ethical Imagination is characterised by an attitude of awe and humility towards truth, and a respect for tradition; whereas the Rousseauist seeks instead to stimulate wonder and sensation and to assert its own independence.

In the balanced character, the Ethical Imagination should lend its support to the intellect and the will, whereas since the Romantic period, the imagination has been associated with the appetites and so has become itself subject to the flux or the 'law for thing'. That

1. Ibid., pp. 359-70
is, imagination has been divorced from the 'Will to Refrain', the Higher will, in contrast to the lower will which gives its consent to the demands of appetites or expansive desires. Ultimately, Humanism is voluntaristic, rather than intellectualistic; its sides with the Oriental against the Greeks in giving the higher will priority over mind. The danger of the intellectualist is that of pride and over-confidence in the powers of the mind, easily degenerating into Sophistry. The voluntarist however, needs the help of the intellect in order to exercise the will intelligently and not merely to acquiesce inertly in tradition. In the modern period the situation is such that there is little threat of this latter danger; the element of change and novelty is so apparent that what primarily concerns man is to achieve some sense of direction and purpose, and to do that demands an effort of the will. For an example of voluntarism that is at once strenuous and critical, Babbitt in particular turns to Buddha. To him, Plato's attempt to solve the problem of the one and the many was principally intellectual; Buddha's was pre-eminently practical, although he always distinguished between mere bodily activity and true inner strenuousness.  

1. Foerster, op. cit. (Babbitt, 'Essay at Definition'), pp. 42-43.  
At the outset of the *Shelburne Essays*, More would have agreed with Babbitt's judgment, but with his increasing interest in Platonism, he became convinced that Plato's philosophy was founded, not on intellectualism, but on the positivistic basis of intuition. The first three volumes of the *Greek Tradition* are linked by his determination to illustrate the purely intuitional nature of Platonism and its superiority over the rationalistic philosophies which derived from it, but lost that intellectual humility of the master before the mystery of human dualism which united Plato, on the one hand, with the religious genius of India, and on the other with Christianity. All three *had seen* that ultimately the problem of human conduct was intimately connected with that of the higher will, a problem of supreme importance in the Twentieth Century when mankind was suffering acutely the penalty of spiritual isolation. Not only were men divided within themselves, they were divided against their fellows. But whereas by the assertion of the lower will, they were thrown into inner isolation, the effort of the higher will would bring them into harmony with their best or ethical selves, and consequently into harmony with each other. This is essentially the same as Matthew Arnold's solution of the problem in *Culture and Anarchy*. But there still remains the further problem: whence comes.

this higher will. The Christian equates it with the will of
God, visiting man in the form of grace, and evoking in man
a similar will. This, to the Humanist, is simply another
approach to the problem of the One and the Many which Plato
sought to solve by his doctrine of Ideas; but in order to
escape the abstraction of Plato's conception of the Good,
so it seemed to Babbitt, the Christian sees divine reason
as subordinate to divine will. In the culminating act of
the Incarnation, divine will takes the initiative, the
Word becomes Flesh, and by so doing bridges over for ever the
gap between the abstract and universal, the Idea of the
Good, and the individual and particular, goodness made
concrete in action. 'The final reply to all the doubts that
torment the human heart', says Babbitt, 'is not some theory
of conduct, however perfect, but the man of character. Pontius
Pilate spoke as an European when he enquired, "What is truth?"
On one occasion Christ gave the Asiatic reply: "I am the way,
the Truth and the Life." With such a conception of the
Incarnation the last three volumes of the Greek Tradition
are concerned, although by the time of writing them in the
Nineteen Twenties, More had come to regard the Christian
conception of truth as the consummation, not the contradic-
tion of the Platonist.

Nevertheless, in order to establish the supremacy
of the will, Babbitt did not consider a religious basis as

2. Ibid., pp. 171-72; cf. p. 46.
indispensable. Both Christianity and Buddhism call ultimately for complete renunciation as the only way of releasing the true self from the flux of distracting desires. Humanism, on the other hand, seeks to moderate and harmonise those desires. For renunciation, it would substitute mediation; its aim is the achievement of justice among men, rather than the purely religious aim of inward peace. Such a distinction runs through the Shelburne Essays, although by the time of the later books of the Greek Tradition, More had come to question the possibility of achieving a justice which had not its roots in a religious attitude to life. Babbitt, however, remained where the More of the Shelburne Essays and the first edition of Platonism had stood. 'The Platonic definition of justice as doing one's own work or minding one's own business has perhaps never been surpassed—Justice in the outer world must, in the last analysis, be only a reflection of the harmony and proportionateness that have resulted in certain individuals from the working of the spirit upon itself.' What seemed necessary to Babbitt was a revival of the ethical will on a purely secular level.

In On Being Creative, however, Babbitt admits that without the sanction of a divine will humanism is apt to lack, as it did in Cicero, the tempering influence of humility.

Reason is prone to be self-assertive without the support and

control of a Higher Will, whereas 'the reason that has the support of a Higher Will, that is, in Confucian phrase, submissive to the will of heaven,' would seem better able to exercise control over the natural man than a reason that is purely self-reliant. To those who assume from this that, if the humanist seeks support in something higher than reason, he needs must turn to Christian theology, Babbitt has no quarrel, but he disagrees with those who deny to humanism independent validity, especially in these days when so many men of good will are unable conscientiously to accept dogmatic and revealed religion. Here Babbitt reverts to Buddhism which, religion though it is, makes no place for a God in its discipline and denies the soul in the sense that is usually given to that term in both East and West. At the same time, according to Babbitt, it sets up an ideal of saintliness approximating very closely to that of the Christian. Nor were Buddha and his followers saintly in ideal alone; their achievement raises in Babbitt's mind the acute question whether righteousness is to be measured by the degree to which one brings forth 'the fruits of the spirit or by one's theological affirmations'. If one maintains that the theological affirmations are a necessary preliminary to bringing forth the fruits, Early Buddhism supplies evidence to the contrary.

1. Babbitt, On Being Creative, p. XVI.
2. Ibid., p. XXXIII.
Babbitt's attitude to religion is a difficult subject to entangle. In his 'Essay at Definition', he ranges himself unmistakably on the side of the supernaturalists, admitting the truth of Plato's saying that things human cannot be properly known without first insight into things divine. The religious man can dispense with humanism better than Humanism can dispense with religion. But, for him, religion does not necessarily involve revelation; in Greek and Confucian philosophy, humanism is illuminated by a religious insight completely unsupported by any element of revealed religion. Elsewhere, indeed, he had refused to commit himself to any discussion of a plane above the human, which alone could be apprehended by that purely human form of knowledge, the working of the rational intellect. To More, as he looked back at the end of his own life after Babbitt's death, it seemed that his friend had failed to distinguish between the supernatural and the superhuman. A strong case for the wisdom of Babbitt's refusal to be lured into a discussion of the religious plane has been put forward by Professor L. J. A. Mercier who compares Babbitt's restraint to that of the greater Scholastics. The philosophy of an Aquinas, however, was consummated in the prevailing faith of the Catholic Church, and therefore had no need to undertake an independent survey of the grounds of religious

2. Ed. Foerster, op. cit. (Babbitt, 'Essay at Definition'), pp. 37-38
as opposed to philosophical truth. Babbitt, on the other hand, could only abide in his intellectual scepticism, believing that enough light came to man on the purely human plane to make it possible for him to walk through this world without stumbling, and that if only he acted on what light he had already that light would grow. In the existing state of knowledge, many sincere and devout men were unable to commit themselves to a dogmatic theology, and it was therefore the more essential that they should come together on the basis of what they could believe—the lowest common denominator of all 'religious' perceptions. Undoubtedly a fuller communion is possible on the level of the established religions, but even within Christianity itself difference of dogma and Church order make it difficult for various sects to co-operate. If the survey is extended to include Moslems and Hindus and Chinese, the obstacles in the way of a purely religious union are well-nigh insuperable. On the humanistic side, on the contrary, as we have seen particularly in regard to Buddhism, the great traditional faiths have much in common, and it is upon these fundamental attitudes to the nature of man that Babbitt hoped to build up a co-ordinated criticism of life which should be at once comprehensive and consistent. In this confederation he hoped to unite all earnest seekers after truth in his own day, whatever

1. Babbitt, Democracy and Leadership, pp. XXXV-XX.
3. Ibid., p. 50
their background and tradition. 'In this age of facile and facile communication, it would seem especially desirable to bring together two halves of human experience. An estimate of this total experience that is based on adequate knowledge and is at the same time free from dogmatic preoccupations of any kind will, I believe, flash a vivid light on the predicament into which we have been led by our one-sided naturalism'.

'The solution of this problem as to the relation between humanism and religion, so far as a solution can be found, lies in looking upon them as only different stages in the same path. Humanism should have in it an element of religious insight; it is possible to be a humble and meditative humanist. The type of the man of the world who is not a mere worldling is not only attractive in itself but has actually been achieved in the west though not perhaps very often from the Greeks down', and Babbitt cites John Inglesant as one of the rare examples of this happy combination, with which we shall find More was primarily interested during his writing of the Shelburne Essays. 'If humanism may be religious, religion may have its humanistic side. I have said, following Aristotle, that the law of measure does not apply to the religious life, but this saying is not to be understood in an absolute sense. Buddha is continually insisting on the middle path in the religious life itself. The resulting urbanity in Buddha and his earlier

followers in India is perhaps the closest approach than that very unhumanistic land has ever made to humanism.

Babbitt was aware of the dangers of a humanism without any support in religion. The pride of Stoicism was in direct contrast to the humility of Buddhism or Confucianism, as well as of Christianity; and man could be conscious only of the inferiority of his ordinary self by submitting it to a higher or divine will, such as one finds in all genuine religions. Further than this, however, Babbitt would not go. The idea of the higher self might be confirmed by the testimony of traditional religion, but primarily it was known to man positively and experimentally, through an intuitive insight into his own nature. Man must rest in this knowledge and not seek to explore a plane which is not his peculiar territory. Here as we have seen, More and Babbitt were ultimately to part company, for while Babbitt remained in the position of spiritual scepticism which both the friends had shared up until the end of the *Shelburne Essays*, More sought to find the necessary complement of humanist mediation in the meditation of Christianity and the mystical communion of faith for which humanism as such could offer no immediate sanction.

But in spite of the fact that More was constrained to go further than Babbitt, he did not thereby repudiate the

direction in which both had been travelling. In common with other thinkers of the Twentieth Century, they had sought some voice of authority which would be acceptable to the majority of men of good-will who were seeking to escape the atrophying effects of modern nihilism, and for this they had turned to the corporate experience of the past. Like Middleton Murry, they felt the need of a 'Church', composed not of orthodox believers in a given creed, but of those who had reached a deeper insight into the nature of human experience, whatever their age or race. There was, however, one condition which the members of this great humanistic body had to fulfil in order to prove to the satisfaction of More and Babbitt, that they possessed true insight into the mystery of human life: they must be aware of the deep-seated dualism which distinguished man's experience from the conditions prevailing in the rest of the universe. The sum of human wisdom accumulated down the centuries has been preserved under the name of 'tradition', and it is in their attitude towards these corporate resources of man's life that the Humanist differs sharply from the Rousseauist and the Baconian. With the decline of organised religion and the growth of the critical spirit, the standards of conduct and judgment formerly accepted throughout Europe have decayed and a new spirit of individualism has taken their place. 'To be modern has meant practically to be increasingly positive and

I.J. Middleton Murry, *cit.*, pp. ???. 
critical, to refuse to receive anything on an authority anterior, exterior, and superior to the individual', with effects which will have to be considered at length in the section of this thesis entitled, for the sake of brevity and convenience rather than elegance, 'Chaos'. The Humanist, on the other hand recognises man's need of the inherited culture of the past, and respects every means of ensuring their preservation for the future. Not least of these is the training of the young in civilised habits, which entails the disciplining of their affections so that they may come to like and dislike the right things, and therefore involves the recognition of those conventions which make up the ethos of their particular society. 'Here is the chief difference between the true and false liberal. It has been said of our modernists that they have only one convention and that is that there shall be no more conventions. An individualism that is thus purely temperamental is incompatible with the survival of civilisation. What is civilised in most people is precisely that part of them which is conventional. It is, to be sure, difficult to have a convention without falling into mere conventionalism, two things which the modernist confounds; but then everything that is worthwhile is difficult'. The prime need of modern society is that men should have standards, but

hold them flexibly and critically. And to that end it is essential

ial that those who realise its need should work together to find a solution of the prevailing problem. So much experience has accumulated in both the East and the West that it should seem possible for those seeking to maintain standards and fight an anarchical impressionism to come together, not only as to their general principles, but as to the main cases that arise in the application of them. Actually, Babbitt is envisaging a movement similar to Matthew Arnold's 'Confederation of Culture'.

As the guide of mankind in this attempt to find once more some ethical and intellectual center he proposes the great sages of all times. Mankind over the years has accumulated such deposits of thought that he feels, like Arnold, that at this late age, any philosophy he has is bound to be made up of heterogeneous and seemingly irreconcilable elements. Anyone who seeks like myself to draw for wisdom on such diverse sources, East and West, may be accused of falling into an undue eclecticism. An eclectic philosophy is, as a rule, a thing of shreds and patches. I would reply by distinguishing with Goethe and others between an eclectic philosophy and eclectic philosopher. A philosopher who is not in this late age of the world highly eclectic may be viewed with suspicion.---'Wisdom is finally a matter of in-

sight; but the individual needs to assimilate the best of the teaching of the past lest what he takes to be his insight may turn out to be only conceit of vain imagining. The role of the critic is therefore of vital importance in mediating between the great minds of the past and the men of their own day. But the Humanists saw criticism itself vitiated by the same tendencies as the rest of modern life. It became incumbent upon them therefore to start putting their house in order by defining more clearly the aims of Humanist criticism.

1Babbitt, On Being Creative, pp. XXXV1-11.
Humanism and America was the manifesto of Humanist criticism. In it, in an essay entitled 'Our Critical Spokesmen', one of the younger Humanists, Gorham B. Munson, considers the achievements of various American critics and finds them all wanting. He goes on to outline his own requirements for the ideal leader of American critical thought. These coincide with the general conclusions of the Humanists, so that he seems to be speaking not so much as an individual, but rather as a member of a movement. The first prerequisite is objectivity; the Humanist critic must have standards which allow him to stand, not only outside the frame of his own century, but of all centuries, to judge, not sub specie durationis, but sub specie aeternitatis.

To do so, one has to be certain of the existence of primary laws in the field of literature, as in physics, so that one may say that a few laws are true, regardless of the particular frame of time and place in which the artist is set. Even a hint of an analogy between the realm of physics and the realm of literature sounds strangely out of place in Humanist criticism with its constant stress upon the separation of law for man and law for thing. Nevertheless, it is true that the Humanists base their literary judgments upon a few primary laws, notably upon the canons of imitation and probability laid down in Aristotle. To Munson, it seems, objectively speaking, that literature has
been in decline, not only for a hundred and fifty or even for six hundred years, but almost since its classical sources, but to recognise this need be no more distressing than to contemplate a magnificent mountain from its base. Rather the contemplation of the heights to which man has ascended in the past should inspire the critical leader with a greater elevation of aim — the second prerequisite of Humanism criticism.

Because of their ignorance of man's past achievements, contemporary critics lack grandeur of breadth and elevation of thought, as well as a third characteristic of the ideal critic — a burning zeal for perfection. 'This', says Munson, 'is the spirit that giveth life to standards that otherwise would seem too skeletal, too non-human to be glamorous and magical in their remoteness; this is the spirit that killeth despair and compromise. Infused with it, our imagined critic becomes single-minded and proof against deviations and resting-places.' The use, however, of such words as 'glamorous' and 'magical in their remoteness' suggests how difficult it is for even the most single-minded of the Humanists to get back to the integrity of Classical inspiration; into the frame of Greek architectonics they would infuse a strong draught of Romantic spirit. Their position is essentially one of compromise, of mediation, if they would prefer the word; its instability comes from their very unwillingness to admit in Historical Romanticism any

elements worth retaining. It would have been far more honest and easier for them to retain their balance had they admitted that there were in Romanticism certain positive qualities which have become indispensable for the fulness of modern literary inspiration—as indeed Moretti did, somewhat reluctantly in one or two places—but which need to be tempered by the firmer fibre and greater lucidity of Classical example. It would then have been possible to define the Humanist ideal without tacitly relying upon phrases which borrow their heightened colouring from a Romanticism they are ostensibly attacking.

There is however one remaining requirement, according to Munson; the ideal critic would be distinguished by the capacity for relating deeds to words. 'His interest would not cease with a beautiful formulation, but would continue until the formulation was embodied in experience. Not words alone, not deeds alone, but words and actions would be his great desideratum' The ultimate aim of Humanist criticism is therefore purely practical; to inspire men to live the good life. The literature it approves is that which sets before men the picture of the good life in such a way as to make it pre-eminently desirable, and the immediate aim of criticism is to make known to men the best that has been thought and said in

2. Ed. Norman Foerster, op. cit., loc. cit..
literature. It is not surprising that, as an example of the Humanist critic in practice, Munson nominates Matthew Arnold as one who has the build of a great critic— and the crying need of America at that time seemed to be a critic of the stamp and dimensions of Arnold.

In his *Destination: A Canvas of American Literature since 1900*, Munson claimed for Babbitt and More that they represented the greatest maturity of judgment yet displayed in the American literary scene, and further, more explicitly for Babbitt, that he combined both the comprehensive attitude to criticism, such as is found in Sainte-Beuve, and the cohesive, such as is elsewhere represented by Boileau. In other words, the ideal Humanist critic must be both analytical, examining and defining the standards by which he judges, and capable of synthesis, combining ideas in new and relevant patterns. But in an age given over to analysis of the purely scientific kind, it is difficult to be comprehensive. Synthesis demands an ethical centre to which to relate all one's ideas, in order to impose order upon their multitudinousness. It was because of the presence in the thought of Socrates of some such centre of reference in an age when the Critical spirit was abroad and the traditional basis for conduct was failing that Babbitt claimed him as a Humanist. The unity of synthesis does not, however, necessarily entail a monistic view of the

world: the critical thinker is bound to recognise the existence of many elements in life which cannot be resolved into an essential harmony. What is indispensable, however, is a focal Idea around which other subsidiary ideas may be grouped as either contributory or hostile to that central Idea.

Obviously such a conception of the critical function takes the critic far outside the immediate realm of literature. From the very outset of his writing career, Babbitt's desire to counteract the forces of disruption at work in art and literature involved him in conflict with the spirit of utopianism in education described in Literature and the American College, a spirit which in turn he saw as a reflection of a still deeper malaise which he traced to the philosophy of life current in the Twentieth Century.

More came more gradually to a realisation of the need of venturing directly outside the field of literature, although as early as the First Series of the Shelburne Essays, he has an essay on 'The Religious Ground of Humanism'. Such an attitude to criticism naturally leads the critic away from the strictly 'literary' view of his craft, away from the genre tranche which Babbitt upholds so rigorously in other branches of literature, towards the historical, philosophical, biographical or scientific. Babbitt's judgment

of the work of Sainte-Beuve which is perhaps the most striking modern example of the type of criticism which moves away from its own centre in the genre tranché has thus an added significance. 'To read Sainte-Beuve is to enlarge one's knowledge not merely of literature, but of life. Indeed the somewhat paradoxical charge may be brought against his criticism that it is not sufficiently literary. He says of himself, it is true, that he was one of those who had the religion of letters, and so, indeed he had— in about the xxx sense, to quote his own phrase, that a Hamilton or a Petronius had it. I do not believe that the religion of letters, or even a sound defense of literary tradition, in the long run, compatible with Sainte-Beuve's philosophy of life. His own performance, we must repeat, was unique. But we have a right to judge it not only in itself but in its tendency and influence, its relation to the laws of its genre. Now thus considered the criticism of Sainte-Beuve is plainly moving away from its own centre toward something else: it is ceasing to be literature and becoming historical and biographical and scientific. It illustrates strikingly in its own fashion the drift of the nineteenth century away from the pure type, the genre tranché, towards a general mingling and confusing of the genres. We are scarcely conscious of any change when Sainte-Beuve passes, as he does especially in the later volumes of the Nouveaux Lundis from writers to generals, or statesmen'.

In any other age, such criticism would be anathema to the Humanist, but Babbitt has to admit the existence of such a deterministic abstraction as a Zeitgeist. Such an admission is, palpably, a weakening of the Humanist doctrines that the purely human element in man, which includes his intellectual faculties, is free and responsible, and therefore cannot of necessity be determined or controlled by powers outside himself. Nevertheless, from both observation and experience, Babbitt, and occasionally More, have to admit, implicitly at least, that there are periods when the writer cannot respond to the inspiration he feels because of the prevalence of hostile or sterilizing currents playing upon him and neutralizing its effect. So the modern critic, in order to have some adequate standard of judgment, has first to clarify his own mind on issues that take him far outside the limits of literature. Sainte-Beuve, like Babbitt himself, was seeking some ground of inner harmony. Other nineteenth century critics, less honest or less acute, were able to take some single element of human nature that was immensely important but still secondary, and exalt it to the supreme and central place. Sainte-Beuve, in his effort to see life steadily and see it whole, was unable to do this. He had to remain completely detached from any faith which might have provided a resting place. In aiming at nothing beyond comprehension, Sainte Beuve was destined to become the Wandering Jew of the intellectual world. 'That so shrewd an observer as Sainte-Beuve

could find no firm anchorage for the spirit in the movements peculiar to his century may in the long run turn out to be not to his discredit, but to the discredit of the century. It may become apparent that something was omitted in the whole nineteenth century view of life, and that something was the keystone of the arch. This 'something' Babbitt tells us in the Preface to On Being Creative is the 'Higher Will'. It is this one constituent which is the central idea of Humanist criticism, the keystone, not only of Babbitt's own literary thought, but of the whole philosophy of life which unites him to other members of the Humanist movement. The same principle which lends cohesion to the individual life is also the correlating force of men in society. T.S. Eliot in his essay in Humanism and America points out that at present the problem of the unification of the individual and of the unification of the world is one and the same problem.

That the focus-point of Humanist criticism is the exercise of the Higher Will lends colour to the suggestion that it is primarily interested in ethics to the exclusion of aesthetics. We have already seen something in passing of the feud in American letters between the two elements, and Humanism has been rigorously berated from all directions for this so-called

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4. Cf. pp. 50 - 64.
exclusive interest in the ethical. That it is so has been dictated, says Professor Norman Foerster, not by any intrinsic necessity, but by the needs of the time. 'In a given age, humanism may have the task of urging the claims of beauty; in another age, the claims of science or of conduct. It may have one problem in France, and another across the Channel. So long as America tends to set the pattern for the twentieth century so long will the greatest problem of humanism lie here in the United States', and the predominating need of twentieth century is for some ethical and focal Idea of life to counteract the centrifugal trend of the times. But this does not mean that the Humanists are per se indifferent to the aesthetic side of literature, although in that sphere individual Humanists are more likely to speak out of their personal attitudes and less out of a closely co-ordinated and consistent corpus of beliefs. In his The American Scholar: A Study in Literae Humaniores, Professor Foerster has sought to formulate a Humanist aesthetic, and through the works of More and Babbitt, primarily concerned though they are with discovering a new ethos for society, there runs a vein of deep aesthetic appreciation, less of individual beauties in given works of art than of the universal nature of Beauty. Nevertheless, More reveals from time to time a keen insight into specific methods by which men seek to create works of art. Again, Babbitt in The New Laughoon give up a whole volume to the study of what is primarily an aesthetic issue, the confusion.

1 Ed. Foerster, op. cit., Preface, p. X.
2 Cf. pp. 166 ff.
Here, more than in any of his other books, he restricts himself to the fundamental issues of art and literature, and if he declares himself unequivocally on the side of the Classics, i.e. of form, concentration, centrality, as opposed to the Romantic absorption in expression, expansion, dissipation of emotion in response to a wide range of stimuli, he is none the less moving within the field of aesthetics. It is contended too often these days that unless a critic is at one with the Impressionists or the so-called Formalists, he is not directly concerned with art. Concern with literary technique is, however, none the less real because it is envisaged as a means rather than as an end in itself.

That the ideal of Greece was the coalescence of beauty and goodness did not mean that the Greek artist was impervious to beauty. Nor did the knowledge that all too frequently he would have to choose between them when they became divorced, and that the wise man would choose goodness, detract from the keenness of the Greek appreciation of great art. Aristotle and Horace whose criticism J.P. Pritchard in A Return to the Fountains shows to be the Humanist pattern were none the less concerned with obtaining the most beautiful results by means of the methods they advocated because they held that art should strengthen and purify the spirit of men as well as delight the senses.

The perfectly relevant and justifiable query has, however, been raised why, if these canons of art are still valid in our day, the New Humanists have themselves produced no great work of art.

3. J.P. Pritchard, Return to the Fountains, p. 6 ff.
and here, in rushing to the defence of his cause, F.J. Mather appeared at first sight to give the game away. In reply to a letter from some twenty writers of the younger generation published in *The New Republic* under the title 'Wanted, A Humanist Masterpiece', he wrote: 'I further remind these aspirants towards Humanism that, since it is not an aesthetic, but an attitude in morals, a humanistic masterpiece of the creative sort is likely to emerge only from a society in which humanistic morals are dominant. Given the morals that actually prevail, a humanistic masterpiece of the creative would be a miracle. In short, we Humanists can hardly deliver the eagerly desired goods until generally our system of morals shall be taken as seriously as it most gratifyingly seems to be by the signers of your letter!

Malcolm Cowley and Edmund Wilson were not slow to point out the apparent discrepancy between this disclaimer to any pretensions to a Humanistic aesthetic and the views of Babbitt and his more orthodox disciples. But upon closer examination it may be seen that there is no basic contradiction between Mather's denial of any pretension to an aesthetic and Professor Foerster's assertion that, whereas in some epochs, humanism is primarily aesthetic, in twentieth century America it has to concentrate on the ethical side of life and literature. More serious is the unresolved question we have already seen

of the effect of the Zeitgeist upon contemporary letters. Mather's admission that apart from 'the monumental critical achievement of Paul Elmer More in the Shelburne Essays' no critical masterpiece was forthcoming, and that in the existing intellectual atmosphere of the day, no creative work was likely to be produced is but a restatement in the twentieth century of Matthew Arnold's problem eighty years earlier. Whether More's work deserves to be called a 'monumental critical achievement' we must decide herafter. It suffices here to say that the Humanists, like Arnold, were acutely conscious that each generation needs to draw on the corporate reserves of culture and tradition built up by men and women in the past. But in an age when such reserves had been overdrawn without being replenished, would-be creative artists were liable to find themselves facing spiritual bankruptcy. They were unable to enter into an atmosphere of living and spontaneous ideas inherited from the past, and so had once more to build up for themselves a culture drawn consciously and eclectically from the wisdom of the ages and resolved into a synthesis by the presence of some central idea acting as a catalytic agent upon other ideas in its orbit. As a result they had to waive the hope of creative work while they fulfilled the necessary preliminary work of creating an atmosphere of critical discernment in which true ideas might flourish.

1. Ibid., p. 247.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.
That the great geniuses of the world would have been able to break through the paralysing effects of the Zeitgeist none of the Humanists would have denied, but for men like themselves, of fragile and uncertain inspiration which needed sustenance from the ambience of the times and was therefore the more sensitive to the various currents of thought and feeling, there was little hope of a flowering of even adequate creative work without a suitable intellectual climate. 'Any expression of a humanistic society through the arts depends upon the acceptance by the artist of some sort of central authority. The authority is not that of official organizations or written codes: it is rather that of approved traditional ideals in which both the artist and the laity believe,' The Humanist contrasts the arts of earlier ages which grew spontaneously out of the accepted creeds and conditions of their day with the esoteric nature of modern art, isolated from society and accepting no responsibility towards it. But there is no easy means of returning to the integrity and spontaneity of an earlier epoch, when standards of art were fostered and fired by some aristocratic vision of the good life. Difficult though it may appear, the only hope for the Humanist is the creation within modern democracy of the right sort of aristocracy—an aristocracy of the Spirit, as opposed to the older prescriptive aristocracy. The central problem of Humanism is how to produce a superiority that is generally accepted and socially available. 'If we can make

2. Ibid., pp. 116-17.
such an aristocracy, it will foster the artist and the arts justly and generously: it will provide a world in which the creative artist is no longer a tolerated alien but solidly at home. Whenever such an aristocracy has a clear and noble vision of the good life, it will want symbols for its ideals and will call upon the only man who can provide such symbols—the artist.

1. ibid., loc. cit.

II

Paul Elmer More and Criticism.

The aim of Paul Elmer More in the Shelburne Essays is, in no small measure, the creation of such an aristocracy, not by putting the clock back, as it had been suggested by certain of his critics, but by using the example of history vitally and flexibly in his attempt to discover what is the 'good life' both for the individual and for society at large. One of the first needs of such a criticism will necessarily be the acquiring of a right attitude towards the past from which it accepts certain values and conventions. It is not surprising then that the Shelburne Essays were not written merely as literary criticism.

The numerous authors treated in them are considered chiefly for their bearing on the 'good life', rather than the 'artistically designed life' as J.P. Pritchard suggests. To modern ears, the phrase 'the artistically designed life' has an unfortunate connotation which smacks of Oscar Wilde and the 'Nineties. That More had as his aim anything approaching Wilde's conception of the art of living, one glance at his essay on 'Decadent wit' is enough to disprove. His aim was rather that of a John Inglesant.

to discover from the various teachers he consulted some vision which should comprehend beauty, truth and goodness. Amongst his critical predecessors, two stand out as the masters whose formative influence moulded More's conception of the critic's task, Sainte-Beuve and Matthew Arnold. In the Preface to the Selected Shelburne Essays, More in explaining his reasons for selecting essays mainly of a critical and biographical character, to the exclusion of those bearing immediately on problems of philosophy, religion and sociology, pays tribute to Sainte-Beuve as 'one of the dominant influences of my literary career', although at the same time he underlines the opposite directions in which their intellectual courses lay, 'his away from faith towards complete scepticism and a sort of naturalism controlled by classical taste, whereas mine was towards a slow submission to the dogmas of religion'.

His debt to Arnold is nowhere quite as clearly recognised, but many of his ideas and, indeed, the whole cast of his mind have much in common with the English critic and his essay on 'Criticism' in which he deals with Arnold, together with his essay on Sainte-Beuve, are amongst the most significant of his writings for the light they throw on his personal attitude to criticism. Many of those who have sought to evaluate More's contribution to literature have,

1. Selected Shelburne Essays, Preface p.XII.
Robert Mahieu, Sainte-Beuve aux Etats-Unis (Princeton; 1948), p. 82.
significantly enough, drawn a comparison between More and either Arnold or Sainte-Beuve, and ultimately it is by the way in which he measures against such world critics as these that More's reputation as a critic must be lost or won. In both Arnold and Sainte-Beuve, the analysing intellect had paralysed an early poetic impulse. 'The finest poetry', says More _Apropos_ of Sainte-Beuve, 'is written when the discriminating principle works in the writer strongly but unconsciously: when a certain critical atmosphere about him controls his taste, while not compelling him to dull the edge of impulse by too much deliberation'.

Neither Arnold nor Sainte-Beuve was fortunate enough to live in such an atmosphere, and More himself in turn had known what it was to have the edge of an early poetic impulse dulled by too much deliberation. Again both Arnold and Sainte-Beuve had seen in this paralysis something more than personal failure, the effect of the sterilising climate of the times, and both had sought to counteract this by creating for their contemporaries a living and vital current of thought as Boileau had done for his contemporaries in the Seventeenth Century. This More also was attempting to do for the Twentieth Century. What he wrote of Sainte-Beuve was true also of Arnold and of himself, that the Democritan maxim _Excludit sanos Helicone poetas_ proved too strong for them, and that finding themselves debarred from Helicon (not by impotence, as some would say, but by excess of

of self-knowledge), they deliberately undertook to introduce a little more sanity into the notions of their contemporaries. Of all three it might be said, as of Goethe, that their life was one long endeavour to supplant the romantic elements by of their taste by the classical.

Further, in all three, criticism became in turn a form of creative art. In discussing the failure of Sainte-Beuve to attain to full poetical status, More seeks to differentiate between the poet and the critic by saying that in the former the principle of restrain works unconsciously and from without, whereas in the latter it proceeds consciously and from within. Normally the two classes, creative and critical, regard each other with suspicion, even hostility: but there are instances of writers where the line of demarcation is so faint that the critic appears to be transmuting the experience of the creative writer in a way that makes of it something original and revitalised. 'Certainly the best and most durable acts of mankind are the ideals and emotions that go to make up its books, and to describe and judge the literature of a country, to pass under review a thousand systems and reveries, to pint out the meaning of each, and so to write the annals of the human spirit, to pluck out the heart of each man's mystery, and set it before the mind's eye quivering with life,- if this be not a labour

1. Ibid., pp. 72-73.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.
of immense creative energy the word has no sense to my ears.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 75-77.}

To enter imaginatively into the corporate experience of men requires a keen interest in men in and for themselves. The charge has frequently been brought against More that he was indifferent to human beings, and inspite of his own protestations that he was acutely interested in his fellowmen, the fact remains that over and above any such interest he may show towers his impassioned absorption in Ideas. It is not that he lacks any personal concern for the authors he studies, not that from the pinnacle of personal egotism he looks down upon them as small and insignificant men. Rather does he see them and the ideas to which they give expression against the background of eternal verities, \textit{sub specie æternitatis}. Against the skyline of the infinite, More would say, the finite and human is seen in a truer perspective than the contemporary viewpoint affords, as it seeks to study men against the background of other men. Sainte-Beuve on the other hand was essentially interested in people: 'Literature to him was one of the arts of society', and therein lay both his strength and his weakness. 'If he fails anywhere', says More, it is when he comes into the presence of those great and imperious souls who stand apart from the common concerns of men, and who rise above our homely mediocrities, not by extravagance or egotism, but by lifting

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{J. P. Pritchard, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 180.}
\item \footnote{More, \textit{Shelburne Essays} 111, p. 78.}
\end{itemize}
wings of inspiration'. It was as common a charge against
Sainte-Beuve that he was cold to the sublime as it was
against More that he was cold to the commonplace. Some-
where between the two stood Arnold, veering however in the
direction of More and sharing with him the charge of lacking
the common touch. Such a distinction is significant of the
three men not only as individuals, but as representatives
of their national traditions. French literature and language,
as More points out, are pre-eminently social in their strength
and weakness; the chief glory of English letters on the other
hand lies in the very field where the French is weakest,'in the
lonely and unsociable life of the spirit, just as the faults
of England are due to its lack of discipline and uncertain taste'.
That may explain why England never had, and possibly never have
a critic on any way comparable to Sainte-Beuve', for, 'after all,
the critical temperament consists primarily in just this
linking together of literature and life, and in the levelling
application of common sense.'

whatever the respective merits of Arnold and Sainte-
Beuve, More sees them both as members of one of the great fam-
ilies of the human intelligence,' (the very phrase is reminiscent
of Sainte-Beuve), beginning with Cicero and extending through

1. Ibid., p. 79.
2. Ibid., p. 80.
3. Ibid., p. 81.
4. Ibid., pp. 80-81.
5. Ibid., p. 81.
Erasmus, Boj

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jeau, Shaftesbury and Sainte-Beuve to Arnold. Obviously it is here too that More himself feels most at home, amongst these 'exemplars of the critical spirit', discriminators between the false and the true, the deformed and the normal, preachers of harmony and proportion and order, prophets of religion and of taste. They deal much with the criticism of literature this is because in literature more manifestly than anywhere else life displays its infinitely varied motives and results: and their practice is always to render literature itself more consciously a criticism of life. The past is the field out of which they draw their examples of what is in conformity with nature, and of what departs from that norm. In that field, they balance and weigh and measure: they are by intellect, hesitators, but at heart, very much in earnest.

And here again More returns to the question of the relative rôles of the critic and the creative writer. The critic has frequently been contrasted with the creative writer to the detriment of the former, although More himself cannot see the that Tennyson and Lucretius added more to the intellectual life of the world than Matthew Arnold and Cicero. But the real contrast in More's mind is not between critics and creative artists, but between critics and the fulminators of new creeds. He would place an Arnold against the Carlyles

1. Ibid., loc.cit.
2. Ibid., loc.cit.
3. Ibid., pp. 45-46.
and Ruskins and Huxleys of his day, Shaftesbury against Rousseau, Boileau against Descartes, Erasmus against Luther, Cicero against St. Paul. Superficially it would appear that the advantage is with the man who seizes on one deep reaching idea, whether newly found or re-discovered, and with single-hearted fervour forces it upon the world. Yet More believes that the critical spirit ultimately triumphs: 'that the balancing spirit of Erasmus is really more at work among us today than that of the dogmatic and reforming Luther; that Cicero's philosophy, though they would gape to hear it said, is really more in the hearts of the men you will meet on the street than is the theology of St. Paul'. The eternal advantage is with sweetness and light rather than with the fire and fury of the prophets.

This flexibility and moderation the critics acquire from their acquaintance with the great minds of the past: 'they stand with the great conservative forces of human nature, having their fame certified by the things that endure amid all the betrayals of time and fashion'. But such a view of criticism demands an attitude of humility and receptiveness before the past, in contrast to the attitude of the naturalistic critic fluctuating from scorn or indifference to a mood of aesthetic eclecticism. We have already seen that according to Babbitt, one of the characteristics of the Romantic imagination

1. Ibid., p. 219.
2. Ibid., p. 220.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
was its tendency to enjoy a vicarious dalliance with the remote or exotic, or a luxuriating indulgence in the memory of past sensations. To More this was an abuse of the critic's function, all too common amongst writers of the Romantic school.

'When we speak today of the romantic critic, we think of one who has joined the sensibility and fluency of the revolutionary temperament to the sympathies of the later historic method, and has taught his soul to transform itself cunningly into the very types that it chooses to study. We associate the word with that kind of fluctuating egotism which makes of the critic one 'qui raconte les aventures de son âme au milieu des chefs d'œuvre'?

A frank indulgence of the senses, such as that counselled by a Chesterfield, is to More far less dangerous than the tendency to gloat vicariously and obliquely over the sensuous gratification of others, such as one finds in Pater's three chief works: *Plato and Platonism*, *Marius the Epicurean* and *The Renaissance*. There the author is less concerned with giving an accurate and critical account of the various periods he describes than in portraying in heightened colours aspects of the life of the day which would titillate the reader's senses and leave him in an ecstasy of mental, if not also partly of physical, excitement. Nor was Pater alone in this

2. More, *Shelburne Essays* 11, pp. 741-
attempt to create a means of escape from the stark realities of industrialism into a voluptuous Utopia of the senses. The same tendency prevailed in the work of the Frenchmen, Renan and Anatole France, and reached its climax in France with a Huysman, and in England with an Oscar Wilde. Nor was the tragic fallacy of attempting to educde from every minute its maximum of sensation confined to literature alone: Wilde and other young men of the 'Nineties sought to put into actual practice the principles of 'The Critic as Artist', an effort culminating in the disaster of Reading Gaol, which, to More, must needs be the inevitable conclusion to any such career which takes for its motive power the unchecked promptings of an imaginative hedonism.

Unfortunately, the inclination to intellectual dalliance found its way into far more unlikely places. The charge of dilettantism was brought against as devout a study of the inner life as J.H. Shorthouse's *John Inglesant*, whilst not all the moral fervour of such a critic as Arnold availed to free him entirely from at least some of the responsibility of fostering the prevailing epicureanism. Although More recognised that Arnold could hardly be charged with the excesses of those who derived their aesthetic bent from one aspect of his doctrine of culture, he still felt that it behoved those followed him and who believed that the critical spirit was

one of the powers in the world which made for right enjoyment to examine their terms more rigorously. To Arnold, 'culture' and 'criticism' were practically synonymous terms, and without an anchor in some definite moral principle, both were liable to abuse by some less scrupulous thinker. 'The fault lay not in any intrinsic want of efficiency in the critical spirit nor in any want of moral earnestness in Matthew Arnold or Shaftesbury', (to whom More compares Arnold). 'But these men were lacking in another direction: they missed a philosophy which could bind together their moral and their aesthetic sense, a positive principle besides the negative force of ridicule and irony; and missing this, they left criticism more easily subject to a one-sided and dangerous development'. Be it said, in fairness to Arnold, that from his early days he had realised the need of some such central 'Idea of things' as was now engaging the attention of the Humanists: he had sought to make his poetry a complete 'magister vitae'; and when he turned from creative work to criticism, finding his theory of culture impotent for lack of a religious impetus, he gave himself to the task of reconciling Christianity with the positivist trend of the day. If the faith that he offered as an alternative to Christianity was too feeble to hold in check the hedonistic impulses of the weaker brethren, this was due to no individual failing in Arnold.

More, Sheilburne Essays VII.
1. Arn., p. 234.
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but to the peculiar dilemma of his day.

This was the problem which the Humanists were facing anew, and it is significant that More himself did not always avoid the pitfall into which Arnold most frequently stumbled in his later work: that of enjoying the emotional satisfactions and consolations which derive from religion without accepting explicitly its dogma and discipline. In his essay on Pascal, having sought to show that we would have gained little and lost much had Pascal lived to complete his Apologie, he adds that had the famous Jansenist 'purposed to prove that the religious instinct has no sure support outside of Catholic dogma, we might perhaps at this point, have parted from him in sadness and humility; or we might have stayed with him in the assurance that we should find satisfaction for the imagination in his unfolding of that sublime symbolism which for so many centuries was able, and still is able, for so many believers to speak comfort to the deepest needs of the heart.'

Or again, in a tone resembling that of Renan's romantic eclecticism, he praises Greek religion for its very absence of dogmatic authority which may well save its mythology from 'that utter condemnation which threatens to overtake more exacting and, it may be, more spiritual creeds. It is possible that Zeus and Apollo, the nymphs and dryads, may

1. Cf. p. 16.
2. More, Shelburne EssaysVI, p. 145. (The italics are mine.)
retain their appearance as symbols of the religious imagination when Jehovah and Jesus, Allah and Mahomet have been dethroned as false gods and denounced as priestly impositions'.

Similarly in assessing the tragic effects of Newman's secession to Rome upon his spiritual development, More suggests that instead of seeking absolute authority in Catholicism, Newman 'might have accepted manfully the sceptical demolition of the Christian mythology and the whole fabric of external religion, and on the ruins of such creeds he might have risen to that supreme insight which demands no revelation and is dependent on no authority, but is content with itself'--

'Or, if that task seemed impossible or fraught with too great peril, he might have held to the national worship as a symbol of the religious experience of the people, and into that symbol he might have breathed the new fervour of his own faith, waiting reverently until by natural growth his people were prepared, if ever they should be prepared, to apprehend with him the invisible truth without the forms'.

I fail to see how such a spiritual compromise differs in any substantial particular from the position of the Vicaire Savoyard whose deism had also demanded no faith in dogma or revelation, and of whom More wrote: 'Rousseau felt the instability of such a religion, and recommended a compliance with the popular forms of worship in whatever land a man might

be, as a guide and stay, so to speak, to vague emotionalism. It is a pretty theory, not without its advantages, and has warmed the fancy of more than one poet to noble utterance. But it has one insurmountable element of weakness. It depends for its strength, for its very vitality, on the more precise faith of those whose worship it adopts. So long as these believe energetically in the virtue of forms and creeds, your deist may prey on their emotions: but a lasting Church made up of deists is inconceivable!, — or of Sceptics, we may add. It is comforting to know that More was not destined to remain for ever in this limbo of eclecticism which impinged so closely upon the enchanted circle of an aesthetic hedonism. His stringent criticism of impressionism would carry far less weight, had he himself continued to countenance even in part an imaginative dalliance with sacred things.

We shall see elsewhere the Romantic points of view into which More, was from time to time betrayed by some inward desire for the infinite and remote, the ideal world of dreams and visions and dim haunting perceptions, which is at war with his classical love of order, moderation and clarity. Such judgments as those we have just seen are part of his suppressed Romanticism; More would probably excuse them as belonging to 'essential' romanticism, in contrast to abhorred excesses of 'historical'romanticism,

2. Shelburne Essays VIII, p.66.
just as he distinguishes between the nobler enthusiasm of a Hazlitt and the mere impressionism of later Romantic critics. One thing is certain: he never underestimated the strength of the appeal of Romanticism, and if sometimes his attacks upon it seem unduly violent, they are so in proportion to the violence of the attraction. Romanticism still held for one side of his nature. That More often uses his pen as a broadsword in attacking a movement whose consequences he felt were so far-reaching and insidious was the more unfortunate because in theory his sympathies were not with the crumaders of the world, but with the pure critics, whose judgments were reached not in the heats and dust of battle, but in true detachment from the contending issues of the day.

The criterion of Humanist criticism as opposed to the mere personal whim of romanticism was the work of Homer, recognised by the corporate judgment of the ages to be 'the nearest approach to pure poetry'. Such a criterion could not be absolute or infallible; there have been times when opinion has veered away from Homer, but the fact still remains that the majority of educated men throughout the centuries have adhered to the view that Homer represents the highest attainment of human art; as long as men hold to that norm of taste, they are within the great tradition, but once they cut themselves off, they are liable to fall into all kinds

2. Cf. pp. 147-49.
eccentricities and aberrations. Tradition does not create standards, but there is evidence that certain works of art embody qualities which it is our concern to appreciate and which we may use as a criterion. These qualities Coleridge examined in his *Biographia Litteraria*. It is, incidentally, paradoxical that More should find the clearest statement from of these eternal standards in the work of a Romantic critic. It is, however, noticeable that Coleridge nowhere comes in for that adverse criticism which More bestows upon his fellow Romantics. There is only one slightly derogatory reference to the genesis of *Kubla Khan*; the rest is silence. But in his attitude to the ethical imagination and the discursive and intuitive reasons, More is obviously influenced by ideas which derive in their modern form from the philosophical and critical thought of Coleridge. It is significant that More should so consistently avoid any detailed discussion of the thought of one whom he must have recognised as one of the seminal minds of the period. Any such clarification of his mind on the subject might well have led to a modification of his attitude to certain aspects of Romanticism, at least, and driven by a relentless terroq of the direction in which he saw Romanticism to be moving, More was not prepared, so it seems to me, to make any such concessions even to the saner elements of its thought. His criticism would have gained in strength and in persuasive power had he faced this issue at the outset of his career instead of

concentrating on the excesses of the lesser Romantics. Robert Shafer, in a volume dedicated to More, devotes a chapter to a critical study of Coleridge's development which brings out the importance of Coleridge's sacramental conception of life in a way that challenges comparison with More's own later sacramentalism. It would be interesting to know more of the extent of More's debt to Coleridge, in this direction. Without, therefore, discussing the foundation on which he accepts Coleridge's approach to criticism, More adopts the standards suggested by Coleridge as his own yardstick for Humanistic criticism. The value of a work of art, says Coleridge, is determined, not primarily by authority, but by its approximation to truth and nature. Secondly, our sense of truth and nature in art is revealed by the pleasure we derive from it. Again pleasures vary in value, and their importance can be assessed by applying the criterion of permanence — that is, how often we can read or hear or see the work of art — and the criterion of quality — that is, to what faculty of mind it appeals. The first two stipulations would seem to favour the Naturalists who claim to take their stand on truth and nature, but they must be supplemented by a consideration of the two remaining criteria which need to define the permanence and quality of the pleasure afforded. In these lies the answer to the question why certain works have become standard works able to afford perennial delight.

They appeal to the universal in nature rather than to the temporary and accidental. But there are, as More points out, two kinds of universality: the one on the level below reason, the other above. The first is that of Zola's *La Terre*, but the Naturalist forgets that there is an even prior requisite of good art, permanence of pleasure. He seeks to fascinate by shock of surprise, or to interest by the intensity of emotion he excites, but surprise and intensity are to the Humanist the least stable factors of pleasure which, if they appeal, appeal to the animal in us. The universality of true art is of quite another order, and the pleasure derived from it is able to bear the scrutiny demanded by Coleridge's fourth criterion: we must examine the quality of the pleasure produced. Coleridge graded pleasures according to their faculty or source. Man, he would say, with the Humanists, is not simple in being, but dual: there is within man, not only a lurking beast, but also a faculty of control, whether you call this higher element reason or the divine or the supernatural. The true artist is aware indeed of the bestial in man, but he is aware also of something else, and in that he looks for the meaning of life. The artist is not limited in his representation of nature by his acknowledgement of this law of our double being to what is pure and innocent. Homer, Shakespeare and Turgeniev, all depicted a world shaken by passionate ambition and furious desire. Nor does the true artist try to

preach. Rather by 'the subtle insinuating power of the imagination, by the just appreciation of the higher emotions as well as of the lower, by the revelation of a sad sincerity --- in his own soul, (he) gives us always to feel that the true universal in human nature, the faculty by which man resembles man as being different from the beast, is that part of him that is 'noble in reason', the master and not the slave of passion. True art is thus humanistic rather than naturalistic; and its gift of high and permanent pleasure is the response of our own breast to the artist's delicately revealed sense of that divine control moving like the spirit of God upon the face of the waters.'

The elusiveness of Humanist criticism arises however from the fact that it is not always possible to analyse critically the artistic devices by which the Humanist author appeals to the higher faculty in man. He is concerned not 'with artistic means, but with artistic results'. The reader will return again and again to Paradise Lost, but not to Blackmore's epic King Arthur. The essential difference is something too elusive to be formulated scientifically, although the aim of criticism is to train men to recognise the highest when they see it. True criticism, therefore, demands the effort of an inner discipline which not all men are prepared to make.

The faculty to respond to the higher and more permanent pleasures

2. Ibid., pp. 23-24.
3. Ibid., p. 24 (The italics are mine).
of art is present undoubtedly in all men, i.e. it is potentially universal, but it lies dormant until it is awakened by some external stimulus. Because this activity demands self-control and self-abnegation in one's choice amongst one's natural inclinations, it comes to fulfilment only by an exercise at first painful and repellent to the natural man, who is ever inclined to question the validity of the higher and more permanent pleasure unless he is forced to recognise it by the influence of the opinion of others upon him. Herein lies the function of tradition and education.

Yet another touchstone of the quality of art which it seems to me More uses, perhaps unconsciously, whilst overtly maintaining that it in no way affects his division of writers into major and minor classes, is his recognition of two types of poetic genius, the essential and the contingent. The work of the essential poet is of interest and of value for its own intrinsic beauty, regardless of our knowledge of the poet, his background, or the background of the experience out of which the poem has grown. The contingent poet's power depends more on our knowledge of the circumstances surrounding poem and poet alike. The two examples More cites to illustrate the principle are Keats whose work would be almost the same to us if we knew nothing of the poet, and Wordsworth whose verse derives much of its strength and significance from what we know of the poet's character and philosophy. I do not
know whether I am reading too much into the distinction, but it seems to me that this is simply another form of the issue of the One and the Many which More proposed as the touchstone of the highest excellence in art. The contingent poet's appeal rests on an awareness of the Many, the essential poet's power derives from an intuitive sense of the One. Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare would, to More, be the outstanding exemplars of essential poetic inspiration. The Romantics in general would be to him examples of contingent poets, although I personally would hardly agree with his assessment of Wordsworth's appeal.

Superficially it might appear that More leans towards the aesthete's concern with the intrinsic merits of the work of art, as against the 'social' or 'psychological' critic's concern with the circumstances surrounding the work and its author, although More, especially in his earlier essays, was not insensitive to the value of biographical detail in criticism. But in his evaluation even of 'essential' poets, More differs from the aesthete's attitude to 'essential' art. They judge solely by internal standards of excellence, varying with the individual work; More's criterion remains the one constant standard of excellence, fixed by its approximation to external and eternal Ideas of beauty, truth and goodness, and recognised freely down the ages by those whose faculties have been awakened to respond to it. But how have their faculties been awakened?

the cynic might ask. By training, would be the Humanist's reply. Training according to what standard? presses our cynic. According to the traditional standard of approximation to the Ideas of beauty, truth and goodness, retorts the Humanist. But without an a priori acceptance of that standard, it is impossible to train men to discriminate according to its values: It is therefore impossible to base the Humanist case for standards on purely rational argument. Its grounds, as More would willingly admit, are purely intuitive, and Humanist criticism must remain to those who are not prepared to accept its conditions purely elusive, if not also deliberately evasive.

III

Paul Elmer More and Creative Art.

Hitherto we have concentrated almost exclusively upon the Humanist's criticism of criticism; but inevitably the Humanist critic must define his attitude to creative art as well. 'Art', says More in his 'Definitions of Dualism', 'is the attempt, by means of the subjective imagination, to establish the experience of the individual in tradition. Serious art is thus almost necessarily concerned with the past and with ambitions of the future. In so far as it deals with beauty, it is an attempt to adapt the beauty of nature as seen through the objective imagination to the demands of the subjective imagination. It differs from the pathetic fallacy by implying a distinct and more or less revocable addition rather than a fusion of nature and soul'.

The active agent which works upon the raw material of nature and transforms its elements into art is the inner check, by whose presence the twofold action of the subjective and objective imagination is, as I understand it, heightened and sublimated into the Ethical Imagination. How this fits in with Babbitt's assertion that the Higher Will as a centre of control, i.e. the 'inner check', is perceived through the agency of the ethical imagination is not easy to see. One is left with the age-old question, which came first, the chicken or the egg, the inner check or the ethical imagination? It is interesting to set beside the description of art given above an earlier attempt of More's at a definition: 'The old ideal of art had been sought in the union of the higher intellect and the aspirations of the will touched with emotion, and the final court of appeal was the taste of the man who had attained to the most perfect harmony of culture and to the fullest development of character'. Although such a definition was originally set down as the general ideal of Humanist artists throughout the ages in opposition to Tolstoy's attempt to erect popular impressionism and the divine right of the individual, divorced from any pleasure in beauty for itself, into a canon of literary judgment, it can hardly be claimed that such a definition does much to focus...

2. Cf. p. 113ff.
attention on the importance of beauty, as it is generally understood, as a constituent in art. The wording smacks of a cross between Matthew Arnold's famous definition of religion as 'morality touched with emotion' and his equally famous plea for 'culture'. What More is trying to convey becomes clearer when we consider in relation to it his definition of beauty, as it occurs in the passage where he criticises Kipling for a lack of 'the desire of beauty as an end in itself, such as inspired the opening lines of Keats' Endymion'.

'In its purer manifestation this element of beauty is but the expression of an inner harmony of the faculties depending on the same will to refrain; it is the law of the Delphian Apollo, Nothing too much, working itself out in perfect proportion of thought and form. The very foundation of poetry as possessing that higher liberty of the spirit growing out of the harmony of restraint lies therein; and such, I gather, was the notion of Coleridge when he traced the source of metre "to the balance in the mind effected by the spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check the workings of passion". Even in its lower manifestations, in the love of mere beauty of detail as displayed by the lesser romantic writers there must still remain something of the power to withdraw the mind from the immediate uses of things, and read into them a higher significance'.

False emphasis upon any of the component emotions destroys the true balance of art, and it is this which spoils for More several passages from Dickens, such as the scene in David Copperfield where David learns of the death of his mother. Dickens seems to him to be straining for effect beyond the needs of the time and place, with the result that he falls into false cadences and an unreal use of language. Thackeray, on the other hand, in a similar scene from Henry Esmond, although the thought is equally commonplace, manages to maintain a simple sincerity which gives his style a charm of its own. Dickens, in other words, lacked the will to refrain. Such a deficiency is both an ethical and an aesthetic weakness, and in More's attitude to art, the two elements are inseparable, as he claims they were in Greek literature. To the modern critic of the Crocean school, on the other hand, an appreciation of art which depends on, or is in any way influenced by, the perception of moral values, is an impure appreciation, for the worlds of life and ethics and of art are fundamentally separate.

More's maturest and most definite views on the subject are to be found in The Demon of the Absolute, in an eponymous essay in which he deals at length with 'The Fetish of Pure Art', amongst other heresies of the day. Actually there is no fundamental change from his earlier position, but his views are

applied more fully to the modern aesthetic situation. He bases his remarks chiefly upon an essay by Jose Ortega Y Gasset on 'The Dehumanization of Art', of which the central thesis is that true artistic pleasure is something quite distinct from an emotional response to the human lot which a work of art may incidentally present to us. Preoccupation with the human element is essentially incompatible with pure aesthetic fruition. As men are educated to respond truly to art, pictures will come increasingly to depend on little or no subject, for any association with a human content distracts the attention from the purity of the aesthetic pleasure.

"An artistic object is artistic only in the measure in which it ceases to be real." Art, says Y Gasset, is like a window through which we can see a garden. The ordinary man is absorbed with the sight of flowers and trees, and forgets the glass. But the artist seeks to concentrate on the panel of glass until the garden fades into a mere blotch of colour, or passes out of our conscious perception altogether. This is the aim of the young creative artists who aspire to reach the complete dehumanization and derealization of art, equivalent to seeing the pure panel of glass instead of the garden.

The concern of the Humanist aesthetic, on the contrary, as the very name suggests - is with the human content of art.

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2. Ibid., loc. cit.,
3. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
'Most of us', says More, 'would prefer to retain our impure perception of the flowers in the garden beyond; Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper appears to be a truer work of art than the deftest whirl of colour ever painted, the Aeneid is richer in poetical joy than Kubla Khan, not to mention the latest lyric from the American colony in Paris, and Bach's Mass in B Minor is still a miracle and a rapture of sound. Yet all these are rich in human emotion, and a brooding sense of the eternal values of life, and as such, would be suspect to the pure aesthete. That life and art are not and cannot be identical, More agrees. The attitude of the artist to the human scene cannot be one and the same as that of the actual protagonists, but that does not mean that human values have no part in artistic inspiration. 'What has actually happened', says More, 'is this: always the great creators have taken the substance of life and, not by denying it or attempting to evade its laws, but by looking more intently below its surface, have found meaning and value that transmute it into something at once the same and different. The passions that distract the individual man with the despair of isolated impotence they have invested with a universal significance fraught with the destinies of humanity; the scenery of the material world they have infused with suggestions of an indwelling otherworld. And so by a species of symbolism, or whatever you choose to call it, they have lifted mortal life and its

2. Few Shelburne Essays 1, pp. 35-36.
theatre to a higher reality which only to the contented or
dust-choked dwellers in things as they are may appear as
unreal. That, for instance, is precisely what Perugino has
achieved in his picture of a death-scene entitled The Mystic
Crucifixion 'where pain and grief and the fear that clutches the
individual heart in its hand of ice have been transmuted into
a dream of divine redemption through suffering, while the
tender burgeoning of spring thrown against the far-off juncture of earth and sky gives hints of a mode of existence in
joyous and infinite freedom. Even the lesser creators, those
who in innocence of spirit have undertaken merely to repro-
duce what they see, may have done so with a clarity and large-
ness of vision capable of working a magic alchemy of which they themselves perhaps never dreamed.'

If art is not the depersonalised, esoteric vision
of the sur-realist, neither is it the minute preoccupation
with physical detail which the realists would make of it.
Of Gissing's obsession with human poverty and his characters'
desire to escape from it by making money, More comments:
'Waiving the point in ethics, there still remains the question
of art: what profit is it, one asks, to paint in all its hid-
eous colours the death of the soul, to forget the glad things
of the world for its shadows, to deny Agamemnon and Achilles
and choose Thersites for the hero of our tale? "Art nowadays,"

Gissing relies boldly, "must be the mouthpiece of misery, for misery is the keynote of modern life." Gissing moved in later years from such a theory of art, but for the greater part of his literary career, it was his obsession with squalor and suffering which contrasted so vividly with Dickens' zest of life, although both were handling the same materials. 'Gissing's aim was to strip off to the last rag those veils of melodrama and humour which prevented Dickens from becoming a realist, and which it may be argued, he himself by native right possessed in large measure. He would not be waylaid and turned from his purpose by the picturesque grimaces of poverty, but would lay bare the sullen ugliness at its core; he would, in a word, write from the inside.'

Such writing may furnish very striking documentation and very startling results. C'est magnifique, one might say, mais ce n'est pas l'art. For all too easily so-called realism seizes upon the ugly and revolting aspects of life to the exclusion of the joy and beauty and humour which go to make up the sum total of human experience. Realism, therefore, offers an ill-proportioned picture of life, and as such fails to achieve that inner beauty which arises from the just and harmonious synthesis of the perceptions of the objective imagination, as opposed to the mere outward beauty of sensuous appearances. Moreover, the final effect of realism, as of sur-realism, is frequently to suppress the truly human in man. The realist sees man as the

as the product of certain pre-determined laws of heredity and environment, and frequently turns his attention from the character of man, which to the Humanist is the only subject worthy of great literature, to study the external forces which according to their theories, make him what he is. Gissing in mid-career, turned from the themes which give literature real dramatic value by showing man, free, purposive and responsible, pitted against a hostile universe, to write about the endless abstractions of his day: feminism, imperialism, pacifism, anti-vivisection, anti-gambling, anti-hunting, education, marriage, and so like Zola and the French naturalists, sought reality in a realm below the purely human plane of reason and free will.

'Art, so long as it is human, must concern itself with the portrayal of character—triumphant or defeated, still character—s says the Humanist. Such art will seek to portray its content through symbols in which thought and feeling coalesce, and which therefore depict a complete human response in any given situation. Naturalist art, on the contrary, portrays purely its people from a physical point of view, and as a result, falls into the error condemned centuries ago by Plato of depicting emotion by means of a physical gesture or attribute. There is in all art an insidious danger in its tendency to relax the moral fibre by translating things spiritual into things corporeal symbols, as Plato clearly saw, but in naturalism, with the removal of the will from a position of supreme

1. Ibid., p. 60.
authority, this danger is aggravated by the centrifugal emphasis upon a number of individual and disintegrated traits and habits. Even in as great a modern novelist as George Meredith, in whose work there is no trace of the sordid or pornographic which mars the writings of so many novelists of More's own day, the naturalistic attitude to life results in the subordination of an active and personal human interest to a study of the development of character under given conditions of environment and heredity, and in a tendency to convey emotion through purely physical details. Already in Series II of the Shelburne Essays, More is aware of the modern tendency to adopt the physically 'kinetic' means of eliciting a ready response from the reader, and to this issue he returns at far greater length in his essay on James Joyce in On Being Human. Aristotle in his Poetics had recognised in the tragic emotion two phases, pity and terror, both of which 'arrest the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unite it with the human sufferer' and therefore are 'static'. On the other hand the feelings excited by improper art, desire and loathing, are 'kinetic'. In Joyce's use of the terms in The Portrait of the Author as a Young Man, this distinction is confused by being grafted on to a purely naturalistic conception of the 'static';

not only should pure art avoid exciting physical sensations of desire and loathing, either of which might incite us to immorality, but it should further aim to be neither moral nor immoral by imitating the indifference of nature and reproducing the facts of the physical universe with a realism which eschews any attempt at interpretation.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to record the facts, and all the facts. Art is essentially selective and interpretive. An aesthetic which refuses to accept the authority of spiritual law and traditional inhibitions in its attempt to imitate the impartiality of nature inevitably ends by selecting from reality nothing but the physical, and by interpreting it in such a way as to exalt the animal in man above the purely human, as indeed More sees happening in the later work of Joyce. The very thing he set out apparently to avoid had happened: by his own definition of proper and improper art in *The Portrait*, *Ulysses* must stand condemned as improper art. Joyce's failure to achieve a true 'stasis' in art More attributes to an initial error of terminology. He would have been enabled to formulate his principles more correctly, if, instead of contrasting 'kinetic' and 'static', he had distinguished between art that seeks to arouse physical lust or loathing, and art that seeks to move to desire and joy of hyperphysical realities; for to More, all art, so far as it is alive must be kinetic, for good or for evil.

1. Ibid., p. 87.
2. Ibid., p. 89-91
3. Ibid., p. 88-89.
For to More in the last analysis there are two kinds of \textit{kinisis}, that which affects the impressions that lie below reason, and that which affects those above. Those impressions that lie below reason are \textit{chaotic}, sullen, resistant to good, moved only by a strong appeal to their physical nature; those that lie above reason are at least amenable to a conscious power of selection and control. More's aim as a critic is chiefly this: to distinguish between those literary works which excite to physical loathing or desire, and those that lift the soul above itself into the purer air of hyperphysical realities, those that drag the soul down into the vortex of the Many, and those that aspire to the calm and unity of the One. Such a distinction is all the more necessary in an age when all distinctions tend to be explained away in purely physiological terms, i.e. in the name of what lies below reason. The Humanist is aware of three planes of existence— the Ideal plane of the divine, set above reason, the human plane of reason itself, and the physical, the subliminal plane of matter, set below reason. Art exists on the human plane, the plane of divisions and distinctions, but the artist in the full flight of his inspiration, enters into communion with the Ideal world from which he brings back visions of the eternal harmony existing above reason, the One universal truth, itself immune from the divisions and distinctions of the world of sense. The greater the poetic insight, the more free it is from concern with the individual and the particular. Although it necessarily

uses the individual and the particular, it aspires itself, and carries its audience with it, to the realm of the universal and impersonal. 'Shakespeare', says More, 'was not dealing in empty words when he likened the poet to the lover and the lunatic as being of imagination all compact; nor was Plato speaking mere metaphor when he said that "the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses and the mind is no longer in him".----It is this mood of inspiration which overflows into rhythm, and this in turn produces on the mood of the reader something of the stimulating effect of music and this effect is enhanced by the use of language and metaphor lifted out of the common mould. Such a transformation differs to More from merely pantheistic or erotic reverie of romanticism, for the true poetic experience involves an acute tension within the poet himself between his ordinary and his inspired selves. The dissolving power of genius and the personality of the man can never be quite reconciled; he is detached from nature and attached to her at the same time. There is thus set up a tension between his own personality, often of the most ardent, dragging him irresistibly to the satisfaction of personal emotions, and his poetic mission.

Were this all, however, it would be difficult to accept

More's discrimination between the romantic and the humanistic genius. The true distinction remains, as far as I can see, implicit rather than explicit, in More's criticism. We shall see later that to More the very act of creativity, in both Platonic and Christian thought, involved the imposition of form by a divine activity, upon that which was before without form and void. So I take it, the divine activity of inspiration must of necessity take place through the imposition of form on what would otherwise remain merely inchoate matter. In both art and nature, the act of creation is the deliverance of matter from its own impotence. The firmer and clearer the form, the more complete the deliverance. Hence More, and Babbitt's concern with an incisive division of art-forms into genres.

The various arts are limited to specific fields of experience in accordance with the medium in which they work, and they rise in dignity as the sense to which they are directed has less of the flux and more of mental stability in its activity. Thus they may be arranged in a scale of honour as they act through the medium of taste and odour, sound, colour and line, form. For the same reason, their emotional appeal is more personal as they descend in the scale, more impersonal as they ascend. The so-called confusion of the genres by obscuring distinctions introduces an additional and unnecessary element of instability in the medium employed. Its effect

1. Cf. pp. 465-70,
therefore is to enhance this merely personal appeal of art and to lower its dignity and impersonal appeal.

The epic is more impersonal, less emotive in its appeal than the lyric, the drama than the epic. Prose remains on the level of everyday interest, and as such deals with individual detail, whilst verse raises the individual above himself into a world of universal and eternal truths. All these distinctions to More are not mere pedantry, the dead letter of an archaic code of literary laws as they became under the touch of pseudo-classicism. They are an essential and permanent aspect of creation in which the poet, like God, brings to life and movement and vitality the inert matter which he fashions in accordance with an ideal pattern: The effect of romantic ideology has been to break down these distinctions, to confuse the genres, to merge prose and verse, to dissolve the clear, well-ordered rhythms of the Classics into the fluid, lilt of a Walt Whitman. Unfortunately, he and many of his fellow Romantics, in breaking away from much that was undoubtedly a sham, forgot too often those eternal conventions which grow out of the essential demands of human nature. They did not recognise that the more rigid technical forms of a previous

1. More, Shelburne Essays, III, pp. 88-89, 263-64
3. For discussion of lyric, see Shelburne Essays I, p. 105ff.
4. For discussion of drama, see Shelburne Essays, III, pp. 86-87.
were not necessarily a shackle upon originality, but a valuable guide towards true flexibility in the poet's art.

As a result, either, like Browning, they fell into the mere flatness of a cadenced prose, or, by nature of the Romantic tendency to run from one excess to another, they substituted for the flexible, lucid control of classical prosody, the strangely complicated rhythms of a Swinburne or a James Thomson whose *City of Dreadful Night* More likens to 'the phantasmagoria of a fever subdued to mathematical restraint, or the clamour of a mad grief trained into remorseless logic! The Humanist, on the other hand, seeks to reassert in a rebellious and undisciplined age the necessity of those eternal conventions. To him, in literary form, as in literary content, the choice lies between an imitation of eternal Ideas or the breakdown of all design and pattern, a return to the formlessness and inertia of Chaos and *Old Night*.

**IV**

*More's Own Critical Achievement.*

Upon the sincerity and devotion, and even the passion of More as a critic of life and letters many of his most keen critics would agree. Where they feel his criticism fails is in its ability to rise itself to the point where criticism becomes

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literature in and of itself. And in so far as The New Humanists claimed the Shelburne Essays to be their finest original creation, it is not only More's own reputation that is at stake, but that of the whole movement.

For factual knowledge and the marshalling of ideas, for drawing out unexpected and significant analogies, More with his extensive reading in so many literatures, ancient and modern, Oriental and Occidental, Christian and pagan, is bound to be recognised as one of the most learned critics of the modern period: he was in a position of the greatest advantage for making known the best that had been thought and said, but in the last analysis, the question remains whether he had the capacity for making it loved. Style, I should define, as that capacity for so presenting one's ideas in a way that makes them seem infinitely amiable and much to be desired: and it is of just More's capacity to do that that so many of his critics are in doubt.

'More', wrote Alfred Kazin, 'could write with great sympathy of all world literature up to Proust and Joyce. He had a natural love of literature where Babbitt thought most modern writers merely wilful and even a little mad; and though he always discussed writing within an ethical framework, his appreciation of it was often passionate and, in the great passages of the Shelburne Essays even moving.' The fourteen volumes of essays

were a monument to More's profound absorption in world literature and to a search for salvation and a craving for the ideal that are without precedent in the modern literature of criticism. 1

But such high praise is not given without reservation.

'Yet', continued Kazin, 'his quality as a critic, so mechanically praised by his admirers and so mechanically condemned by at least two generations of modernists in America, is not easy to define. There was something persistently small in him, something curiously provincial and strained, that lies like a shadow over his ambition, his stupendous learning and his so carefully wrought essays in human failure. He had a great ambition and was certainly not unequal to it: he had profound imaginative sympathy, if not particularly imaginative insight, and was a distinguished student of ideas. But though he loved literature as he loved nothing else in life, he was always a little suspicious of its testimony to human frailty and disorder. To say he was merely cold and bigoted is to forget with what ardour he could write of figures so different as George Gissing and Shelley, Thoreau and Sir Thomas Browne, and how, unlike Babbitt, he could enter sympathetically into the work of many writers holding different views from his own. All the same, 'there was a lack of some final personal distinction in More' to Kazin, 'a crabbedness, a fundamental lack of generosity and ease that make his ambition to be an American Sainte-Beuve just a little preposterous. Catholic in his learning, Catholic in his

1. Ibid., p. 307.
2. Ibid., loc. cit. (The italics are mine):
yearning for absolutism and dogma, he yet lacked more than some of the little men who mocked him so facilely a simple catholicity of human interest and curiosity. Even the courtly old-fashioned tread of his style, so solemnly careful and formal a scholar's style, revealed the struggle he always waged with himself. It was certainly one of the most self-conscious styles ever brought into criticism, and for all its intensity and dignity, a kind of magnificent patchwork, the style of a man at once passionate in conviction and hungry for what he did not have in himself. It was not merely a great bookish style; it was an uneasy style, the enormously style of an immensely learned man who had worked too hard to get himself a style, as he had worked too hard all his life to attain a perfect faith and spiritual repose.

The charge of provinciality has been brought against More by a variety of critics: some have based their criticism on the over-seriousness of his concern with morality, some on the consistently solemn tone of his essays, some on his choice of subject; others have objected to the assumption of authority with which he seems always to be speaking ex cathedra, while yet others have been repelled by the meticulous obsession with detail which led him to an apparently ill-natured exposure of slips of the pen in men intellectually his superior, as in the all-too-obvious correction of Whitehead's grammar, singled out for public notice.

1. Ibid., pp. 307-308.
2. M.D. Zabel, Literary Opinion in America, pp. XLVII.

by the addition of a damning (sic). For this last lapse into pedantry there can be no excuse, except to say that in spite of his deprecation of theoretical Absolutes of every kind, in practice More was sufficiently child of his Puritan lineage to demand absolute correctness in every detail of human activity. Here his desire for absolute precision had made him forget that *sprezzatura* he had tried so hard to cultivate. But *sprezzatura*, the ease and grace of the true aristocrat, cannot be feigned: something of its careless elegance has to be inherited, to come as naturally as leaves to the tree or, to adapt Keats' saying, it had better not come at all. In More, the attempt to be urbane or even whimsical in his essays is never quite convincing. Only one attempt to adopt a lighter vein to suit the tone of the subject stands out as successful: that is his imaginary reconstruction of one of Charles Lamb's famous Wednesday evenings, and in this the spirit of Lamb is potent to dominate the fantasía, although even here we are haunted by memories of that sad, strange judgment of More's in an earlier essay when, influenced by Carlyle's impression, he failed lamentably to understand the grim courage behind the 'bleak mockery of wit'; and so found Lamb's refusal to face the graver issues of life tedious.

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2. Cf. Ibid., p. 112.
6. Ibid.
Fortunately, even within the essay itself, More thought better of it, and, remembering Thackeray's tribute to 'Saint Charles', he set side by side with this mood of revulsion, another mood which Lamb is capable of inspiring in his readers—a mood of delight and whimsy and gentle devotion to one who had suffered long and unobtrusively. Nor did he attempt to reconcile their two moods. 'There is a time to look solemnly into the face of life and then these letters and essays repel us, as they did Carlyle, with their ghastly London wit. There is a time for laughter and for quaint fancy that dallies lightly with the emotions and then we reflect on the sublime courage of this man who could smile where others would despair, and with Thackeray we lay his letters to our forehead and call him Saint Charles. And the latter mood is wiser, on the whole, and safer, and more just.'

Both moods, however, are intense and over-serious, and impose a strain on the reader's emotions which is inherent, not in the subject, but in the writer. More's essays afford little mental relief: there is all too little light and shade in his prose. Nor does he make any concessions to the taste of his audience; in many of his essays he does not even attempt to exercise a legitimate charm of manner, but is content to expound his views clearly 'on the principle that good wine needs no bush'. In moments of increased seriousness, the tone is not so much heightened as tautened by its sheer insistence.

Nevertheless, if More offers no decoration or flourish of style to make his material more attractive, it means that he is at least saved from any of the tricks of repetition, of play on words or any of the other devices, such as the use of formulae or key-words, which become so exasperating in even such a master of his craft as Arnold. More's essays proceed upon an entirely different structural pattern from Arnold's: they drive steadily to a conclusion, under the impulsion of their controlling purpose, instead of advancing sinuously, often imperceptibly upon the enemy under cover of some flexible and oft-repeated phrase. Each essay of More's is planned according to the particular circumstances calling it forth. Its first objective is to set its subject in a clear steady light. More does not attempt to make his essays an exhaustive, or even a comprehensive, survey of the subject. His method demands a rigorous exclusion of non-essentials, and as a result, he has to limit his standard of judgment to what is needed for the purpose immediately in hand. The broad underlying basis of all his evaluations is the presence of a dualistic attitude to life, but in individual essays the touchstone is not dualism in general, but the one concrete aspect of it directly suggested by the crucial points arising from the subject. The result is a simple coherent structure as opposed to the blurred effect which comes from all-inclusiveness.

1. Shafer, op. cit., p. 171.
Only occasionally is this clarity and precision of outline purchased at the price of accuracy of statement. The desire for a clear-cut distinction between the dualist and the non-dualist, betrays him in the essay on Disraeli into too sweeping an antithesis which delights by its balance of language but lacks the complexity and subtlety of truth. 'In comparison with Gladstone (Disraeli) was a philosopher and a statesman; he was a genius opposed to a man of great talent— as it is fair to say that conservatism is in general the intuition of genius: whereas liberalism is the efficiency of talent'. But generally More contents himself with a plain straightforward statement of his thesis, less scintillating perhaps, but less dangerous than playing with epigrams.

His use of certain master ideas, as opposed to the more superficial use of key-phrases we shall see later. This at once lends coherence to the individual essay, and cohesion to the essays as a whole. But there is a danger of repetition of theme becoming monotonous as repetition of language. G.M. Harper points out that when the essays of the first three series with which he is particularly concerned in his review were first printed, they appeared separately in various periodicals. As a result, 'the minds of readers who followed him assiduously had time to relax: we felt no sense of monotony, but rather a grateful admiration of his versatile powers. Now, however, when

2. C. J. P. 210ff.
the full army is marshalled before us, we can hardly help observing that rank upon rank wears the same uniform and follows in the same direction. The tread at times is heavy; its regularity is a little oppressive; and there is something vexatious in seeing these brilliant squadrons wheel at the same point in one fatal direction. Yet when we discover what this objective is, when we look back through the three volumes', (and more so, through the thirteen) and re-read the passages which by their frequent iteration wearied us perhaps and made us think Mr. More was narrow in his conception of art, we shall confess that no generalisation about human life could really be wider and more richly suggestive than his dominant idea, which reaches perfect expression in the last essay of all."

The substantial and workmanlike texture of the body of the essays is distinguished from time to time, however, by phrases of rare insight or beauty, or even sustained passages of striking descriptive power, as in some of the miniature allegories with which occasionally he rounds off the thought of a essay. In seeking to explain the popularity of Browning, for whom he himself felt so little sympathy, he could still write: 'At intervals the staccato of his lines, like the drilling of a woodpecker, is interrupted by a burst of pure and liquid music, as if that vigorous and exploring bird were suddenly gifted with the melodious throat of the lark'.

2. *Atlantic Monthly*, October 1906, pp. 562-63. Last essay—"The Quest", p. 244
The pure patriotism of W.B. Yeats 'burns through his language like a clear flame within a vase of thinly chiselled alabaster', Hazlitt moves amongst the other members of that memorable group of early Romantics 'like some creature of burning skies and flaming horizons amid the cold children of the mist', Swinburne's *Tristram of Lyonesse* leaves the reader with the sensation 'of a vast phantasmagoria, in which the beating of waves and the noise of winds, the light of dawns breaking on the water, and the floating web of stars, are jumbled together in a splendid, but inextricable confusion! Of Morris's *Earthly Paradise* he wrote: 'As you read on and the spell of the song lays hold of the mind, you seem indeed to have been wapt away into the dream of a strange land. Nothing is quite familiar, nothing quite stable. Before you drives a broken mist, through the rifts of which you catch glimpses of a changing and disconnected panorama—gold-gleaming palaces and grey weather-beaten castles, groups of huntsmen driving the deer in the deep glades, terrible kings frowning forward from their thrones. Warriors battling within rings of fire, women wonderfully fair calling men to blind dooms.'

It is significant how many of More's metaphors and similes are taken from natural phenomena, and endowed in the crucible of his mind with a vast cosmic dimension which is of the very essence of Romanticism. Skies and seas and fire and planets flash and gleam through his imagery almost as much as

they do in the pages of those most inchoate of Romantics, Shelley and Francis Thompson: But whereas in the poets we are frequently dizzied by the grandeur of such images wheeling in almost ceaseless motion, in More's ascetic prose, they burst in with the beauty of an unexpected constellation upon a bare sweep of sky. Moreover, More's use of natural phenomena in his imagery emphasises not the permanence and solidarity and variety of the world of sense, but its transitoriness and illusion. These too will pass, and man will be left alone with the ultimate mystery of things. 'For we have"traversed many paths in the wanderings of thought" and like Odysseus of old have reached an Aegean island, where we know neither the rising nor the setting of the sun and doubt if there be any counsel for us.' No one can enter more fully for the moment into the magic of the false illusion, but he knows it for what it is, and like the Preacher can say of it, Vanity, vanity, all is vanity. At such times his language takes on the stately poignancy of Ecclesiastes; the silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl broken, the pitcher broken at the fountain and the wheel broken at the cistern. More, too, seems to be seeking to pierce through the symbols of tangible things to a perception of the underlying mystery of life. He is like his own portrait of George Herbert returning through the Salisbury fields! It is an afternoon of early autumn, when the grey sunlight shimmers in the air and scarcely touches the earth, brooding over all things with a kind of transient peace. A country parson, after

a day of music in the Cathedral and at the house of a friend is walking homeward. In his heart is the quiet afterglow of rapture, not unlike the subdued light upon the meadows, and while he knows that both are but for a little time.

This wisdom of the true awakening to the transience of all created things is very different from the disillusion which comes upon the man who is deceived by appearances, by the worship of the flesh, the theme with which More deals at length in his essay on Arthur Symons. There in the symbol of the Watcher King and the Dancing Girl he finds epitomised the slow spiritual disintegration of the man who has yielded to the spell of the false illusion, only to awaken to satiety and despair. Few men have a greater power than More to suggest evanescence and change without introducing the coarsest images of physical decay. The sense of corruption which broods over so much of More's thought is not of the body, but of the spirit, and has to be evoked through metaphors which are not of the palpable clay, but of invisible and intangible things raised to the plane of infinite and eternal powers. The atmosphere of Symons' poems is one of 'evanescent reverie'—of indulgent brooding: their warp and woof are of the stuff of dreams woven by a mind that turns from the actual issues of life as a naked body cowers from the wind. 'The world is seen through a haze

1. More, Shelburne Essays IV, p. 90
3. Ibid., p. 130.
of abstraction, glimmeringly, as a landscape looms misty and vague through the falling, fluttering veil of the rain! 'And human nature is viewed through a like mist, a mist of tears over laughter, as it may look to one who dreams deliberately while the heart is young and the haunting terror of the awakening seems still something which can be held aloof at his own sweet will.' Symons himself frequently compared the enigma of beauty to the Mona Lisa's smile, withholding the joys it feigns to render up:

'Is there in Tantalus' dim cup,
The shadow of water, nought beside?'

'The shadow of water', echoes More,---'There lies the pity of it all. Suppose the thirsty watcher of the play suddenly becomes aware that the pageant is insubstantial shadows, and that the cup of this world's delight which he longs to raise to his lips is empty and holds only the shadow of water—what then?

Individual examples fail to evoke the accumulative effect of illusion which broods heavily over the earlier volumes of the Shelburne Essays, vacillating from dream to nightmare with a strange phantasmagorical movement. The reader is seized, as More himself was seized before the spectacle of modern Socialism, with 'a kind of vague terror, as if (he) had strayed into a land swept by armies clashing ignorantly in the night or had fallen into some dream of the streets of Troy where friend and foe surged together under the same standards.'

1. Ibid., loc. cit.
2. Ibid., p. 131.
3. Ibid., pp. 134-35.
But although More dwells long and often on the confusion and disenchantment of the world, he is master too of phrases that bring serenity and final relief from its tension. The stanza of Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*, in which thought and image, emotion and rhythm, are in liberated and mighty accord" pulses in the memory like the sound of a bell swaying amidst a waste of obscure waters'. Of Longfellow, More wrote: 'He himself, if he did not, like Dante and his peers, build at the great cathedral of song, did add to it a fair and homely chapel, where also, to one who comes humbly and reverently, the eternal ages watch and wait.' Or again there is a companion piece to the George Herbert picture: 'I think of Vaughan as travelling his quiet rounds in his Silurian hills, with an eye open to every impression, and a heart like Thoreau's always filled with the waiting wonder of the dawn'.

These give a suggestion of a central peace amidst so much that of necessity relates to the stresses and strains that form the dynamic of literature. We are apt, says More, in an essay on Longfellow, to take our poets too seriously, and search them for deep and complex meanings, and in so doing, we often lose the inner serenity and unvexed faith which it is the mission of the poet to bestow. Not the stress of our emotion or our intellectual perturbation is the measure of our understanding, but rather the depth of our response to that word of the exiled Dante, when, in the convent court, he was questioned as to what he sought—La pace, peace.

It may not be the mission of the critic to bestow such peace, but if through the dissection and analysis of literary processes, he is able to bring us into an attitude of acquiescence towards our world which is founded neither on ignorance nor on a wilful refusal to face the facts of life as they actually appear, then it would seem to me that under such circumstances, criticism has achieved the highest purpose of art, to bestow upon the reader the benison of man's lost harmony whereby he is purged of his individual selfishness and separateness, and brought into a living and unbroken relationship with his universe.

That More was unable to sustain uninterruptedly this high standard of excellence not even his most bigoted admirers could deny. Supreme moments of literary insight are evanescent experience even in the work of the creative artist, and more so with the critic who works normally on the plane of the discursive reason at whose cold touch of analysis visionary gleams are wont to vanish into the light of common day. The greater part of the Shelburne Essays is merely efficient, with, from time to time, recurrent hints of that determination to be precise which More's critics condemn as 'provincial'. Reservations, recantations, questionings abound, as though the writer hesitates to be too dogmatic, and thereby draws the reader's attention all the more to the rigours and rigidity which underlie the surface hesitation.

More's so-called 'provinciality' is, I believe, indicative of a far-deeper spiritual malaise. In his allegiance to the moral law he never wavered: on questions of conduct he held to the clear-cut distinctions of his Puritan upbringing, and it is this decisiveness which lends to his criticism that undertone which his opponents dismiss as merely harsh and crabbed. But on account of the intellectual climate of his age, he was unable to accept those religious beliefs which should have given content to his moral code: for a living body of doctrine he could substitute, during the Shelburne Essays only that mood of Socratic scepticism which questions and reserves judgment. There is thus set up a conflict between his natural instinct to pass definite and clear-cut judgments and his intellect which seeks to hold judgment in suspense. Kazin is right when he describes More's style as 'an uneasy style, the style of an enormously learned man who had worked too hard to get himself a style, as he had worked too hard all his life to attain a perfect faith and spiritual repose'. The effort to obtain a style and the effort to attain a faith seem to me, in More's case, to be fundamentally one and the same, symptomatic of the inability of this learned and earnest and spiritually hungry critic to digest the crumbs gleaned from so many tables in such a way that they might become a synthesised and satisfying diet. Because More had to work out for himself

a philosophy of life, instead of being able to accept read
to-hand some adequate corpus of beliefs, he failed frequently
to keep his eye on the object he was supposed to be describing
whilst he strained after significances his subject could not
always afford.

Professor Bonamy Dobrée has given an illustration
of this in his Modern Prose Style where he quotes More's own
opinion that 'mere description, though it may at times have a
scientific value, is, after all, a very cheap form of literature
because 'too much curiosity of detail is likely to exert a
deadening influence on the philosophic and poetic contemplation
of nature'. Side by side with this he sets a passage of More's
as an illustration of what More obviously considers a descript-
ion should be. 'I submit', writes Professor Dobrée, 'that what
happens when a writer eschews "mere description in favour of
philosophic or poetical contemplation" is that he fails to be
either philosophic or poetic, and gives us a portrait of himself.
The only salvation for any writer is to keep his eye on the
object. If the object is a thrush, let him keep his eye on the
inward thrush: if philosophy, let him keep his eye on philosophy: in
either instance, he may achieve art, which he will certainly
not do if he keeps it on poetry. The passage, we need have no
doubt, is an excellent portrait of Mr. More. He is an
incurable romantic trying to extract more out of a definite

thing than that thing has to give, and he betrays this by his continual forcing the note. To my ear, though perhaps not to others, Mr. More's style here is weak because it is false; he is not speaking in his natural voice; there is falsification everywhere, a stringing together of word associations. "It is the fateful summons once more;" Mr. More may have uttered it; we may doubt it, but we were not there to hear. We suspect that he said, "There's that bird again". Such a phrase, however, as "had come to have to my imagination the unreality and mystery of a dream of long ago" rouses profound suspicions. When we come to "the unceasing harmonies of nature" and "the endless drama of natural life" those suspicions are confirmed. It is phrase-making, for we feel that the endless drama of natural life is hardly exhibited by a thrush flitting about from bush to bush.

In his description of Prometheus Unbound, in which More is evidently seeking to be fair to a form of beauty for which he himself in theory should feel little sympathy, he refers to the poem as 'a magical incantation, under the spell of which forms of fleeting iridescent loveliness float before his dream-open eyes'. The reader of Morris's The Ring Given to Venus seems to be standing, like the distracted youth in the poem, 'by enchanted waters drenched in a magic light, while dream-shadows flit before him, some terrible and some lovely, but

the former pass with open mouths that emit no sound and raised hands that never strike, and the latter gleam only for a moment on the hillside and are gone'. Not only is there a falseness of emphasis in the attempt to produce the atmosphere of illusion by piling up words that suggest unreality: there is also a certain self-consciousness about the procedure which suggests that More himself is torn between two or more attitudes to his subject. This uneasiness I can only put down to fear-fear of the strength of his own romantic urges which he sought to repress rigorously because he was afraid of the direction in which he saw they might lead, whilst at the same time he found a certain sensuous pleasure himself in dallying with words which carry a romantically charged association.

The Romantic in More never quite died, and numerous critics have remarked about its sporadic resurgence. Middleton Murry has commented upon his romantic isolation: 'at first sight he appears to be a scholar gipsy, wandering in a strange and hardly hospitable land'. Kazin saw in him 'more than a little of that "romantic imagination" which he came to abhor in others'. Ludwig Lewisohn admitted that 'the icy scholasticism of temper which he affects is often broken by a cry as of the heart and by the echo of a mystical experience, from the quality of which no man can withhold his respect.'

His suppressed love of the weird and marvellous throbs through his description of the land of Arthurian legend where 'one may follow up some river valley of many-changing charms till suddenly he comes out on the wide rocky moors, whose vastness seems more lonely than the sea, and whose mysteries have wrought an indescribable fear in the minds of men.' He lingers lovingly over the names of places associated with Arthurian romance, Tintagel, Slaughter Bridge, Dozmare Pool. And in the essay on W.B. Yeats, after a scathing criticism of what seems to him a decadent element in his poetry, More suddenly bursts out: If this is the poetry of defeat, it still retains a vision of pure beauty that is not without a message for those whose ears ring with the din of loud materialistic songs. Nay, I am not prepared to say that the poet of failure has not his own place in the chorus that chers and soothes us when, at rare intervals perhaps, we seek the consolation of verse. How few of us there are who do not feel at times the warm lethargy of defeat steal upon us. It is not easy amid the sordid business of life, even amid the strong calls of generous action when these are heard, to pay heed to the still small voice: and in our moods of dejection there may perchance be some kinship to spiritual things in this feeling of defeat, in this surrender to the vague fleeting shadows that tremble on the inner eye.'

2. Ibid., pp. 5-7.
This tremulous note of nostalgia which breaks from More's repressed romanticism betrays the intensity of his sympathy with the mood he condemns. In his essay on Fiona Macleod, he concludes on this note of half-conviction: "It is wholesome at times to withdraw from the struggle for existence and wander by the lonely shores, where the sharpness of life's outlines is blurred by floating mists, and the voices of the world are lost in the lisp and clamour of the tides; where the hard sense of our individual personality dissolves into the flux of vague impersonal forces, and the difficulties of attained thought and the pangs of unattained desire are soothed into inconsequential reverie. Especially when the heart is fatigued by the harsh intrusions of science and a scientific philosophy, it is good to seek refuge in surrender to an impressionism that acknowledges no law of control." But in his innermost heart he still knows that such an escape is illusory, and man's identification with the natural beauty he so loves will only leave him more closely bound in the toils of the naturalism which, under the guise of modern science, has laid its chill touch on the human spirit. And so, even in the more intense passages in More's essays there is frequently a flatness and lack of conviction, and in his prose, as a whole, a reserve which his critics mistake for coldness and sterility. But this is not the reserve of a man incapable of imaginative

2. Ibid., loc. cit.
passion, but of one who had stifled such passion in his attempt to attain to that detachment from the world of ephemeral beauty which he thought necessary to an apprehension of truth.

Such a suppression, however, could not be complete until he had substituted for the desires of the natural world some faith which could so sublimate emotion and intellect alike that More was no longer haunted by memories of that tangible beauty he had sacrificed to win it. His problem, to me, was that of Gerald Manley Hopkins. Hopkins too had been haunted from his youth onwards by a fear that his attachment to beauty was inordinate, and all his life, he sought to integrate his craving for beauty in a spiritual vision which at once included and transcended the physical. At first he was tempted to relieve the tension between the divine and the natural by denying the natural world, and plunging into an austere asceticism. From this, he happily passed to a new and truer vision of the world and of man in which he saw 'God in all things and all things in God'. 'In this the goal of poetry and religion are one, whether it is named an imaginative or a sacramental view of nature. And for both the unity sought is one that contains the true tension of opposites.' Hopkins' greatest poetry is delicately poised upon the paradoxical tension of attachment and detachment, a polarity always hard for the artist to maintain, and especially for Hopkins who strove to maintain it at the highest pitch.

The true mystics of all faiths have been acutely conscious of this tension, yet have attained through it to peace with God and themselves. Eckhart would declare that he who so does not attain to being one with God in spirit is not a really spiritual man. But to be one with God in spirit is also to be in harmony with God’s nature, which includes the natural world redeemed by imaginative vision, and no longer dreaded or wrong­ly desired through selfish attachment.

' Hopkins', adds I'Anson Fausset, 'was not a mystic. He was rather a noble scholastic, in whom pride of intellect and intense physical sensibility strove for a concordat under the unrelated control of a lofty spiritual will. The Jesuit discipline confirmed and fixed this straitened complex in his being. Whether a less hard discipline or a richer or at least wider human experience would have released him into a deeper unity, it is impossible as it is useless to conjecture. He was of those who are compelled to take the Kingdom of Beauty as of Heaven by violence, because there was division in his soul.' What was true of Hopkins might be equally well applied to More in his twofold relationship to nature and the supernatural, and the intensity of the inner conflict made him the more critical of the romantic solution of pantheistic reverie. This explanation alone to me accounts for the apparent malaise underlying that outwardly calm and self-sufficient style, the sudden bursts of descriptive beauty, the lapses into an emotional falsetto, the increasing strength and integrity of his style in the

1. Ibid., p.112
2. Ibid., loc.cit.
Greek Tradition and The New Shelburne Essays, whatever our attitude to their contents.

But before More could attain to a co-ordinated and coherent body of beliefs, he had to examine the grounds of the prevailing thought and conduct. The Shelburne Essays are primarily an account of More's search for the good life as he hoped to find it embodied in the work of writers of various periods. Finding instead a marked deterioration in man's conception of life, he had also to consider the forces at work undermining the humanist ideal of the complete man. The Shelburne Essays are thus also a study of those modern heresies which have made the very faith for which More was seeking impossible and which are themselves the result of the breakdown of an integrated philosophy of life. More had himself been infected by some of them at the outset of his career, and although he had, by the time of The Shelburne Essays, passed through that phase, he saw it was necessary to expose the danger which he felt they constituted if he hoped to carry his contemporaries with him on his journey to spiritual health. But to exorcise the demon of romanticism was only to make room for other demons yet more menacing, unless he could offer his age an alternative attitude to life. Within The Shelburne Essays themselves, there is a changing outlook: at first Hinduism seems to hold the solution of More's problem of the good life, both for the individual and society, then a Platonism retaining certain elements of Oriental thought.
But neither could satisfy completely his own spiritual need nor could it therefore hold the answer to the dilemma of modern society. At the end of The Shelburne Essays, More's attempt to find the good life by the light of purely human knowledge is left unfulfilled: the seeker must remain in his scepticism. Only later in The Greek Tradition is it consummated in his new found faith, and only in the light of that final answer to his problem can we fully appreciate the direction in which his thought was moving in The Shelburne Essays themselves.
Illusion and Conduct in the Shelburne Essays.

'Though strictly considered, life is but a web of illusion and a dream within a dream, it is a dream that needs to be managed with the utmost discretion if it is not to turn into a nightmare. In other words, however much life may mock the metaphysician, the problem of conduct remains.'

The Shelburne Essays always seem to me to fall into roughly two sections. The one comprises the first five volumes; the other, the remaining six, each of which, with the exception of Series Six, has a specific title reflecting the dominant theme. Series Six, Seven, Eight and Nine, and the New England essays of Series Eleven form a closely related and coherent core of thought. More's own criteria of values, are outlined in Series Six, Studies in Religious Dualism, in which the traditional dualism of Christian and classical literature is contrasted with the romantic dualism of man and society which More and Babbitt found in its most influential form in the writings of Rousseau. The subject of this clash of dualisms became the spring-board for More's thought in the four succeeding volumes mentioned above. Series Seven, which has no title, might well be called,

1. Babbitt, Rousseau and Romanticism, p. XV.
with Series Eight, *The Drift of Romanticism*. In both volumes More deals with authors of various shades of the Romantic dye. Most of the essays concentrate upon purely literary topics, although in the essays on Nietzsche, Huxley, Newman and Lowes Dickinson, he touches upon the adjoining territories of science, philosophy and religion. In the last essay of Series Eight, More gathers up the various Humanist principles and precepts scattered throughout the previous essays into a co-ordinated body of thought, and then in the Ninth Series, applies these conclusions to the existing political and social situation both at home and abroad. This volume, *Aristocracy and Justice*, might equally well be called *The Drift of Humanitarianism*, for here More isolates this one phase of romanticism and considers its effects, including the inevitable reaction it evokes, in politics, economics, sociology, education and religion. In the first part of Series Eleven, he retraces his footsteps and returns to a study of the effects of Romantic ideology combined with Calvinist theology on the later New England writers in contrast to the militant Puritanism of their predecessors, tracing the development of the New England spirit to its logical conclusion in Henry Adams. Series Ten, on the other hand, is a study of wit as the intellectual antidote to the excesses of Romantic emotionalism, and for the greater part, looks back to the sardonic humours of the Eighteenth

Century, although More finds, side by side with the satiric vein in many of the leading writers of the day, the beginnings flower of an idealistic optimism which was to later into the doctrine of the perfectibility of man, and the Romantic cult of Natural Goodness and the Noble Savage.

Of the three volumes of *The Shelburne Essays*, the second, *The Sceptical Approach to Religion*, is a summary of the essential findings of the six volumes of *The Greek Tradition*, and is best considered in relation to them. The remaining two, *The Demon of the Absolute* and *On Being Human*, take up still more modern developments of naturalism, although both volumes contain miscellaneous essays whose affinity is with the miscellaneous material of the first five volumes. Apart from the radical change in his attitude to Christianity, there is no break in the continuity of More's thought between *The Shelburne Essays* and the *New Shelburne Essays*.

The two main categories into which the whole range of the essays falls correspond to the two types of criticism to which More himself refers in the Preface to Series Eight. There is a kind of criticism that limits itself to looking at the thing in itself or at the parts of a thing as they successively strike the mind. This is properly the way of sympathy, and those who choose this way are right in saying that it is absurd or merely ill-tempered to dwell on what is ugly in a work of art, or false, or incomplete. But there

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1. Vide Appendix A.
is a place also for another kind of criticism, which is not so much directed to the individual thing as to its relations with other things, and to its place as cause or effect in a whole group of tendencies. The highest criticism should hold the two methods in a perfect balance, but that his own essays fall short of this ideal More is only too ready to admit. By the time of Series Eight he has veered away from the first towards the second method. The general drift of ideas resulting from the spread of Romanticism appears to him so destructive of all he holds most dear that he is moved to study the wider relations existing between various phases of the movement rather than to concentrate on individual writers and their works, and incidentally to judge them, not for their intrinsic quality, but for the tendencies they represent.

The first five volumes of Shelburne Essays and the miscellaneous essays of The Demon of the Absolute and On Being Human represent the former method of criticism: they are concerned with looking at the thing in itself. More studies a number of authors from different periods, considering each for his individual merits and achievements. It is true of the Shelburne Essays as a whole that the authors More chooses are not always the best or even the second best of writers. More, however, considered it part of the critic's task to rescue little-known authors from oblivion.

Sometimes it happened that those writers bore some resemblance to More himself, just as Matthew Arnold, whilst advocating that the critic should make known the best that has been thought and said, not infrequently chose to write about little-known and insignificant writers, usually because they bore some resemblance to his own temperament and outlook. More generally, especially in the volumes representing the second type of criticism More describes, he seems to me to select second-best authors because they bear a fundamental relation to some trend in their century which he seeks to emphasize, as in the case of an Arthur Symons, a Louisa Shore or a Fiona Macleod. Frequently this relation to the intellectual climate of the age emerges more clearly in a lesser writer than in the foremost writers of the day in whom genius and originality overlie what they hold in common with the rest of their generation.

With the transition from the first to the second method of criticism, there is, as More himself suggests, a change of technique. In the later volumes, where the authors are considered more as representatives of the age, More is interested above all in the development of their thought. In the earlier volumes, he studies each individual as a separate entity. We are frequently given a detailed description of the appearance and habits of the men and women with whom he deals. In Putnam's for March 1904, à propos of the essay on 'The Vicar of Morwenstow', H.S. Krans draws attention to More's successful

use of the literary portrait. 'Here the critic scans an author's work for revelations biographical and psychological, and studies circumstantially what is recorded of his life, his ancestry, his kinsfolk and acquaintance, his physical peculiarities, and his whole environment in time and place. The data provided by these studies then undergo a rigorous process of selection and fresh combination, until the irrelevant disappears, and only what is typical and significant of the author's temperament, mind and character remains. And the result at last is a reincarnation of the man who stands before us, as it were, in the flesh and attached on all sides to the earth.' This was a technique which More used less and less as his work matured; in it, it is easy to see the influence of Sainte-Beuve. It is, however, a method which is liable to become stereotyped, if overdone, and it is to the advantage of More's work as a whole that he came to use biographical detail much more flexibly, often almost imperceptibly, as his mastery of his craft became more sure.

His main aim for the first five series of the Shelburne Essays is summed up in an interesting passage in the essay on Fanny Burney in connection with the famous Diary, 'Just now I should like, if possible, to convey to the reader something of the exhilaration I have myself brought from this renewed acquaintance with so full and sprightly a book. I understand, of course, the difficulty of that task. To those who do not already know the Diary what notion can be
given in a brief essay of that overflowing story of sixty-two years and to those who have read it, how dry and inadequate any summary will seem! Yet, with the latter class, at least there is a ground of assurance. It is good to recall in solitude the speech and acts of a dear friend; it is good also to sit with one who has known him and to talk over his generous ways. In the interchange of memories the striking events of his life come out more prominently, and his clever words tickle the ears again as if newly spoken; we pass from one point to another of his character as if, in journeying over a fair country, we were carried by some seven-league boots from hilltop to hilltop with no care for the humbler valleys where the prospect is concealed. Such a dialogue, indeed, I should wish these essays to be — a dialogue, indeed, the reader plays an equal part with the writer in cherishing the memory of the great moments and persons of our literature.'

Whilst focussing our attention on the personal habits and characteristics of the authors who fill his pages, More never lets us forget that they are moving against the wider background of history. In the edition of Putnam's Monthly for March 1907 there is a note in the Lounger section, containing miscellaneous items of interest (including a portrait of More in early middle life), which reads as follows: 'Mr. Paul More has already four volumes of Shelburne Essays to his credit and he will have many more before he has finished. It is M. More's intention to make a library of

these essays, which will virtually cover the history of English literature from the Eighteenth Century. 1 If it was More's intention to compile a historical survey of literature during the last two hundred years, his ambition remained unfulfilled. There are such large omissions and so much obvious overlapping that to follow chronologically the various movements of thought which he describes is to lose the central significance of More's criticism, the search for the ideal of the good life, and the incidental analysis of the causes militating its realisation in his own day. Moreover, his concern with this central Idea led him back beyond the limits of the last two centuries to Ancient Greece, to India, to the Elizabethan Age. Through all the essays there run, however, certain recurrent themes giving an organic unity of their own, and linking history itself with the larger cadre of eternity.

The most prominent of these themes in the earlier volumes of the Shelburne Essays is that of Imaginative illusion. We have already seen Dabbiit's use of the phrase, as it came to him from Joubert, in seeking to assess the highest forms of art. More had taken the same phrase from Joubert as early as 1904, and made it the motive of his essay on 'The Two Illusions' in which he expressed his attitude to an idea which was to be of particular consequence in the development of his criticism. 3 The artist, after focussing our attention upon the manifold

1. Putnam's Monthly, March 1907, p. 76.
appearances of natural phenomena (phantasmagoria) their beauty, shape and colour, suddenly, like a magician with his wand, waves aside the panorama he has created, the 'illusion' of the imagination, and reveals behind the world of appearances an abiding Reality. The wise man is he who is aware of both the phantasmagorial aspect of nature, i.e. of illusion, and of the hidden reality which ultimately supercedes it. This is true disillusion, the uncynical disenchantment of the sages of all times who have penetrated through outward show to the inner meaning of the universe, and is in direct contrast to both the false illusion by which man yields to the allurements of the phenomenal world as though they represented the ultimate reality, and to false disillusion, the final desperate awakening to the emptiness which underlies their superficial glamour. Both Babbitt and More found that quality of imaginative illusion present par excellence in the work of Shakespeare, especially in the scene from The Tempest where Prospero, having evoked before the eyes of the lovers the magic spectacle of the world of appearances, makes the illusion vanish into thin air, whilst likening its insubstantiality to the transience of all created things.

In the essay on 'The Two Illusions' in the First Series, More had sought to show the effects of false illusion upon the creative arts in an essay on Arthur Symons. Here too

we see most clearly the connection of the theme with Oriental thought which was still exercising a powerful influence upon More's imagination. Nature is Maya, the world of appearances, the eternal feminine who attracts men by her beauty, but who hides from them her true nature. She is like the dancing girl in the Hindu metaphor, displaying her charms before the Watcher King. The end of such absorption in the delight of the senses is a sudden revulsion of feeling and the discovery that all is vanity. To the false sense of peace which comes from the gratification of desire succeeds an agony of despair, the vertiginous frenzy of the man who finds himself suspended above the eternal abyss. Only to the man who recognises the deceitful wiles of nature and who sees beyond to the true responsibility of man in such a universe can come the true peace of Nirvana, the purging away of the passionate desires that rend the soul of man, and the absorption of that which is eternal back into the all-embracing source of Being.

George Maclean Harper in an article on 'More's Shelburne Essays' sees in More's concern with the relation of illusion and disillusion the dominant idea of the first four volumes of essays, colouring his attitude to every phase of life. Faith is 'that faculty of the will, mysterious in its source and inexplicable in its operation, which turns the desire of a man away from contemplating the fitful...
changes of the world toward an ideal, an empty dream it may be, or a mere name, of peace in absolute changelessness'.

And art is nothing more than a mode of 'contemplating the fitful changes of the world'.

'Art, he teaches', says Harper of More, 'deals chiefly with the most shadowy deceptions with which humanity appeases itself,- with the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Musicians, painters, and poets do but deck with flowers the devoted victim of perpetual change, do but beguile us to admire "this ever-shifting mirage of our worldly life". We may admit nonchalantly enough that art finds her favourite pigment in the iris of our dreams, but Mr. More asks us to lay aside our jaunty assurance and follow him on a journey which may make us blench. What if art herself be an illusion? To Plate she was suspect. Augustine stopped his ears to her voice as to a siren's voice. Philosophers and Hindus, ascetics, Greeks and Hebrews, and almost the whole of ancient and medieval Christianity have felt the cold touch of this doubt. It is no mere passing mood with Mr. More, but an indwelling, regulating master-thought, which dominates and in the end formalizes his conceptions of every subject,- the thought, almost the dogma, that art is but "the dream of a dream."

In many ways and places, here by implication, here again in a subtle argument, and here again in a flash of frank abandon, but

never at all with petulance or with bravado, he manifests his conviction—or shall I say his suspicion—that beauty is impermanent and art deceptive.

"The haunting dread," he confesses, "will thrust itself on the mind that in accepting, though it be but as a symbol, the beauty of the world, we remain the dupes of a smiling illusion. And something of this dread seems to rise to the surface now and again in the works of those who have penetrated most deeply into art and life."

The validity of More's application of his illusion theory to the great geniuses, to Shakespeare and Sophocles and Dante, Harper calls into frequent question. The sense of the impermanence of the phenomenal world does not adequately explain for him the deeper mood of peace, 'all passion spent' which succeeds to even the most painful experience represented by great art. For Harper, at least, More had failed to emphasise sufficiently the obverse side of his illusion theory, that in the true, as opposed to the false, disillusion opens a door to the inner reality, and that only through an awareness of the ultimate deception of appearances does man attain to a perception of those eternal values with which the great artists of all times are concerned. Harper was more relevant in its application to the analysis of decadent literature, such as the poems of Arthur Symons and of Swinburne, and certain sonnets.

of Shakespeare, although even there, to Harper, the solemnity of More's master-idea makes for a lack of detachment and grace. Most of the topics which have to be considered by a general literary critic are, happily, not capable of being treated in this high tragic way. And the critic is doomed to fall short of the highest usefulness who forcibly applies an inappropriate method or proves to be the servant of a system.  

It is not that Harper doubts the sincerity or integrity of More as a critic, nor that he uses the illusion theory purely as a device for making a systematic approach to his varied subject matter. To him the danger lies deeper than that. Such great preoccupation with the emptiness, the vertigo, the abyss yawning beneath the treacherous beauty of the world of art was bound ultimately to recoil upon itself, and render itself null and void. As long as More's thought was coloured by Hindu philosophy, it seemed futile for him to range through the pages of literature in search of the good life, for to the Western mind such a quest is meaningless if the end of all things is the annihilation of the personality as we conceive of it. Before it could be really fruitful for the Western imagination, the illusion theory needed to be crossed with Plato's philosophy of Ideas, whereby the phenomenal universe is seen, not as a deceptive phantasmagoria, but as a shadowy reflection of an eternal and supernatural Reality. From such

1. Ibid., p. 565.
2. Ibid., p. 566.
a synthesis it emerges, strengthened and revitalised, as one of the most potent elements of More's critical thought.

The power of an imaginative illusion which trembles on the verge of true disillusion and thereby acquires an added poignancy and intensity seems to More to have become increasingly rare during the Post-Romantic period. The majority of Romantic writers draw their inspiration from a belief in the pantheistic diffusion of the divine throughout the universe in which they themselves seek to be absorbed, to the blurring of all distinctions between divine and human, true and false, illusion and disillusion. Three or four modern writers stand out in More's critical survey for their deeper penetration into the nature of reality amidst the superficial allurements of time and sense. There is something of this in Christina Rossetti with the haunting refrain of her poem,

'Passing away, saith the world, passing away',

something of it in Emerson, though there it is clouded by a nebulous idealism which minimises the power of evil and magnifies the majesty and glory of man, but most of all, More finds it in Carlyle and Tennyson.

More's attitude to Carlyle is one of those bewildering things in his essays when, suddenly, amidst much that is sensible, much that is logically and carefully reasoned, one finds him upon a writer with whom he feels a strange inexplicable sympathy just where one would expect him most to

to be repelled, and we are left struggling to explain this affinity in terms of his humanist ideology. But often it is unconvincing: all we can say is that by some strange whim of taste More is drawn to an author, not because of any common ground of thought, but because of the very differences which separate them from each other. Matthew Arnold would have found it difficult to see much that was Oriental in Carlyle, yet it was the Oriental cast of his insight that struck More. The Hebrew prophet Arnold might have recognised in him, but hardly the Hindu seer with his awareness of illusion, that 'sense far removed from the ordinary bustling practical intelligence of Britain and America, a form of mysticism, as we vaguely call it, which is spurned under that all comprehensive word un-English or un-American, which yet here and there crops up unaccountably in our greater poets'. Freude's life of Carlyle is to More full of the sense of spectral vision, although it is never mentioned as such.

'Not Bhartrihari himself, the philosopher king of Oujjein, was more haunted by the bewildering phantasmagoric aspect of the world than this peasant-born son of Ecclefechan. Life in well-ordered England was to Carlyle a struggle with the "whirlwind and wild-rising battle of fate". Everywhere it was the same; whether at Craigendputtock or by the weltering sea or in the roaring streets of London, he was wed by the noisy significance of the world swirling through the void of space, by the frantic unrest of the heart of man looking out

upon the eternal repose of the hills, by the clamorous discord
of human life beneath the great silences of the sky; everywhere
he moved among spectres and illusions'. How More can admit in
Carlyle this sense of true illusion and dismiss a similar mode
of apprehension in Wordsworth as mere pantheistic reverie remains
to me a mystery. If 'the sense of "the inscrutable mystery of
life" weighed on Carlyle in London like "a hideous nightmare";
it seems incredible that More should fail to recognise in one
who bore almost incessantly 'the burden of the mystery' a kindred
soul, for all the paraphernalia of Godwinism with which his
deeper insight was, at the beginning of his career, entangled.

Tennyson, too, inspite of his surrender on one side
of his sensibility, to the Victorian compromise, had perceived
the transitoriness of mortality and through its veils of illusion
had caught glimpses of a lasting reality. 'It was a sense of
estrangement from time and personality which took possession
of him at intervals from youth to age: "a kind of waking trance"
in which "out of the intensity of the consciousness of individual-
ity, the individuality itself seemed to dissolve away into
endless being" in such a way that it seemed "no extinction but
the only true life".' This sense was present as early as his
juvenile poem The Mystic, but it finds its fullest and most
artistic expression in The Idylls of the King. The vision of the
Grail when the Knights are gathered at the Round Table in
the absence of the King 'is nothing but a sudden and blinding

1. Ibid., pp. 88-89.
sense of that dualism of their world and of the human soul beneath which the solid-seeming earth reels and dissolves away overwhelming with terror and uncomprehended impulses all but these purely spiritual to whom the earth is already an unreal thing.' Inspite of superficial resemblances, this, to More, is something very different from the false illusion of romantic literature whereby the reality of the outer universe is dissolved into a dream. This false illusion keeps men from an awareness of a central and abiding truth above the transitoriness of natural phenomena, and when at last the false illusion fades, men are left only with a nightmare sense of the dissolving universe, and beyond, the bottomless abyss.

Intimately connected with More's use of the illusion theory is the presence of yet another native infused throughout his criticism, that of the One and the Many. Here again, as we have already seen, the original inspiration came from Hindu thought. The One was the supreme Reality to be discovered only by the complete renunciation of Nature and the final translation to the bliss of Nirvana; the Many, the phenomenal world with its multiplicity of impressions and contending desires. The great men of the ages have been those who have attained to an intuition of the abiding calm of the One, amid the shifting illusion of the Many. Not that they have been unaware of the transience of life.

Through the writings of Marcus Aurelius, an Amiel, a Pascal,

1. Ibid., p. 96.
3. Cf. p. 94.
throns a terror of the ever yawning gulf of infinity which threatens to swallow all men alike: a feeling of the brevity of life pervades the Greek Epigrams. All those who have drunk deep of the chalice of mortal life, whether it be Abd-ar-Rahman or Septimius Severns, Solomon or Socrates, Samuel Johnson or Edison have always found at the bottom the amari aliquid.

'It is always the same story, whether the word comes from the East or the West, from the North or the South—always the bitter truth: In this world we have no abiding city; he who thinks to find peace in this mortal life is pursuing a phantom more elusive than the winds. It may be possible to achieve a kind of simulacrum of happiness by a dull or bovine acquiescence in things as they are, or by an indefatigable activity that leaves no time for reflection, or even by a cunningly managed pursuit of worldly pleasures; but such a state is precarious always, and at best devoid of the "high seriousness" demanded of a genuine humanist. But the true men of genius have something which offsets this disenchantment; an insight into

"a central peace subsisting at the heart Of endless agitation'.

Their work takes on a new dimension, the perception of universal before and eternal values, in which the impressions of the senses fade into nothingness or are transmuted by the alchemy of an intensive imaginative experience, so that they are seen to be but a pale reflection of a pre-existent order of Being. It is

characterised by an insight into the stable, enduring, permanent verities which are hidden from the man who is caught up in the unending whirl of movement through which the natural world evolves. Through the *Shelburne Essays* runs the intrinsic dualism of the eternal and the ephemeral, reflected in the work of the various authors whom he studies. On the one hand are ranged those who are aware of their own part in 'the calm and proud Procession of eternal things';
on the other, those who can apprehend only the chances and changes of life, and are buffeted about by restless passions and the insecurity of fate. Shakespeare, Dante, Michel Angelo, Virgil, Homer, all saw man's grandeur and superiority over the rest of creation to reside in his dual destiny, and their perception was shared in a lesser degree by George Herbert, Tennyson, Carlyle, Christina Rossetti and Emerson. Those less gifted with this divine insight vacillate between their perceptions of two worlds. Byron had something of the older sense of the illusion of life which his generation was in danger of losing, but in an age which was losing its faith in the old heroic passions; in Keats, an almost Elizabethan sense of the brevity of life and the relentless-ness of nature was to More contaminated by the contemporary mood of sentimentalism; Blake had at once something of the

2. Ibid. p. 118.
3. Ibid., p. 118.
4. Ibid., p. 118.
5. Ibid., p. 119.
spiritual vision of the early Hindu philosophers and the intense egotism of the Romantic, whilst in many of the lesser poets, Longfellow, Arthur Symons, Francis Thompson, Dowson, an awareness of the universal breaks only intermittently through their absorption in the local and particular. Those least gifted with a spiritual insight, on the other hand, achieve a unity of a sort by repudiating any principle of permanence and centrality in communion with which they too might know the true meaning of silence and inner peace, and here More places many of the 'Moderns' who can see in life nothing but incessant movement and flux: Swinburne, Walt Whitman, James Thomson, William Morris, Nietzsche, James Joyce, all are votaries of the Many.

As long as More was influenced by Oriental thought, as in the first four volumes of the Shelburne Essays, he saw the impressions of the Many as necessarily false and deceptive, to be renounced by the discipline of asceticism so that one might come to an unimpeded consciousness of the One. But with the transition to Platonism, he came to regard the world of natural Phenomena, not as essentially evil, but as imperfect in contrast to the eternal world of Ideas of which it was a

mere shadowy replica.

The wise man accepts both the impressions of the Many and those rarer glimpses into the nature of the One. The supreme Reality is revealed to him, however, only in dim and haunting visitations, and to remain true to such an insight amid the solicitations of the senses demands a constant bracing of the whole being. This is the essence of Platonic dualism, as opposed to the sterner Hindu emphasis upon renunciation of the natural. The Buddhistic insight into the illusion and transience of the world was, to Babbitt, productive of a deep humility, but to More, as he grew increasingly aware of the power of Platonism to satisfy his own spiritual needs, it seemed that it required an even deeper humility to accept the two terms of the human dualism without seeking to eliminate one in favour of the other. The Platonic 'aristocrat', the man of character, was he who could hold the various faculties of his nature in a true balance, so that the higher Reason whereby he was linked to the world of eternal Reality, the realm of Being, might rule over both the personal emotions, the thymoeides corresponding in man to the phenomenal world of Becoming in nature, and the instincts, rooted in the dark irrational sub-literature stratum of Non-Being. And in Post-Renaissance, it seems to me, More recognises three stages: (1) the Humanistic stage where the stress is on the whole personality of man existing in a just and harmonious balance of the faculties, (11) the Romantic stage in which already the thymoeides, the spirited or egoistic element
are in rebellion against the higher Reason, and seeks the support of the instincts, and (III) the Post-Romantic stage where the whole personality is surrendered to the free play of the instincts, the passive victim of the unregulated images which float up from the yet-unfathomed gulfs of the subliminal.

(1)

Both in life and art, the man who has attained to an apprehension of the One manifests it in his concern with character, that which man is in so far as he is human, in opposition to the sway of passion which links man to the rest of the animal creation. The central motive of Humanist criticism is the importance of a right conception of character both in life and art, manifesting itself in a concern with conduct.

The artist who succeeds in creating order amidst the manifold impressions of the senses does so by the exercise of the 'inner check', the prohibitive faculty which holds in abeyance the conflicting appetites in favour of the working of the ethical imagination. The famous phrase which became the rallying-cry of the Humanists, is in itself the key to their conception of the rôle of character in art. Contrary to popular opinion, Hindu literature, from which the phrase originally came, is rich in its emphasis upon the importance of character. Man, although intellectually impotent to explain and rationalise his experience, is morally responsible; upon his conduct in the
present world depends his karma, his fate in the next life. Both the grandeur and the tragedy of man arise from this paradox of his human situation, an insight shared by the great tragedians of Ancient Greece. The keener a man's awareness of the ideal of a rounded and centripetal character, the keener his awareness of the forces within him opposing such an ideal. The great tragedies of all times have shown men of strong character, locked in battle with the enemy within, being driven to despair and finally shattered by some excess in their own nature. Such a concept is indeed full of profound dramatic potentiality. It is Shakespeare's concentration upon character which serves to lift his plays, in More's sight, out of the rut of Renaissance drama. His plays, like his contemporaries, are frequently marred by needless intrigues and universal butchery which bear no logical relation to the main theme and degrade the artistic enjoyment of the hearer, but through all the surface crudities vibrates his intense concentration upon a single passion, magnified 'until it assumes the enormity of a supernatural obsession and the bearer is shattered by the excess of his own emotion.' The interest of a King Lear or a Macbeth lies 'in the excess of passion and not in any unravelling of a tragic nodus; it is a drama of character and not of plot.'

2. Ibid., p.24.
3. Ibid., p.22.
4. Ibid., p.23.
Jacobean drama, on the contrary, merited the charge of immorality made against it by its Puritan critics, not on account of the coarseness of the passions depicted, but because of its failure to bring out the moral responsibility of man. The stories of Euripides are fully as violent and morbid as those of Beaumont and Fletcher, but the real theme of the classical plays is not the passion itself, but the personality or character who suffers it. With the loss of the sense of character to lend a semblance of unity to the story, imaginative freedom in the romantic drama of Beaumont and Fletcher disintegrated into mere licence. The withdrawal of the inner check results in art in the same confusion as it does within the individual consciousness. 'The real moral indictment under which they lie', says More of the Jacobean playwrights, 'is rather the more central charge that in ignoring that element of our being which stands apart from the passions as a governing power, they loosed the bond of character, removing from conduct the law of cause and effect and leaving human nature as a mere bundle of unrelated instincts'—'We understand a thing as we see a principle of unity at work within or behind a changing group of appearances. We understand human nature in the same way; we may in a manner respond in feeling to emotions, we understand only character.'

The cause of this loosening conception of character More found in the failure of the Catholic Church to supply a central law of character in place of its decaying discipline.

I. More, Shelburne Essays, pp. 20-21. (The italics are mine)
Throughout the Middle Ages, a period for which More never showed much predilection, the emphasis of the Church had been upon vicarious salvation, to the exclusion of any doctrine which encouraged man to rely on his own power of self-control, such as Greek philosophy had offered. In the Hippolytus of Euripides, the human soul is shown as standing 'naked and unassisted in the midst of great buffetings, daemonic powers', fighting for possession of itself, and happy or miserable in accordance with its ability or inability to discriminate amongst the 'infinite solicitations of the other world'. That this might well appear an oversimplification of Mediaeval Christianity, More was prepared to admit; the Church had had its great saints and mystics, had made on the whole for right conduct, and above all, had nourished the imagination with infinite treasures of beauty and fed the emotions with celestial raptures. 'Yet after all is said, it remains true that when ecclesiastical authority was broken by knowledge and scepticism, the soul was left with its riches of imagination and emotion, but with the principle of individual responsibility discredited and the fibre of self-government relaxed.'

The lack of stress on character at the time of the Renaissance was counterbalanced in some measure by the Reformation seeking to restore the emphasis upon man's moral responsibility, but the interaction of the two currents was always complex and not least so in England where, in the religious realm, 

3. Ibid., pp. 26-27.
the contest between Catholicism and Protestantism soon yielded
to the opposition of Anglican compromise and the extreme indivi-
dualism of the Puritans. Although More's personal sympathies,
more particularly in his later years, are with the Anglican com-
promise, as appears in his work in conjunction with F.L.Cress, 1
he pays high tribute to the contributions of Puritanism to Eng-
lish literature in restoring an adequate conception of character.
A writer in the Revue des Deux Mondes had sought to prove that
Puritan ethics had had a stabilizing effect on English letters
in comparison with the greater moral freedom of modern Paris.
But to More, as a historical phenomenon, Parisian non-morality,
like Beaumont and Fletcher's variety of non-morality, is merely
transitory, whilst Puritan ethics are in the great tradition of
universal values, the allegory of Bunyan's Holy War depending
like the Hippolytus of Euripides upon a sharp division of good
and evil, the perception of the eternal dualism of character and
passion. 2

That man's attention should once more be directed to
the central problem of human life was all the more important
during the Seventeenth Century because of the new movements
assailing man's position in the universe. It is interesting
to notice that of the men of the Seventeenth Century whom More
treats in his essays, the majority are outstanding for their
characters as much as for their works, whether they are Anglicans,

Puritans, or men of independent beliefs like Sir Thomas Browne who was famous not only for his attempt to reconcile science and the imagination, but also for the harmony and sweetness of his own life. This same harmony and sweetness of life characterised Henry Vaughan and George Herbert, of the latter of whom Walton could say: 'His most holy life was such that it begot such reverence to God, and to him that (his parishioners) thought themselves the happier when they carried Herbert's blessing back with them to their labour.' Over against these may be set the outstanding Puritans of the period, Bunyan and Milton, notable for their zeal and strong individuality more than for the harmony and sweetness of life. Ultimately, the advantage was to be with the Anglicans, for the Dissenters in their enthusiasm for individual righteousness, neglected the imagination, and consequently the power of tradition. 'The continual redemption of the past is in the hands of those who have imagination, and whose interest falls naturally upon individuals and ages which lived by the same faculty. It is a rule from which there is barely, if at all, escape, that those who forget the past are in their turn forgotten. Now the lack of imagination among the Puritans showed itself in contempt of the arts and in many other manifest ways, but in none more clearly than in their violent break with the continuity of tradition.'

1. Ibid., p. 174.
This break with continuity on the part of the Puritans was to have serious repercussions, not only on English, but on American, life and letters. As a result of the division of England into two camps of King and Parliament, there resulted a corresponding division in the English consciousness between the aesthetic and ethical senses. Henceforth imagination and character were to go their separate ways, nor have they ever, to More's way of thinking, been satisfactorily reunited in the national consciousness. Unfortunately it was from this divided civilisation that the Pilgrim Fathers emigrated across the Atlantic under the pressure of the Laudian persecutions, and New England, with its profound ethical preoccupation, was the offshoot of this incomplete consciousness. The wonder to More is, not that it should have produced an eccentric or one-sided literature, but that, springing from that part of the English people who contemned the imagination as evil, it should have nurtured any kind of art at all. In England herself, it was possible to find a balance between the extremes of passion and partisanship rending her unity. There, in spite of the iconoclasm of the Puritans, there was a certain sedate beauty in the writings of such men as Bunyan and Baxter and others, who, by their influence, tended to restore to English literature its lost conception of character without entirely suppressing the appeal of the imagination. But in New England the more rigid spirit of dissent was reinforced by the rigours of life in a

primitive community where men were in conflict with a relentless nature, and hostile and uncivilised tribes, and so the division of consciousness was reflected in its most extreme form in the rise literature which, taking its from Cotton Mather, continued through Hawthorne, down to

Nevertheless the division persisted in England too. The frustration of the imaginative resources of the country gave rise to a spirit of satire and cynicism which was reflected in Restoration drama. Already in the Seventeenth Century men had recognised self-love as the motivating power of human conduct, and with the failure of the Commonwealth of Saints, they were the more ready to seize on the hypocrisies and egotisms of humankind as subjects of the drama. But the new spirit differed from anything before it in English letters in shifting the emphasis from human personality to external circumstances. Even in the romances of Beaumont and Fletcher the stress had been at least on individual passions and foibles, if not on the integrated personality behind them. Restoration Comedy proceeded one step further in disintegration. It sought to represent evil as an accident brought about by some conspiracy of fate or constraint of society; instead of lashing or ridiculing the vicious or the foolish, the new comedy tried to appeal to the sympathies by depicting them as the victims of circumstance. The individual was no longer responsible for his conduct. This, in its earliest form, was an attitude to man

1. Cf. pp. 250-51, 244.
which was to undermine the very foundations of the Humanistic concern with character. The division of imagination and ethics had begun to take effect in English literature.

Although More recognizes the Restoration drama as but a transitory phase, to be distinguished from what preceded it and what followed it, this tendency to see man as the product of society had come to stay. Its mood of 'complacent cynicism' was to yield to a whole new literature of optimism and sentimentality, coloured by the exotic imaginings of Romanticism, but the central conception of character as that which lifts man above the fluctuating circumstances of his environment had dropped out of the field of drama, and was being gradually undermined in other fields of literature. To this cleavage between the imagination and character, More attributed England's decline from the intellectual leadership of Europe. Whereas at the beginning of the Eighteenth Century she was supreme in the field of letters, by the end she had fallen into obscurity. At the beginning of the century, the men of imagination, the Tories, had been in control of the political affairs of the country, but with the ill-opportunite death of Queen Anne in 1715, power had passed to the Whigs who represented the practical sense of the country. Henceforth England was to flourish commercially and industrially where before she had been supreme in the things of the spirit. The leading men of letters,

1. Ibid., p. 85.
with the exception of Addison and Steele, were on the losing side, and deprived of the encouragement of an enlightened aristocracy, turned their talents to attacking the time-serving and expediency of the Whigs and the hack writers of Grub Street in the Battle of the Wits.

Already in the earlier volumes of the *Shelburne Essays*, More had been aware of the loosening conception of character in the Eighteenth Century. A comparatively large proportion of essays in the first five volumes deal with authors of the period. G. M. Harper sees this as an escape from the mysticism of More's Oriental philosophy and its application to Romanticism into the Eighteenth Century with its 'sense of the reality of life'. 'Pseudo-Orientalism played a large part in the fusing together of subject and object, God and nature, which is the least satisfactory practice of English and American Romanticism; and it is no wonder that Mr. More, who apparently knows Oriental literature as Emerson never did, should revolt against his vague fluidity and facile optimism. He finds relief — and this speaks well for his taste — in the firmer, though less passionate and high-coloured thought of the older period. That undoubtedly More was glad to leave the Romantic dissolution of the concrete and tangible into the vaporous illusion of the senses and find shelter on the more solid ground of the rational and realistic literature of the Eighteenth Century, there can be

no doubt, but in the light of subsequent trends of thought in the Shelburne Essays which were a closed book to Harper in 1907, it becomes apparent that the change was no mere escape. Already there were to be seen at work amongst the men of the Eighteenth Century influences which were to result in the dissolution of even their solid-seeming ground, and only by a consideration of their gradual percolation into the life and thought of the period was it possible to understand what came after. More's studies of Chesterfield, Walpole, Benjamin Franklin, Fanny Burney and the people of her circle, Strode, are all studies of men and women of character, but of character already moving away from its centre of balance towards an excess of eccentricity. In the earlier writers their wit retains its firm and trenchant edge, finding expression in the brilliance of satire and irony, but as the century wears on, wit degenerates through mere humour, and whimsicality into the sentimentality which marks the end of the era. By the time of Fanny Burney, the clear, salient outline of wit has been blurred into mere eccentricity of manner.

'It must be remembered that her day fell in the dregs of English social life, in what might be called a kind of inter-regnum between two different worlds. Literature was dead,

3. Ibid., pp. 129 ff.
4. Ibid., pp. 35 ff.
and only a stale echo of it remained among the blue stocking coteries. Wit was fast degenerating into sentimentality. The peculiar virility and large insolence of the early Eighteenth Century had passed away, while the new society was yet to be born. The men of the age just gone by had been originals with plenty of sins and crudities to answer for; but their originality (I use the word in its old sense) had been one of character, whereas the younger generation were original only in manners. The difference is felt strongly if one turns from the satire of Tom Jones and Roderick Random to that of Evelina and Cecilia, and it is shown equally in the transcript of real life. The coarse humours of the men in Walpole's letters seem to be the ebullience of some unused and untamed inner strength; in comparison with them the eccentricities of Miss Burney's circle have the appearance of mere whim and sentiment, or of callous insensibility.

Even the greatest men of the period failed to achieve a more balanced view of human nature. For the complacent cynicism of the Restoration, Pope and Swift substituted a more earnest indignation with human shortcomings; but whereas Swift whilst lashing the stupidity and corruption of mankind in general rarely attacked individuals, Pope, who exposed individuals to merciless ridicule, regarded men in general as the most benevolent and well-deserving of creatures. This difference betokened a further cleavage within the human consciousness which had developed...

oped from the two currents of thought we have already mentioned, the one deriving from Machiavelli through Hobbes and viewing man as essentially selfish and aggressive, the other deriving from Shaftesbury, Mandeville and Bolingbroke, and viewing man as altruistic and sympathetic. The co-existence of these two antithetical attitudes to man within a society outwardly as uniform as that of the Eighteenth Century was in itself an anomaly, but when, as in the case of Pope, the two elements were present in the consciousness of the same man, without any attempt at reconciliation, it becomes something more than an anomaly. Of the two elements, the more optimistic view was to be immediately victorious, and the triumph of the one was to make its fellow seem repulsive to succeeding generations.

We are out of sympathy with Pope's satire less because the references to his contemporaries have lost their immediate point than because their whole spirit of invective and diatribe is alien to our age. The clash of the warfare of the Wits comes to us from a distance with the sound of 'old unhappy far-off things
And battles long ago'.

It would appear to us a temporary thing now forgotten. But More sees it as but one phase of a recurrent, even a perennial, struggle between two unreconciled elements of human nature still at variance in our own day. Even in this living age, always a few,

2. Ibid., pp. 158-59; cf. Appendix B.
3. Ibid., pp. 111-12, 138-39.
are still fighting for the rights of the mind against a dull and delusive materialism, for the freedom of the imagination against a prosaic tyranny, for a pure patient ambition against the quick successes of vanity and pliant cleverness, for the reality of human nature against a fatuous self-complacency.¹

It is with the element of disillusionment that More's natural sympathies lie, but over against that must be set the optimistic and sentimental strain which already foreshadowed the far-reaching changes about to take place in human thought against which so much of New Human criticism was directed. More's strong dissatisfaction with the nature of the Romantic imagination made him the more ready to find traces of the humanistic imagination surviving among the defeated Eighteenth Century Tories, although his more general tendency was to consider the imagination submerged during the period as a result of the domination in arts and science alike of the discursive and analytical reason.² Of imaginative illusion, the sense of the allurement of natural appearances, there was little during the whole period: deism had reduced the universe to the monotonous regularity of a well-ordered machine. Its pure rationalism denied, or at least minimised, all that was mysterious and escaped the net of logic, and so gave rise to the pseudo-Classicism of the day.

Reason, i.e. the rational faculty, and imagination are, however, as we have seen but two facets of the same general

¹Ibid., p.148.
²Ibid., pp.510-11.
³More; Shelburne Essays VIII, pp.229-31.
tendency of thought; both belong to the lower element of man and are subject to change and fluctuation. Both attempt to set up as sole tyrants over the whole personality, whereas rightly they should exist in juxtaposition, and in subservience to the higher will. Character, not passion or rationalism, is the fullness of the human personality in which all subsidiary faculties are to be co-ordinated.

(11)

With the reaction against the arid formalism of pseudo-Classicism, the imagination, in its most rebellious and centrifugal form, sought to usurp its place. We have already studied in some detail the nature and tendencies of the Romantic imagination, its impatience of restraint, its proneness to run to excess. Unlike the humanistic or ethical imagination which has a central authority in the action of the inner check, the Romantic imagination has no common centre to which to refer the various impulses that beat upon man, and so each impulse claims autocracy. The impulsive life is measured, not qualitatively, for that demands a standard of judgment by which to compare individual impulses by reference to some criterion outside them, but quantitatively, according to the degree of sensuousness each arouses. The libido sentiendi, the lust for sensation, which the Middle Ages had seen as one of man's besetting sins to be held in strict check, now becomes something to be sought and stimulated.

For the voluntaristic conception of man there was being substituted in the late Eighteenth Century, the conception of the man of sentiment, deriving, like its concomitant, the idea of the Natural Goodness of Man, from the deism of the day. Both the older disillusionment of the Wits and the optimism of the new sentimentalists had this in common: they were agreed that mankind as they saw it in civilised society was thoroughly vicious, both had lost faith in virtue as a conscious self-discipline. What could be more inevitable than that, by way of contrast, men should look back longingly to the primitive state of mankind where they imagined man free, spontaneous, virtuous, untouched by the vitiating hand of society? Thus to More, the idea of the noble savage arose as a sort of halfway between the mockery of the Wits and the sentiment, or sensibility which was finally to usurp dominion over literature.

The idea he already finds in the Oroonoko of Mrs. Aphra Behn; as well as in others who, in their dissatisfaction with the straight and sterile reign of rationalism, sought relief in half playful indulgence of the fancy. But the idea of the Noble Savage, together with other aspects of this reaction, might well have remained in the limbo of fantasy had it not been for the momentous impact upon his age of a single man who was to give direction to all the hitherto vague and scattered tendencies which sought to substitute sentiment for reason. The dynamic

which set the whole movement in action was Rousseau's pure literary talent, his gift for unforgettable phrases, together with 'the daemonic personality of the writer, the inexplicable force that imposed the experience of the man Rousseau—vagabond as he was, a foe of convention, betrayer of sacred trust, morbid self-analyst ending with a fixed hallucination of a conspiracy of society against him—the magic glamour that imposed the private emotions of this man upon the world'.

Rousseau, more than any other man of his day, sounded the death knell of the man of character, the aristocrat of the spirit, as Plato had envisaged him, and enthroned in his place the man of passion, in whom the thymoeides, the personal feelings, were supreme. In the Platonic aristocrat, the thymoeides were subordinate, and owed allegiance, to the Reason, the supreme human faculty; but Reason, in Europe, had been weakened by the divorce of the imagination and the practical sense of man, the discursive and analytical reason which had turned from its things of the spirit to pursue the utilitarian ends, while the imagination had deteriorated into the mere whimsical play of the fancy, with little or no root in reality. The imagination was henceforth to be rescued from the oblivion into which it had fallen, and in league with the passionalelement in man, was to set up an opposition to both reason, in its limited rationalist sense, and to Reason, the super-rational intuition which should be in supreme control. But the passionalelement

in man when it has no ally in what lies above inevitably tends to ally itself with what lies below, and so the thymoeides, which in the man of character should stand with Reason against the purely instinctive and appetitive side of man's being, once the Reason is dethroned, throws open the door to the free play of the instincts.

This, as I understand it, is at the root of More's study of the Romantic writers which forms the core of the Shelburne Essays, and also of the similar trend of thought in Babbitt and in their French contemporary, Ernest de Seillière. The symbol of this mood of extreme egotism and introspection finding expression in a restless aspiration after some vaguely defined ideal is to More the figure of the Seliman in William Beckford's Vathek through whose transparent bosom it is possible to see his heart perpetually enveloped in flames, restless whilst around him surges an ever rising thong moving each with hand clasped upon flaming heart, 'the essential type and image of the Romantic life and literature'. In The Drift of Romanticism More studies various manifestations of his Romantic spirit, 'whether the morbid egotism of Beckford, the religious defalcation of Newman, the aestheticism of Pater, or the dregs of naturalistic pantheism of Fiona Macleod, or the impotent revolt from humanitarian sympathy of Nietzsche.' Various other studies in Romantic discontent are strewn throughout the remaining volumes of the series, studies of the revolutionary utopianism of

1. L.J.A. Mercier, op. cit., pp. 82 ff.
3. Ibid., pp. 233-34.
Shelley, the robust primitism of Walt Whitman, the nightmare phantasmagoria of James Thomson, the Celtic vapourings of the early Yeats, and the other poets of the Irish Renaissance, the inchoate pseudo-mysticism of Francis Thompson.

Ernest de Seillière divided the mystico-imperialism of the Romantic Movement into four phases, passionate, amatory, racial and social, according to the predominating interest. Similarly it is possible, for convenience in discussion, to find in More’s treatment of Romanticism the same four phases, the first relating particularly to the Romantic’s attitude to the natural world, the second to sexual love, the third to his preoccupation with the democratization of literature, and the last with the awakening sense of national pride and solidarity. More himself does not divide his studies of Romanticism into any such definite categories; but it will help us to seize upon the outstanding features of his own critical attitude towards different phases of the movement if we can place in juxtaposition writers whose affinity can be defined rather more precisely than by noting merely a common delight in expansive or unbridled emotion.

In the past there have been various attitudes towards nature. The Oriental, aware of the two orders of nature and humanity, saw only the imperviousness of nature to the desires and efforts of man, a world of hideous unfathomable contingencies resulting from the crossing of absolute law and human sentience.
Wisdom consists of cultivating the inner life in complete indifference towards the outer order of unending change.\footnote{More, Shelburne Essays VI, pp. 57-58.} The Latin poets saw nature as a realm to be mastered and cultivated by man, as Virgil in the \textit{Georgics} extolled the labour which secures for man the fruits of the soil.\footnote{Ibid., p. 116.} But with the Romantic Movement, blending the optimism and pantheism of deism, there comes a completely different attitude towards nature. Instead of the two distinctly separate worlds of man and nature, nature is envisaged as an extension of the world of man, while man is seen as a creature of nature, subject to the same cycles of growth and change as his environment. It is possible for man by assimilating the mood of his natural surroundings to be possessed of a sense of brooding calm which bestows upon him a feeling of unity where before was the tension of dualism, and, incidentally a feeling of aloofness from the ordinary world of human affairs. The German transcendentalist looked down in contempt and irony upon the everyday sphere of action and commerce as something far removed from his own experience of life. Hence the contempt of business and of the Philistines follows as a kind of seal set upon the romantic soul which is conscious of itself. It cultivates a divine idleness; the summons to loaf and invite one's soul came from ever the sea long before the scandalous outbreak of Walt Whitman\footnote{More, Shelburne Essays V, pp. 165-66.}. 

In the first flush of emotional emancipation, it was enough that this swooning indulgence of the senses should be ecstatic. Later, there came a demand for acute observation and precise detail, as a result of the liaison of sentimental and scientific naturalism. Our modern attitude to nature is a coalescence of these two phases in the development of romanticism. Precise detail and minute observation of natural phenomena there had been, prior to the Romantic revolt, but the post-Romantic consciousness demands that it should be aureoled about with the wistful sense of man's close kinship with the universal life about him. The lack of this mystical infusion of human sentience into the processes of nature makes the nature poetry of such a writer as Crabbe, unsympathetic, if not definitely repulsive, to our generation, in spite of the scientific accuracy of his description of flora and fauna. 'He lacks some a certain note of mysticism, a feeling of vast and indefinable presence beyond the finite forms described, a lurking sense of pantheism by which the personality of the observer seems to melt into what he observes or is swallowed up in a vague reverie'. This is what we look for in the great nature-passages of the Nineteenth Century, 'the solemn mysteries of Tintern Abbey, or Shelley's Ode to the West Wind, and we find subtle echoes of it in poets not professedly of the Romantic school; time and again, in the poetry of Matthew Arnold, imbued as he

1. Ibid., pp. 116-17.
is with the classical spirit, there yet escape[d] him lines which suggest all the yearning poignancy of romantic nature.

This attitude to nature is extended to include the human figures the Romantic sees against the background of country nature. Whereas Crabbe saw men as they were, with all their poverty and ignorance and imperfection, the Romantic idealised them as the embodiment of innocence and virtue. Wordsworth repudiated the sham idyllic dreams of earlier pastoral poets, but his own nostalgic concern with the 'still sad music of humanity' was in its own way no more just as much an evasion of reality. 'It is the same humanity considered as a whole; humanity betrayed by circumstances and corrupted by luxury, but needing only the freedom of the hills and lakes to develop its native virtues; humanity caught up in some tremulous vision of harmony with the universal world; it is in short, the vague aspiration of what we have called humanitarianism, and have endowed with the solemnities of a religion'. Tintern Abbey itself was vitiated to More by a deep-lying confusion of thought. On the one hand, nature was the medium of expression of the 'still sad music of humanity', on the other, the consolation for 'the sneers of selfish men' and 'the dreary intercourse of daily life'. There is always this 'irreconcilable contradiction between the general sympathy and the particular distaste of the enthusiast who sees this mystery of mankind

1. Ibid., pp. 143.
2. Ibid., p. 144.
3. Ibid.; loc. cit.
refracted through the mist of setting suns. The illusion of the nature worshipper and the deception of the humanitarian spring, indeed, from the same substitution of reverie for judgment, and it is worthy of remark that Wordsworth who mused sympathetically on the lot of the salesmen about him had no power of entering into their individual lives, and was commonly distrusted by them.

Again, in spite of Wordsworth's assertion that Nature never did betray the heart that loved her, More cites ample evidence to prove that Wordsworth did become aware of a sense of treachery which cast him upon other consolations, notably those of religion. But although admitting the existence of such an inconsistency in Wordsworth's thought, More does not consider its implication of a development within the poet's experience. Unfortunately he dwells on the least attractive side of Wordsworth. He draws attention on the one hand to all that is gaudlin in the sentiment of Wordsworth, seeing him as the poet of 'One impulse from a vermal wood' or of the Luey poems, and on the other, to the cold, unresponsive elements in his constitution. In his essay on Wordsworth, More emphasises as significant to an understanding of his poetry his low vitality, his shrinking from strong emotion and active exercise. His intellect was keen and penetrating enough, but to More, 'some vice of the blood shut him out from participation in the larger current of life'. This it was

1. L. More, Shelburne Essays VII, p. 30. 2. Ibid., p. 41. 3. Ibid., p. 31-37, 42-46. 4. Ibid., p. 44.
which compelled him to seek refuge in the mild and soothing experience of natural solitude.

There are, however, elements in Wordsworth which More ignores or completely underestimates, and which reveal him as something very different from the pretty-pretty poet of popular imagination, or the austere, rather anaemic, figure of More's portrait. These have been described in detail in the chapter entitled 'Visionary Dreaminess', in Professor D.G. James' Scepticism and Poetry. One whole side of his work reveals that he is concerned with poor and illiterate people, not entirely because they are close to nature and therefore virtuous in the Rousseauistic sense, but because they become to his imagination 'symbols of the great Apocalypse', revelations of the supernatural seeking to break through into the natural. The sense of illusion of the natural universe is as much present in Wordsworth as in Carlyle or Tennyson, or in the Shakespeare of the Tempest, but where Wordsworth is concerned More has a persistently blind spot.

In contrasting the nature poetry of Thoreau with that of the English Romantics, More dwells upon the difference between the American write and Wordsworth as it appears to him. 'Least of all did (Thoreau), after the manner of Wordsworth, hear in the voice of nature any compassionate plea for the weakness and sorrow of the down-trodden. Philanthropy and humanitarian sympathies were to him a desolation.

1. Ibid., p. 42.
and a wee'.—Similarly his reliance on the human will was too sturdy to be perturbed by the inequalities and sufferings of mankind, and his faith in the individual was too unshaken to be led into humanitarian interest in the masses:"

Such a statement overlooks, rather wilfully, it seems to me, what is fundamental to Wordsworth's poetry about humble people; the fact that they suffer proudly and uncomplainingly, impervious to, and even a little disdainful of, the rigours of Fate. The poet is moved to write about them, not in order to plead indulgently for their welfare, but to give expression to the admiration, even the reverence, which their silent, relentless suffering evokes in him. The Leech Gatherer, Margaret, the Soldier in The Prelude, Michael, these are not figures who stifle Wordsworth to write sentimentally about the weakness and sorrow of the down-trodden. They have the majesty and proud unbending endurance of the characters of classical tragedy, although their lot is cast on a different scale of life. Antigone or Oedipus or Phaedra are not more tragically intransigent than their attitude to misfortune than the lowly figures of Wordsworth's poems. But this is an aspect of the poems for which More makes no allowance: Wordsworth's characters must be made to fit in with his general strictures about Romantic psychology. Further,

as has already been suggested, More does not allow for
the development of Wordsworth thought. The *Lyrical Ballads*
are separated from such later poems as *Stanzas en Peel
Castle* and the *Ode to Duty* by experiences as far-reaching
as those which separate the *Mere* of *The Great Refusal* from
the *Mere* of *The Greek Tradition*.

Wordsworth's reading of life More finds compressed

'into a meleicous stanza:

"One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can."

which, be it said with due respect is good verse but literal
folly. Ner does it yet appear a fact that idle reverie in
the fields is better for a man's soul than the discipline
of Plate and of Jesus'. Wordsworth himself came to this
same conclusion long before the end of his writing days.
Whatever he thought of Plate, he turned back on his former
Romantic optimism to a new attitude of humility and acquies-
cence towards the discipline of Jesus. But this at least
must be said: even before he had explicitly repudiated the
philosophy of Godwin for the wisdom of the Church, he had
long been preoccupied with modes of sensibility and perception
which were intrinsically Christian, and his use of nature
symbols had been an attempt to convey imaginatively these

intuitions of supernatural truth which traditional religion had symbolised by the Cross. His greatest poetry is concerned, not with impulses from vernal woods, or daisies, or butterflies, or green linnets; it seizes upon bleak, derelict landscapes, barren mountain scenery, hungry waters, not as ornamental description superimposed upon a ground of sentimental thought, but as an integral part of the process of thought itself. Mountain and rock and river become images in which feeling is thought and thought felt, as it is in the best of the poetry of Shakespeare and the Metaphysicals, and through them the poet leads the reader onto an ethical condition in which he apprehends imaginatively the reality of the paradox of triumph in defeat and joy in extremity of suffering. This is very different from 'reverie in the fields'.

Because of this, More's contrast between the attitude to nature of the English Romantics and that of Thoreau is hardly applicable to Wordsworth. Unlike the pantheistic belief in a benign and maternal nature of the Romantics, Thoreau's conception of nature in colours by the memory of man's struggle with a hostile and unsubdued force, primeval fields and mountains and dark untrodden forests infested with savage tribes. "We have not seen pure nature", he says, "unless we have seen her thus vast and drear and inhuman—Man was not to be associated with it. It was matter, vast,
terrific,— not his Mother Earth that we have heard of, not for him to tread on, or be buried in,—no, it were being too familiar even to let his bones lie there, — the home this of Necessity and Fate.¹ Such an attitude brings a tonic and bracing spirit into literature, in contrast to the ennui of pantheism. 'Nature was to him a discipline of the will as much as a stimulant to the imagination'.

There was, however, enough that was harsh and rugged and untamed in the uplands of the Lake District to make More's remarks equally relevant to Wordsworth, as he really appears to the reader who is not blinded to the nobler aspects of his work by preconceptions.

And yet the ultimate wisdom of nature is not to be found in Thoreau's Walden, nor in the work of any of the Concord group; the final outcome of the solitary reverie of Thoreau of Whitman is the loafing of Walt Whitman. Rather does More turn for the voice of common sense, in respect to the natural world, to Donald Mitchell's Edgewood. 'Perhaps, as a child of the city,' says More, 'I may be barred out from judging these high matters. Yet I too have had my share of Therellian vagabondage— who has not in these days?—and have even relived in humbler fashion the experiment of Walden. I knew how easy it is to wander by the river's brink,
meditating upon the eternities, or to discover the Holy Grail in the chalice of a flower. Doubtless these solitary communings with nature are a desirable antidote to the fever of the world; they have their incalculable \textit{eternal} reward, but their very facility is a warning not to trust them too far. For my part, I shall suspect always that, failing the initiation of plough and harrow, I have still come short of the greater mysteries. It is something to observe idly the fresh miracles of spring, but I repeat the opening of the \textit{Georgics}, and know how far this is from the joy of feeling oneself a partner in the earth's great task of renovation. It is something to watch with unconcern the tempestuous glory of the clouds, but again I recall the storm in Virgil and know how different are the emotions of one who spells his prosperity or ruin in the portents of the sky. Alas, \textit{labor improbus!} it is not facile enthusiasm alone but the curse-born sweat of the brow that shall at last bring a man into harmony with the stern realities of nature.

It is unfortunate that More should have missed the common ground of thought in Wordsworth, for his misjudgment of of the earliest of the great Romantics makes his criticism suspect even where it is justly incurred. There are times when it is good to judge literature according to the general trend it represents, but it is important too to keep one's eye on the object lest one be betrayed into sweeping assertions and strictures made in accordance with ready-to-hand formulae which are

only partially true. The Romantic attitude to nature, according to More, depends upon the predominance of the subjective imagination over the objective; whereas to More himself, the appreciation of natural beauty depends upon nature's being set apart from ourselves, and under the control of some Eternal and unchanging power. When the phenomena of nature appear to be under the control of a force corresponding to the inner check, they are said to be beautiful. More specifically, beauty is this particular sense of unity in diversity as manifested by design, form, harmony, clear and regular transition, relation of parts. It is commonly mingled with other perceptions of the one-in-the-many—such as sublimity, grandeur, charm, grace—more or less closely related or subordinated to it. Thus the very stability of the mountains reared amidst the shifting panorama of the atmosphere, the endurance of great waters in their everlasting fluctuations, suggest the indwelling of some eternal word of command. The quiet gleam of light, the purity of colours, the melody of sound, hint at some deep-hidden principle of joy. The brave persistence of growing things, the stealthy instincts of wild life proclaim the immanence of some master virtue. This formative power within phenomena we often think of as Nature personified. There is one whole side of the poetry of Wordsworth to which these words apply perfectly, nor is the work of as 'complete' a Romantic as Shelley without elements of this deeper perception. The criticism of the Romantics should be less that they were consistently pantheistic in belief.
than that their work maintained, unsynthesised, traces of several different modes of thought, some making for a dreamlike dissolution of the personality in pantheistic rêverie, others for a bracing of personality in the teeth of a hostile and alien power. More had eyes only for the presence of the former which he contrasts with the latter as though that were confined to 'classical' literature. 'The consolation of nature is an impersonal emotion arising from the confirmation of our inner consciousness of dualism; for beauty is, as it were, a visible image of the possible happiness of the soul. This consolation is peculiarly liable to suffer perversion from the pathetic fallacy and from the usurpation of reason. It is after all but an illusion that trembles at the touch of analysis. Hence the sense of uneasiness that often accompanies the perception of beauty, and the difficulty of reconciling ethics and aesthetics.

1 nimium caele et pelago confise sereno'.

Closely allied to the Romantic attitude to Nature was the Romantic attitude to love. The passive surrender of the soul to the impressions of the outer world makes for a similar surrender to the importunity of human passion. The limitlessness of human rêverie as man seeks to be absorbed in the vast processes of nature is reflected in the limitlessness of human desire as it seeks a satisfaction it can never find in erotic indulgence. An even vaster dimension is lent to desire by the merging of physical love with the love of God, as More finds it in (the German)

L. More, Shelburne Essays VIII, p. 262.
German Transcendentalism where even a Schleiermacher yielded to the sensuous appeal of erotic imagery, and sought to awaken a love of the divine by charging his preaching with an emotive power which played also on the strong human desires prevailing amongst the coterie to whom his discourses were addressed. Such a procedure may be innocent enough in itself, but it recalled to More the more morbid and passionate tendencies which were working in that very group. 'I cannot forget the morbid life of Rousseau, from whom all this *gefühlphilosophie* is ultimately derived: I remember more particularly Heinse's yearning for some wilderness apart from the world where he might, like a Platonic sage, pass his life in saintly studies— with a Lois at his side. *There is a taint of sickness in all this. It corresponds too well to the "heavenly weariness" of Nevalis himself, as he might be found at the grave of his Sophie, vowing himself to death for lofty example of love's eternal faithfulness and in a short while after discovering his religion incarnate in another woman.*'

It is true, I believe, to say that of More's essays, few are taken up with writers whose main theme is love between men and women; even when he does deal with an author in whose work love plays a large part, More's emphasis is usually on some other element of his thought. The love element in the poetry of Keats and Shelley, for example, is only touched upon incidentally;

Byron is of interest to him, not for the intensity of his passionate
fanfares, but because of his acceptance of the traditional
belief that life is an eternal struggle between good and evil
in opposition to the Romantic faith in human perfectibility. ¹
Christina Rossetti's poetry holds us awhile, not because of its
insight into love, but because of its insight into woman-nature.
Breuning is non persona grata, not primarily because his conception
of love is alien to More, but because that conception springs out
3 of a far deeper fissure of his sensibilities. In those essays where
More concentrates more specifically on love poetry, it is with the
decadence of romantic love that he is primarily concerned. We have
seen above that it is the sickliness and morbidness of German
romantic love which repels him. It follows automatically from his
initial beliefs that human love, unless held in its proper place
by the inner check, must deteriorate into license and lust, bringing its own nemesis in the form of satiety and disillusionment.
It is with this inevitable outcome of romantic love that More deals
in his essays on Arthur Symons, Swinburne and the Decadent Wits.
Not, be it said at the very outset, in answer to his 'Liberal' critics
that he is over-squeamish on the subject of sex relationship. He
finds no harm in Whitman's insistence on unashamed physical love,
he refuses to be stirred to moral indignation at the imputed immor-
ality of Sterne, he takes up the cudgels in defence of Hazlitt's

2. Ibid., p.133ff.
3. Ibid., p.149ff.
Liber Amoris. If he finds something disturbing and sickly in the young Yeats' preoccupation with women's hair, it is because of the implication of a heightened and unnatural sensuous enjoyment which More dislikes far more than open sensuality, an implication derived rather from the association of the subject with Aubrey Beardsley and others of the 'Nineties than from any internal evidence in Yeats' work of even imaginative, and certainly not of bodily, corruption.

Again, in Swinburne, he finds during the early phase of his poetical development, all the symptoms of an imagination diseased by an excess of romantic passion. 'The satiety of the flesh hangs like a fatal web about the Laus Veneris; the satiety of disappointment clings "with sullen savour of poisonous pain" to The Triumph of Time; satiety speaks in The Hymn to Proserpine, with its regret for the passing of the old heathen gods; it seeks relief in the unnatural passion of Anactoria:

"Clothed with deep eyelids under and above—
Yea, all thy beauty sickens me with love";

turns to the abominations of cruelty in Faustine; sings enchantingly of rest in The Garden of Proserpine.—

The mood of Swinburne's earlier verse foreshadows that of the 'Nineties with Dowson, Davidson, Beardsley, Lionel Johnson, Francis Thompson, Oscar Wilde, seeking to taste to the full each passing sensation. 'In the longing after the fullness

of experience without consideration of the lessons of experience we come close to the heart of the movement, and we also see how it was no vagary of a few isolated youths, but was the product of the most characteristic evolution of the age. 'The root of the whole matter lay in a febrile satiety of the flesh, in a certain physical lesion, which the sufferers, having no physical resistance to oppose to it, translated into a moral fatigue, such as Dorian Gray's reaction to A Rebours. The final outcome of a philosophy which glorified the perfervid gratification of natural desire is the impotence of Oscar Wilde, and all the tragedy which closes in upon the curious quest for sensation for its own sake.

Less extreme, but none the less indicative of the dangerous dregs which More suspects at the bottom of the cup of romantic eroticism is the development of Arthur Symons. We have already seen how More applies to him the Hindu image which envisages nature as a dancing girl, while the soul is the King who looks on, and eventually awakens to a sense of the illusion of natural beauty. More traces in detail, using always the image of the watcher, Symons' own gradual deterioration from false illusion through satiety, false disillusion, artificial attempts to stimulate passion through the perversion of good and evil down to the long last nightmare hauntings of ultimate futility.

*I am weary of loving, and I long to be at rest
From the sorrowful and immense fatigue of love*  

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2. Ibid., p. 285.
I have lived and loved with a seeking passionate zest
And weariness and defeat are the end thereof.

But the contrition of genuine regret is lost in 'the bitter cry
of the long struggle resumed half-heartedly between illusion and
disillusion'.

"O rapture of lost days, all that remains
Is but this fever aching in my veins.

I do not know you under this disguise:
I am degraded by my memories! "

'In the ocean of these degrading memories, haunting thoughts, and
impuissant desires, the poor soul (let us call it soul) of the poet
is tossed alternately from the exaltation of terror to the depths
of indefinite despair. He learns at last that "to have fallen 2
through dreams is to have touched hell".'

It may be argued that to condemn the cult of romantic love
from its final disintegration into satiety is no fairer than to
condemn Humanism from the Fascism which its enemies claim to be
its logical conclusion. It must be judged, not from what it be­
came in its decadence, but from its own achievement in its heyday.

Of its effects on the English Romantics of the early Nineteenth
Century, More says little; he touched briefly upon the morbidity
and maudlin sentiment of the young Keats, upon the vagueness and
amorphousness of Shellyan love, upon the very lack of physical
passion in Wordsworth. For the rest he turns to the minor poets

1. More, Shelburne Essays I, p. 141
2. Ibid., p. 142.
of the closing decades of the century. But to bring out fully
the hidden dangers in the spontaneous indulgence of erotic
desire, he should have brought before us examples of its
ravages upon those who experienced its first fine careless
raptures. In the England of the first generation of Romantics,
however, its worst excesses were held in check by the tradition
of individual character and the Christian modes of sensibility
which even the most rebellious of the Titans had consciously
assimilated from the civilisation into which they had been born.
That there was much that was uncivilised and unChristian in the
world about them none can deny, but certain traditional values
were still recognised, and from these it was still possible to
break away completely. A sturdy sense of individual respon-
ability and independence had been too deeply engrained in the past to
leave English writers entirely at the mercy of the new doctrine.
More does not state this explicitly, but from his previous de-
scription of the Puritan contribution to literature in stimulat-
ing personality it is, I feel, legitimate to deduce that this
stress upon character bore fruit, not only in the seventeenth
century itself, but in the next two centuries, though to a di-
minishing degree. If, however, the Elizabethan stage fell prey
we to the vagaries of the Romantic drama because the weakening of
the authority of Roman Catholic dogma left men without a sub-
stiute, owing to the Roman Church's emphasis upon vicarious
salvation to the almost complete exclusion of personal respon-
sibility, it is fair, I think, to assume that the weakening of the
authority of Roman Catholic dogma in Eighteenth Century France left men without a substitute there, for the very same reason, and therefore it is to France we must look for an exhibition of what romantic love, uncontrolled by any austere moral code inherited from the past, can become in a very short time. The evidence we find, not in More, but in Babbitt, in his study of romantic love as he finds it in the French authors of the first half of the Nineteenth Century, evidence drawn from their own writings and therefore available for all his readers to examine in its full context. There we see the insatiable appetite, not only of the flesh, but even more of the imagination which the new philosophy begot, the restlessness, the ennui, the sadistic cruelty, the final inertia of despair through which passion burns itself to extinction. If, in the later English Romantics, this same rake's progress is evident, it is partly because the values inherited from the past which saved their immediate predecessors from complete disillusionment, have by now grown thin; but even more so, because the men of the Nineties have come directly under the literary influence of the later French Romantics. Arthur Symons, W.B. Yeats, Oscar Wilde, are but three of their generation affected by the mood of the French cult of L'art pour L'art, or the mingling of an extremely objective aestheticism and an extremely subjective introspection, as in the work of Baudelaire.

3. Ibid., p. 181.
4. Ibid., p. 191.
6. Ibid., p. 221.
In Volume III of the *New Shelburne Essays*, More considers the Freudian attempt to analyse Baudelaire in terms of an Oedipus complex, outlined by Dr. René Laforgue in *L'Échec de Baudelaire*. Far deeper than the impotence of normal sexual feeling, More sees at work in him those motives which are the mainspring of both individual and group psychology, the imperialism and mysticism which Ernest de Seillière had seen as particularly prevalent since the days of Rousseau, that is, since the weakening of any ethical check, whether outward in the form of law, or inward in the form of the religious conscience. Imperialism is only another name for the Patristic *libido dominandi*, the lust for power as it had been recognised by Hobbes, and it becomes mystical whenever it is reinforced by a belief that the lust of domination is corroborated and sanctified by ultimate forces shaping our destiny. In the last resort, the *libido sentiendi*, the lust for sensation, for erotic desire, is but a subsidiary aspect of Imperialistic mysticism, the desire for the unlimited expansion of the Ego by absorbing, or being absorbed into, the personality of the loved one. The final passion, to More, is for autonomy, for irresponsibility, for freedom from restraint, and romantic love is but another expression of the same urge. Man seeks freedom through the denial of the supernatural, or at the best, its equation with the erotic yearning after infinity, and having repudiated any authority on or above the plane of reason, he seeks for some reality below, in the gratification and multiplication of sensation and impulse.

The third expression of the expansive aspirations of Romanticism is in the realm of social relationships. As well as seeking to find an extension of his own personality in nature and in sexual love, man seeks also to come into a relationship with other men which satisfies his own self-love. In the past this has found expression in tyranny and domination, but the modern phase of the same assertion of the self is more subtle, masquerading as altruism and social sympathy. Outwardly, man appears to be concerned only for the welfare of his fellows, but by so being, he is primarily concerned for himself, not only because he desires for others to do unto him as he does unto them, but because of the gratification of his personal pride which an appearance of philanthropy gives. Such is both More and Babbitt's diagnosis of humanitarianism, and it is this aspect of romantic egotism which they deprecate in modern literature even more than romantic pantheism and eroticism. Few of the outstanding figures are untouched by the illusion of altruism as the goal of human activity.

We have already seen More's criticism of Wordsworth's idealisation of the poorer classes and of country folk, whilst seeking to escape in nature the corruption and selfishness of men in towns. In Shelley, the same belief, nurtured upon far greater reserves of enthusiasm and vitality, gives rise to a perpetual straining after social change. Wordsworth, commencing

with the same belief in the essential goodness of human nature freed from the shackles of the past, learned its fallacy through painful and shattering experience during the final years of the French Revolution. 'But with Shelley revolution meant the fluttering of an opaque and dizzying flag between the poet's inner eye and the truth of human nature--- With a child-like credulity almost inconceivable he accepted the current doctrine that mankind is naturally and inherently virtuous, needing only the applied deliverance from some outwardly oppression to spring back to its essential perfection. With Rousseau the perverting force had been property. With Shelley it was more commonly personified as Jehovah or Jove!... Just as Wordsworth had shrunk from worldly men whilst extolling the virtue of lowly folk, so Shelley, whilst seeing mankind in general as naturally virtuous and generous, could still castigate the evil-doings of any who opposed him. It is noticeable that many of his friends who were at first angels of light became to him demons of malevolence when he got to know them as real individuals and not just projections of his personal emotions. For their suffering, he, the most pitying of men, could feel no pity, for to make them suffer was to avenge the cause of righteousness against its enemies. Hence the brutality of his treatment of Harriet Westbrook. By birth, Shelley was neither a brute nor a maniac. He was a man of acute sensibility, quick to sympathise with the down-trodden of the world, but

his standards of deciding who were the oppressed and who were the oppressors were purely subjective. His private passions were identified with his indignant revolt against tyranny in his poems, and the threats and horrors he breathes out against Jove in *Prometheus Unbound* have the same source as his imprecations against the Westbrook, or his indictment of Elizabeth Hitchener. His apparent callousness is therefore the outcome of the effect on his character of his revolutionary philosophy, itself a form of inverted imperialism.

Shelley lacked almost completely the greater aesthetic humility which in the end rendered Keats curiously docile to tradition, and made him critical of the consistency of his own work as well as of that of others. Yet so obsessed is More with the bogey of humanitarianism that he suspects its presence in Keats also, prompting him to reshape *Hyperion*. More attributes the failure of the first *Hyperion* to the division of the poet's sympathies between the dying order, represented by Saturn, towards which he felt a natural attraction, and the new order, represented by Jupiter, which he had set out ostensibly to exalt. As a result, Keats sought to recast his poem in a more frankly subjective mood. The poet, about to be initiated into the divine mysteries of the temple he beholds in a vision, cries out to his guide, Meneta, for help.

"High Prophetess", said I, "purge off, Benign, if so it please, my mind's film".
"None can usurp this height", returned that shade,
"But these to whom the miseries of the world Are misery, and will not let them rest".
But are there not others, cries the poet, who have felt the agony
of the world, and have laboured for its redemption? Where are
they, that they are not here?

"These whom thou speakest of are no visionaries", Rejoin'd that voice; "they are no dreamers weak;
They seek no wonder but the human face,
No music but a happy-noted voice;
They come not here, they have no thought to come;
And thou art here, for thou art less than they.
What benefit canst thou do, or all thy tribe,
To the great world? Thou art a dreaming thing".

'And thereupon, in a vision, she unfolds before his eyes the fall
of Hyperion and the progress of humanity symbolised in the advent
of Apollo. To compare this mutilated version with the poem Keats
had written under the instructive inspiration of his genius is
one of the saddest tasks of the student of literature.

'No, it was not any dislike of Miltonic idioms or any impulse
from Dante that brought about this change in his ambition; it was
the working of the ineluctable time-spirit.'

This humanitarian mood More attributes, not so much to the Cockney
influences of Leigh Hunt, too trivial to hold Keats permanently,
though strong enough to prepare him for this treachery to his
nature, as to 'the richer note of Wordsworth, the still sad music
of humanity running through the poet's mighty song.'

It is but to be expected that if More misunderstood the
more virile strain underlying the pantheism and humanitarianism
of Wordsworth's poetry because of his failure to take into account
Wordsworth's spiritual development, he should similarly overlook

More, Shelburne Essays IV
1. P. 126.  
2. Ibid., p. 127.
the amazing evolution in Keats' outlook which within a short
time was transmuted from a merely epicurean indulgence of the
senses into a mastery of a difficult and tragic form of beauty,
apprehended through the contemplation of human suffering and
dereliction—in short through the identical mode of perception
which characterised Wordsworth's attitude to scenes of extreme desolation and human beings faced with ultimate disaster and
despair, and through it, attaining to the peace of complete detach-
ment. This is something very different from the restless aspiring
after social reform which characterised the purely humanitarian thinkers. The great work of both Keats and Wordsworth has a calm,
an almost static, serenity which contrasts vividly with the constant aspiring after change and movement in much of the work of other Romantics, such as Shelley, and later, William Morris.

The sense of continuous motion common to the work of both Shelley and Morris is not confined only to those elements which deal directly with social progress and revolution, although they reveal their neoterism in its most blatant form. The lack of inward 'recueillement; bred of a doctrine of social discontent, is reflected in the fluidity and breathless onrush of their poetry as a whole. Of Morris, More says, 'You may sink your plummet into his mind but you will touch no bottom; there is no solid core; all is movement and flux, save this sense of beauty, which was itself largely a matter of flowing rhythm.' For the aristocratic emphasis on order, poise, integrity of conception in art, the new

1. D.G. James, op. cit., pp. 176-178
3. Ibid., pp. 101-102.
democratic literature introduced spontaneity, variety of detail, equality of importance for each isolated beauty. Thus, the trends which socialism was bringing into politics were paralleled by similar trends in aesthetics; the democratisation of literature not only affects the content, but has far-reaching effects on the form.

Something of this was obvious as early as *The Lyrical Ballads* with the almost prosaic flattening of Wordsworth's verse when he was writing ostensibly in the language of ordinary men, which contrasts so pitifully with the rich sonorousness of his poetry when he forgot his theories. But the direction in which the movement was heading became fully evident with the work of a Walt Whitman in whom the return to nature and the exaltation of the plebeian meant a far more thorough-going revolt against poetic convention. 'He observed— as who has not— a certain hollowness in almost all the poetry of the day, owing to the fact that it was not rooted in the realities of modern life. The rhythm was merely pretty, and had lost its vital swing; the primitive habits which had made it a bond of union by the clapping of hands and the beating of feet were too far in the past to lend it any communal force.' Similarly, the spirit of verse also a thing of the past, a product of feudalism. 'In these traditions of form and spirit the poet was swathed until he sang no longer as a free individual man in touch with the

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1. Cf. pp. 177-78.
universal currents of life, but was an empty echo of an outworn age, a simulacrum (this was the word Walt Whitman applied to Swinburne) of vanished emotions. To restore poetry to its dominion over the present, therefore, Whitman would first of all abrogate the accepted rules of rhythm, and would allow his lines to swing, so he thought, with the liquid abandonment of the waves and winds.'

The belief in the individual and in the brotherhood of man had still further repercussions in so far as they now saw the criterion of literary judgment to be, not the considered response to a work of the trained and critical taste of an intellectual élite, but the purely emotional reaction of the masses. For the former court of appeal in the 'taste of the man who had attained to the most perfect harmony of culture and to the fullest development of culture and to the fullest development of character', Tolstoy would substitute the judgment of the ordinary Russian peasant. 'Art has nothing to do with the intellect or with the will, or yet with the exclusive emotions of a falsely isolated and corrupted aristocracy, but appeals to the heart of the humblest man, in whom the universal feelings of humanity have not been covered over by culture or luxury.'

The effects of such an attitude to art are, paradoxically enough, identical with those of the antithetical cult of aestheticism which was disputing with humanitarianism for supremacy on the

1. Ibid., p.193.
3. Ibid., pp.213-14.
literary scene of the late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: criticism became purely subjective and impressionistic, although in the former, it is the individual vision of the artist, the man of refined and exquisite sensibility, and in the second, the pleasure of the unlettered proletariat which decides the merit of a work of art.

The creation of a democratic or even revolutionary literature is the peculiar expression of the awakening sympathy of the writer with his fellow-men in the Nineteenth Century and after; but parallel to this runs a reviving national consciousness, stimulating the poet to a self-identification with his fellow-countrymen. For the humanitarian's vague visionary aspirations towards a universal brotherhood of man in the future, the nationalist looks back to his country's past, and there in the common ground of history and tradition finds the bond that links him to all those who have descended from the same stock. Instead of a semi-mystical belief in

'one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves',

the nationalist believes, to varying degrees of literal fervour, in the efficacy of a mysterious cult of blood and soil by which all the members of the nation are fused into a supernatural and corporate unity. This tendency was the more powerful in nations whose independence had been threatened by alien forces, and who had kept alive their individuality by brooding upon their inheritance from literature, history and legend. This mood,

reinforced by something of the humanitarian's dream of universal regeneration, became the impetus of the poetry of Fiona Macleod (William Sharp) to whom More devotes an essay in *The Drift of Romanticism*. It has been queried why More should attach such importance to one who, in the last resort, must remain one of the least of 'minor' poets. But undoubtedly to More, Sharp represented one facet of the Romantic imagination, the desire to escape the harsh reality of the present by absorption into the world of legend and magic. As a lad, Sharp had spent his school holidays on Iona where he had heard from an Hebridean priest of the time when the island should be the centre of a regenerative force sweeping the world. He had assimilated the ancient legends and nature-myths lingering on in such out of the way places and by dwelling upon the Celtic, came to believe that through his effort to revive the Celtic consciousness, a strange cosmic revolution was to be brought about. Here are all the elements of Romantic pseudo-mysticism, heightened by a sense of racial pride and of a unique personal destiny; and to the usual Romantic proneness to lose any precise outline of its visions in a general evaporation of detail into nebulous phantasmagoria, there is added the strong Celtic tendency to a nostalgic melancholy. Although Sharp never joined the Neo-Celtic school, he was himself victim to the same double-misunderstanding as the other writers of the Celtic revival. They thought they were renewing the old Celtic idealism, whereas in reality, their inspiration came from a wholly different source.
Similarly they thought they were the heralds of youth, whereas they were 'fag-end of an expiring movement'. The new and the old schools of the Celt have nevertheless certain traits in common—the sense of fateful brooding, the feeling of dark and bright powers concealed in nature and working mysteriously upon human destiny, the conception of passions as forces that have a strange life in themselves and come into the breasts of men as if they were ghostly visitants, the craving for unearthly but very real beauty, the haunting belief in a supernatural world that lies now far away in the unattainable west, and now buried beneath our feet, or just trembling into vision, the mixture of fear and yearning towards that world as a source of incalculable joys or dark madness to those who break in upon its secret reserve. But withal the essential spirit of the sagas is quite different from that of these imitators—as different as tremendous action is from sickly brooding. The light in the old tales is hard and sharp and brilliant, whereas our modern writers rather like to merge the outlines of nature in an all-obliterating grey. The heroes in the sagas are men and women that throb with insatiable life, and their emotions, whatever mysticism may lie in the background, are the stark, mortal passions of love and greed and hatred and revenge and lamentable grief; whereas it is the creed of the newer school, fortunately not always followed, to create a literature which instead of dealing with the clashing wills of men, shall in the words of Fiona Macleod offer the subllest and the most searching means for the imagination to compel reality to dreams, to compel actuality to vision, to
to compel to the symbolic congregation of words the bewildering throng
of wandering and illusive thoughts and ideas'.

The same traits mark the writings of W.B. Yeats and other
poets of the Gaelic revival. In them, however, the influence
of decadent French romanticism is more easily traced, and it
is possible to analyse more definitely the difference between
the virile passion and pathos of ancient Irish literature as seen,
for example, in the translation by Lady Gregory, of the Irish
Epic. But even in ancient Irish literature there is a basic weakness
of imaginative power which sets the Celtic far below the
Greek or Roman epics. The work is marred by naïveté of conception,
by lack of constructive skill, and above all by a shrinking from
reality which made the creators of Irish mythology find in the deli-
cate and tricksy Fairy race the native expression of the same
principle of life and vitality as the Greeks sought in the Dionysian
vein in drama. The Irish sagas suffer from the lack of a
centre in a moral sense. Their failure was the same as that of the
whole range of Romantic literature: the absorption in a false illu-
sion, whereby the reality of the outer universe is dissolved into
a dream. Nature, sexual love, social regeneration, racial mysticism,
all are forms of the false illusion of romanticism in contrast to
the sagasse, the true wisdom of disillusion, of which Joubert
speaks.

3. Ibid., pp. 159-60.
4. Ibid., pp. 172-73.
And when the desire for sensation is sated, and false illusion fades: what then? Man, in a revulsion of feeling, may seek to find some solid foothold in a Realism which seeks to record objectively its observations of the phenomenal world, or else, denying the existence of any reality, may plunge into the ever-dissolving stream of impressions which, to the Sur-realist, is the only thing we can know. To the majority of critics, amongst them F.L. Lucas, and Edmund Wilson, Realism is a break-away from Romanticism; to More and Babbitt, it was its logical conclusion. 'The Romantic Movement reflected the abnegation of the will as controlled by reason, and a substitution in its place of the emotions of fancy, guided by the vagaries of this untrammelled use of the fancy, naturalism following in the wake of the materialistic advance of science, turned to the boasted study of reality, thus leaving room neither for the free will nor for the imagination.' From scientific naturalism came what More and Babbitt labelled 'hard' Romanticism, in contrast to 'soft' or sentimental Romanticism, and it was this 'hard' Romanticism, with its emphasis on determinism, which in turn merged into Realism. Again, Sur-realism or Symbolism, which to most critics is the very antithesis of Realism, is to the Humanist but another aspect of the same tendency of man, resulting in the

same denial of free will and the ultimate sterility of the imagination. Both are phases of a naturalism which, refusing to accept the dualism of the natural and the supernatural, the divine and the human, the physical and the spiritual, seeks to assert itself as the Absolute. The will has been overthrown, Reason, dethroned, the personal emotions or thymoeides, satiated with excess of passion; the day belongs to the instincts, to the natural man, now envisaging himself as part of the predetermined mechanical order of nature, now envisaging nature as shewing in his own consciousness of restless, fluctuating impressions, without form and void.

The tendency of man throughout the centuries has been to explain away one or other of the terms of dualism, and because of his greater awareness of the physical, he has sought to find some monistic solution of the universe, either as uniform order or uniform movement. Such, we shall see later, were the rival philosophies of the Stoics and Epicureans, and since the Sixteenth Century, there has been an ever-growing tendency to repeat the experiment.

The increasing importance of scientific law had led men to think of the universe as a vast undeviating machine whose movement, and the movement of all its parts, were determined by certain inexorable conditions, but the full consequences of such an attitude had only become apparent during 1. More, _Shelburne Essays_, VI, pp. 15; cf. pp. 447–50.
the last century, as Realism had sought to depict man as a product of a given environment and heredity. 'The world, to the Realist,' runs for ever in a set groove under some complex of mechanical laws, and man, like the animals, is no more than a cog in the large fatalistic machine! To him, as to Taine, vice and virtue are merely products of certain circumstances for which man cannot be held responsible, for he is impotent to break through the bonds of mechanical necessity. But, whereas in the Nineteenth Century, it was generally assumed that the direction of the great world-machine, and man's automatic movement with it, was towards progress, in the Twentieth Century, the scientific desire to record objectively and realistically facts as they appeared, made it inevitable that they should admit the presence of much that was grim and degrading in modern experience. In the past, the castigators of evil and vice had always been able to appeal to man to reform himself, but in a world where man is only a helpless pawn, there is nothing to be done but to stand up and record the stages of his death struggle with a relentless fate. So it is that modern literature 'looks upon human nature with the enflamed vision of a monocular Cyclops', seeing man as 'the slave of his temperament or a mechanism propelled by complexes and reactions, a vortex of sensations with no centre of stability within the flux'. Something of this we have already seen in connection with the novels of Gissing,

and it is this same sense of human helplessness in the clutch of an inexorable determinism which distinguishes the modern 'social' novel from that of the Nineteenth Century. Mrs. Gaskell's *Mary Barton* or *North and South*, Charlotte Bronte's *Shirley*, Disraeli's *Sybil*, Dickens' *Hard Times*, Mrs. Craik's *John Halifax Gentleman* were novels 'with a purpose', written to awaken a sense of obligation and pity in the strong towards the weak. The Realist novel, when it had any purpose at all, set out rather 'to preach a millennium of brotherly love to be achieved through inflaming the hatred of the poor against the rich', quite an illogical aim in so far as the rich in such a rigidly determined order, were no more morally responsible for their actions than the poor. The effect of the fiction of the Zola-Tolstoy school, though More admits it might be immediately effective, is 'only a harsh contraction of spirit, and its end is in hatred and revolution and palsy and decay'.

But even within the Realist school there has been a change for the worse: to the old enthusiasm for social betterment, however materialistic, however earth-bound its aim, has succeeded a mood of cynical futilitarianism. In America, particularly, men have turned in disdain from the moralising vein of the New England writers, and when they in turn dwell upon the degradation of society, it is in no mood of crusading fervour. The prevailing philosophy is Behaviourism, and spectator and victim alike are impotent to deliver humanity from its fatalistic grip. All the

2. Ibid., p. 77.
A modern author can do is record with callous and cynical detachment the story of men involved in an unequal struggle with the forces of materialism. This is the mood of the modern American novel, of Dreiser's *American Tragedy*, of Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street*, of John Du Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*; and if More brought down upon his head the righteous indignation of the liberal critics by his reference to the last-named as an 'explosion in a cess-pool', he did so in no mood of personal prejudice or petulance. He was concerned, as he told us in the Preface to Series VIII of the *Shelburne Essays*, less with individual books and authors than with the direction of certain currents of thought; and with the Realists' stress on the purely physiological and animal side of man's being, he seemed to see art plunged from its concern with hyperphysical realities and the realm of Platonic Ideas to wallow in the dark primal slough of Matter. What is uppermost in his mind becomes clear in his comment upon the novels of Sherwood Anderson in which 'the withdrawal of any principle of intellectual control or discrimination' coupled with 'a kind of low vitality, a sickly feverishness of the imagination, sets loose those prurient fancy that the normal man holds in abeyance'. 'To peruse Mr. Anderson is to be reminded of Plato's account of the appetites that rouse themselves in a man when, gorged with meat and drink, he falls asleep, and the wild beast within him, freed from the control of reason, goes forth to commit him to all kinds of follies and shameful deeds from which in his waking moments he shrink in abhorrence.'

These aspects of Twentieth Century literature but confirm More in fears he had already felt as early as Series Two of the Shelburne Essays, when, in an appreciation of the writings of Lafcadio Hearn, he had considered the possible developments of science's probings into the beginnings of the human race. In his essay The Idea of Preexistence Hearn had sought to bring out the harmony he believed to exist between evolution and the Buddhistic conception of preexistence, in such a way that he lent to the Oriental doctrine a new and terrifying significance. 'From this union with science the Oriental belief in the indwelling of the past now receives a vividness of present actuality that dissolves the Soul into ghostly intimacy with the mystic unexplored background of life. As a consequence of this new sense of impermanence and of this new realism lent to the indwelling of the past, all the primitive emotions of the heart are translated into a strange language which, when once it lays hold of the imagination carries us into a region of dreams akin to that world which our psychologists dimly call the subliminal or the subconscious.' From this dark backward and abysm of time rise up recollections of the past experience of mankind crystallised in an inherited race-memory. To More, such a power of corporate memory has a rich significance for art, but at the same time a significance fraught with grim consequences. Step by step down the ages, the Church has withstood the disclosures of science as though terrified of the mysteries

it may unveil, and now at last, it seems that such fear was justified; the last strong-hold of man's individual life is assailed. 'In the ghostly residuum of these meditations we may perceive a vision dimly foreshadowing itself which mankind for centuries, nay, for thousands of years has striven unwittingly to keep veiled! Not only do 'vague visitations from man's primeval state haunt his subconscious mind, but vestiges of a still earlier stage of evolution may yet be enclosed within the lower levels of his consciousness! As the mind recoils before relics of a paleolithic age; abhorrent monstrosities, amphibians, reptiles that beat the air with wings of nightmare breath; reluctant hidden records of bestial growths, brought to light by man's probing into the past, so it would turn in shame and terror from the discovery of some new geology which might lay bare the covered strata of memory in our brain corresponding to these records of the earth; for there is nothing lost, and in some mysterious way the memories of all that obscure past are stored up within us'--- 'Consider the horror of beholding in our consciousness the resemblance of such fears and frenzies, such cruel passions and wallowing desires as would correspond to those gigantic and abortive relics of antiquity. Would not the world in all its shame cry out for some Lethean draught of sleep, though it were profound as the oblivion of Nirvana?''

1. Ibid., p. 65.
2. Ibid., pp. 69-70.
Although man as he is portrayed in the Realistic novel appears as the victim of such irresistible primal urges, it is in its rival literary doctrine, Surrealism, that the full implications of modern science find their most significant expression. The Surrealists, the Aesthetics—as More calls them more frequently—seeing that a literature dependent on such a conception of life as the Realists depict becomes 'sicklied o'er with the depression of conscious 1

futility,' recognise no reality but what the artist himself creates within his art. The artist is therefore free from all moral responsibility; he owes no fealty to society or its laws or conventions; he obeys only the law of his own inspiration, and he can stand aloof from the life of mankind, absorbed in his own esoteric art. The first effect of such a creed is to exalt its votaries with the feeling of their own emancipation from the iron law of mechanism which binds other men. They may be haunted by a suspicion that our world, far from exhibiting the tight regularity of a machine, is 'an infinite flux of accidents without 3
calculable plan or meaning,' but that does not disturb/hém. It only leaves them the more free to design whatever pattern their art requires. This suspicion is confirmed by the theories of modern science, especially of the psychology of Bergson and William James. The individual is no longer envisaged as

2. Cf. ibid.
a static entity, but as a succession of changing states, linked by the power of the associative memory. The writer cannot seek to give a coherent or consistent picture of life; he can only give impressions as they arise from the vortex of the subconscious mind which is the actual propulsive power behind human behaviour. There is for him no objective and eternal standard of truth which, when found, demands unwavering allegiance; only glimpses of 'some momentary aspect of the flux, no sooner beheld than lost in the flowing stream of impressions'.

The artist, therefore, owes allegiance to no authority beyond that of his own independent vision, and it is this divorce of art from social values which drives the artist even more completely into the solitude of his own esoteric brooding. Aestheticism thus moves in a vicious circle of ever deepening separation from the current of everyday life. It has no means of communication with the outside world through the medium of ordinary language operating on the level of consciousness. The artist can find expression for his vision only through the use of symbols evoking various phases of the flux, associated one with the other by the power of memory. The Symbolist sees 'the constantly solid fabric of life dissolving into sentiment, which is but another name for sensations floating up from some dark centre of the subconscious under the sway of accidental associations, ungoverned by will, controlled by no faculty of selection, neither never solidifying into action'.

2. Ibid., p. 60.
But the imagination of man craves reality. The artist, therefore, seeking a phantom ideal of beauty divorced from belief in a higher reality of spiritual ideas, is to More, 'like a man in a balloon when his moorings are cut. He soars up and up, until, overtaken by the dizziness of the void, he deflates the balloon, and falls, rushing headlong downwards into space. The aeronaut may reach the ground, but the artist 'in his revolutionary search for reality—is precipitated down and down into the very depths of his own being, into that vast dark region of the soul below the plane of ordered and rationalised life. Being unable to sink lower he will feel that at last his feet are set on a foundation of facts which he calls the nature of man. His art will be to reproduce in flowing language the vapours that float up unsolicited through the conscious mind from the abyss of the unconscious. Rational selection and spiritual authority have been repudiated, and the only law governing the flux is the so-called association of ideas, the fact that one image by some chance similarity evokes another, and one sensation fades into another.'

With the Aesthete, however, as with the Realist, once the active control of consciousness is removed, the impressions to which the mind gives way in vacuity are of a dissolute, frequently of a bestial, character. Again one is reminded of Plato's warning. Nothing is more tragic than to trace the gradual loosening of the

1. Ibid., p. 80.
2. Cf. p. 278.
aesthetic imagination from its initial pursuit of an ideal of beauty to its final obsession with the unclean and lubricious images which throng up from the Poetid whirlpool of the subliminal.

Nowhere does More find clearer evidence of the return of Chaos and dark Necessity as the ruling principle in literature than in the work of two of the leading novelists of the day, Joyce and Proust. The pilgrim's regress is the theme of More's essay on James Joyce in which he follows the moral deterioration of the artist from the high hopes and ideals of the young Stephen Daedalus at the end of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to the moral slough of *Ulysses*. Already during the earlier work, however, there is present the seed of the subsequent dissolution, in the self-liberation of the artist from the spiritual values and dogmatic authority of tradition, and the consequent forging of conscience out of the uncontrolled spontaneity of his individual consciousness! When once that which lies above reason has been removed from its position of authority, the naturalist seeks reality in that which lies below, and so *Ulysses* becomes 'a creation of ugliness, a congeries of ugly pictures expressed in the speech of Dublin 's gutters.' Literature has turned from the portrayal of the man of character, and even of passion, to batten upon a picture of man as a sheer creature of instinct.

2. Ibid., p. 70.
3. Ibid., p. 79.
4. Ibid., loc. cit.
'The living man as a vehicle of the soul is not the real thing, but only the putrid corpse: the body as it appears to the eye is not the real thing, but to know its reality you must strip it of its integument and fumble in its entrails. And this identification of realism with the underside of mature is the almost inevitable companion of an atheistic philosophy that dissolves the universe into a Protean flux of meaningless change'.

The end of Stephen's attempt to encounter anew the reality of experience, and forge in the smithy of his own soul the uncreated conscience of his race ends in a religion à rebours, exemplified by the Black Mass, celebrated at the wildest moment of the brothel scene. To Mr. T. S. Eliot, this is evidence of a deep-rooted conviction of sin in Joyce, the perverted expression of a strong sense of religious orthodoxy; but to More, such art reveals not a conviction of sin, but 'the ultimate principle of evil invoked as the very enemy of truth reinforced by the judgment of philosophy and theology'? Stephen's descent from grace is marked by three stages which correspond to the three assaults of the devil upon Father Girdlestone's soul in Monsignor R. N. Benson's story The Mirror of Shalott. The order of the three temptations, seeming to begin with the most, and end with the least, radical, had puzzled More until he saw how it coincided with the stages of Joyce's regress from The Portrait to Ulysses. In both cases, the attack upon faith opens with a questioning of the validity of all religious

1. Ibid., p. 92.
experience as something unreal and devoid of authority, followed in Stephen's case by a spiritual relapse into an emotional hedonism. This was followed by a more direct attack upon the reason the intellectual doubt and desire for proof from which there was no refuge save by plunging into the one thing standing sure, the world of sense. For this intellectual betrayal Stephen was already prepared by his imaginative dissolution, and by the end of the Portrait, he had succumbed to this second temptation. Out of these previous treacheries emerged the last and worst rejection, the rejection of all reality, the dissolution of the solid-seeming physical universe into the merest phantasmagoria of illusion'.

'In the priest's story this is described as the insurgence from its last and most secret lair, a voice crying to him that even the world of sense is an illusion, a whirling of shadows in the void beneath which the only reality is some horror of loathing,' the experience of a Renan in the Dialogues Philosophiques that the world "N'est que le cauchemar d'un Dieu ivrogne."

"I understood", said Father Girdlestone, "at this moment as never before, how that process consummates itself. It begins, as mine did, with the carrying of the inner life by storm. That may come about by deliberate acquiescence in sin—I should suppose that it always does in some degree. Then the intellect is attacked—it may only be in one point—a "delusion" it is called; and with many persons regarded only as eccentric the

1. Ibid., p.73.
2. Ibid., p.95.
3. Ernest Renan, Dialogues Philosophiques, (Paris:1923), Préface, p.IX.
process goes no further. But when the triumph is complete, the world of sense too is lost—and the man raves. I knew at that time for absolute fact that this is the process. The "delusions" of the mad are not non-existent—they are glimpses, horrible or foul or fantastic, of that strange world that we take so quietly for granted, that at this moment and at every moment is perpetually about us—foaming out its waters in lust or violence or mad irresponsible blasphemy against the Most High.¹

More, in the last volume of essays he ever wrote, had returned to the master-theme that had absorbed him in the opening volumes of the Shelburne Essays, the vertiginous madness of the man who, having confused illusion and sagacity, awakens from his false dreams to find before him the nightmare of the abyss.

The votaries of Joyce and Proust who, reacting against the mechanical determinism of the Realist, begin to think for themselves, find thought acting as a dissolvent on the solid-seeming fabric of life, until the only certainty left is the permanent thing discoverable principle of uncertainty and the only law is the law of impermanence.² Such apprehensions can be conveyed only through the medium of symbolism, whereby all too frequently the imagination becomes the servant of the flesh or merely evaporates into the so-called stream of consciousness. But to maintain the ultimate detachment of nature before the horror of the

¹ More, New Shelburne Essays III, p. 95.
² Ibid., p. 48.
³ Ibid., pp. 54-55.
void is more than the self- liberated soul can do, and so frequently, as in Proust, there is a vacillation from Symbolism to Realism, from an awareness of the Protean flux of human consciousness to an awareness of the outwardly tangible phenomena of life in society. The one thing supposed to lend order and coherence to human impressions is memory, in the Bergsonian sense, but even memory can in itself act as a solvent so that there is no great difference between the memory of reality and the memory of a dream. Illusion is the underground of both the sentimental and the naturalistic pictures of life in *A la Recherche d'un Temps Perdu*. The word 'nothingness' recurs over and over again like a warning signal throughout the whole work: all is vanity both in the various classes of society whom Proust seeks to depict realistically, and in the consciousness of the artist who seeks to recreate them imaginatively through the fragmentary media of his memory. And he transmits this sense of nothingness to the reader who 'has come, like Dante in his infernal journey, to the brink of the dolorous Valley, so obscure and profound and nebulous, that gazing downwards the eye discovers no resting place; he has reached the limbo of nature where the inhabitants, cut off even from the realm of hell, know only "Che senza speme vivemogli disio".  

Both literature and life in their movement away from the Ideal realm of Being, and the intermediate plane of human reason, have sunk into the morbid and sullen realm of Not-Being, of that mysterious Necess...
ity which still resists the imposition of creative form. 'Humanity as portrayed in Proust's imagination is without joy, without peace, without outlook of any sort; his people have no occupation save to think about themselves, and in le néant beyond the phantasmagoria of unsatisfied and forever insatiable desires the only reality for them is the grinning figure of Fear.'

Having repudiated any ethical interpretation of life, Proust, seeking to find reality through and exploration of the psychology of love, can only descend through the superimposed layers of sentiment down to the basic fact of animal desire, which he finds in its most naked and primeval form in the lust of the invert, seen as "as nearest to the "fact of pure physical pleasure uncontaminated by sentiment." The end of the non-humanist way of the creative imagination is on the rock-bottom of nature, envisaged by one of the outstanding novelists of his generation as the sadism, or masochism, of the sexual pervert. More is not alone in his recognition of Proust's novel as the ultimate expression of modern nihilism. A critic as opposed to More himself as Edmund Wilson sees in A la Recherche d'un Temps Perdu the furthest outpost of the symbolist movement as a reaction against Nineteenth Century naturalism. Its sin is the "medieval sin of accidia, that combination of slothfulness and gloom which Dante represented as an eternal submergence in mud." But to More, symbolism is far from a revolt from Nineteenth Century naturalism. 'It is a revolt from the realistic way of naturalism

1. Ibid., p. 56
2. Ibid., pp. 62-63.
merely to another way of the same broad movement'. Unable to create any reality of its own, or to escape the narrow limits that circumscribe both ways of the imagination, symbolism ends by a reversion to the grossest reality. 'These "airy imaginings of metaphor and simile are really no more than vapours floating up from the abyss of the subconscious where nature lies embedded in the double slime of hysterical sadism and hysterical masochism. The vapours melt away in the infinite void, and we have left only "nature!"'

More's essay has been rigorously criticised for its failure to take into account sufficiently the moral indignation of Proust as he exposes the deep corruption of all classes of French society. But before a man can be justifiably indignant, he needs must have standards of reference, and these imply some point of repair beyond the reach of illusion, whereas in Proust's novel, everything, including the hero himself, partakes of the phantom nature of the flux. Yet again More is back with his favourite idea of the contrast of true and false illusion, false disillusion and the true disillusion which is wisdom itself. Around the purely 'humanistic' essays with their specific stress on 'the inner check' and 'law for man and law for thing', there is a framework of essays of a more mystical and philosophising tone— in which illusion manifests itself as the tempter which allures man from coming to terms with his universe as it actually is. In the last analysis, the inner check, unless it has an objective

1. Ibid., p. 67.
co-relative in some eternal and omnipotent will is in danger of being itself caught up in the illusion. By the end of his life, More comes to the point where he sees despair is the end, not only of the false disillusion which comes upon the illusion of romanticism, but of the true disillusion of humanism unless it is consummated in the faith which is its affirmative counterpart. The humanist chain leading up to happiness may be perfected link by link, but ultimately it seems attached to nothing. And so More asks himself 'reluctantly, almost wishing my answer were mistaken', whether those who advocate a self-sufficient humanism, are not doomed to disappointment. Its direction is right, if we are to escape from the waste land of naturalism; but it does not go far enough. Is there not need of a happiness based on something beyond the swaying tides of mortal success and failure? Will not the humanist, unless he adds to his creed the faith and the hope of religion, find himself at the last despite his protests, dragged back into the camp of the naturalists? If we perish like beasts, shall we not live like beasts?'

In 1936, More had arrived for himself at the answer to his rhetorical questions, but to understand how he ultimately came to his solution is to pass outside the immediate bounds of literary criticism, to explore those springs of thought and conduct which must in the last resort supply the imaginative writer with his inspiration, and which More came to see increasingly draw their vitality from a faith in powers beyond man.

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Chaos: The Confusion of Twentieth Century Naturalism.

'Beneath the surface of what we see and feel, beneath the very act of seeing and feeling, lies the unredeemed chaos of desires and impressions, unlimited, unmeaning, unfathomable, incalculable, formless, dark.'

In his essay on James Joyce, More answers T.S. Eliot's contention that the bitter obscenity of Ulysses betrays the tortured conviction of sin of an erring orthodoxy by equating such art, not with a perversion of anything as clear-cut as doctrine, but with 'the ultimate principle of evil invoked as the very enemy of truth and reinforced by the judgment of philosophy and theology' — 'What is this exploitation of the subconscious but an attempt to reduce the world and the life of man back to the abysmal chaos out of which, as Plato taught, God created the actual cosmos by the imposition of law and reason upon the primaeval stuff of chance and disorder.' Joyce's work is but the logical conclusion of the whole trend of Naturalism, as it appears to Paul Elmer More — the denial of the One and the Many in favour, on the one hand, of an arid mechanical determinism, and on the other, of the vertiginous eddy of the flux. In his own day, the second alternative had, with the exploitation of the subconscious, usurped pride of place over its rival, and so More was faced with

the task of plumbing the depths of the contemporary Chaos in
the hope of imposing upon its multitudinousness some semblance
of order and design.

Through his former absorption in Romantic philosophy,
especially of the German school, with its emphasis upon the desires
of the individual and their identification with the life of nature
around him, and similarly, through his interest in the scientific
thought of the Darwin- Huxley school, More's early intellectual
career had been spent in a world of opinions dominated by a sense
of the phenomenal. Although outwardly the two phases, romantic
and scientific, seemed opposed, as More himself had been only
too well aware, he had come to see that they were but two facets
of one all-embracing error, the attempt to force man's conception
of himself and of his universe into a monistic mould by regarding
man himself as an extension of nature. In order to counteract the
prevailing mood of introspection and reverie, melancholy or self-assertive according to the temperament of the individual,
More set out to draw attention through the medium of his literary
criticism to the various forces at work in contemporary society
undermining the harmony and self-reliance of human personality in
favour of a vague pantheistic drifting with the cosmic tide.

What he saw as he looked out upon the world of his day
was man painfully aware of his own isolation from his fellows, as
well as of his utter solitude in the face of nature. Especially

1. Cf. p. 3.
2. More, Shelburne Essays VII, p. 251; cf. Babbitt, Rousseau and
and Romanticism, p. 179.
was this so in a New England where, from a conscience once

gripped by a terrible sense of individual responsibility before

God, belief in the supernatural had dropped out, leaving a deep

and incommunicable dread of some unknown curse brooding over the

soul and dividing the guilty man from his fellows. But not only

was man divided from his fellows and from nature; he was divided

against himself by two sets of contending desires within his own

nature. He might well have said of himself, as Matthew Arnold

said more specifically of the poet;

'Two desires toss about

The poet's fevered blood;

One leads to the world without

And one to solitude!'

Man was torn between his desire for movement, variety, activity,

and his desire for stability and silence. The constant antithesis

between these two unreconciled impulses runs through the Shelburne

3 Essays, as we have seen, as a unifying motive, and from the indivi-
dual author's awareness of this tension comes the quality of his

peculiar vision of life.

The type of imagination which is aware only of an

inchoate eddy of phenomena, or of a rigid and mechanical 'block-

universe', More describes as the 'quantitative' imagination. This

is primarily 'scientific', as opposed to the 'qualitative' or

'ethical' imagination which is religious in its apprehension of

life. Its concern is with the quantitative extremes of chance and

3. Cf. p. 221.
4. Cf. pp. 113 ff., 67,
individualism which seem at first glance to control the momentary meetings and separations of men and things. It may seek to impose order upon, or to seek law within, the flux of primaeval matter, as Newton did, but whenever the thinker enters in upon himself, to reflect upon the dominance of nature, whether it be in the direction of ungoverned chance or of inevitable regularity, he betrays a feeling of deep disquietude. Lucretius' melancholy outcry,

'O miserar hominum mentes, o pectora caeca',
or the anxious awe of Herbert Spencer, contemplating 'the unsoundable gulfs of space through which the law of irresponsible evolution has extended its sway' are but two examples of man's uneasiness before a universe upon which his intellect would seek to impose an order of its own comprehending. 'These', More adds significantly, 'are the nostalgia of impersonal sciences; as though to imply, how much more heart-rending would be the agony of the poet, the artist, the man of letters in the presence of the cosmic maelstrom unless he had some permanent point of repair.

Man's error right down the ages has been to assume from the mutability of the natural world around him, and the presence within him of shifting passions and desires that the whole world must therefore be in flux and that there is nothing stable under the sun; or else, observing a certain rhythm and

and regularity in nature, he has run to the opposite conclusion envisaging the world as static and unchangeable. These two antinomies are to be found in Greek philosophy; to the Epicureans, the whole universe was a whirling dance of atoms, whilst to the Stoics, the mechanism of the world was for ever fixed and unvarying. In the past, however, both explanations of life have remained purely hypothetical, but with the growth of positive science, a new importance was attached to man's conjectures by the possibility of testing their validity by experiment. Moreover, as we have previously seen, the intrusion of belief in progress through the centuries tended to betray man into the assumption that every subsequent scientific discovery must necessarily lead to a fuller knowledge of a truth which was ultimately to be revealed to man. As a result, a scientist's conjecture rarely remained on the plane of pure, or positive, science; it acquired the status of a metaphysical hypothesis, and from that became, not infrequently, the basis of a whole philosophy of life.

With positive science, which he defines in 'Definitions of Dualism' as primarily 'the systematic accumulation of accurate knowledge', and, secondarily, 'the endeavour to express the conditioned knowledge of the senses in the abstract conception of the faculties', More has every sympathy. But over against the researches of positive science, he sets

the assertions of metaphysical science. To him, every attempt to rationalise our perceptions, whether it be theological, philosophical or scientific, runs the risk of making unwarranted assumptions, and thereby of becoming yet another example of the *intellectus sibi permissus*. The main danger of metaphysics of every kind is that it fosters in man the pride of intellect, in contrast to the mental humility in which the true sceptic is prepared to abide, testifying only to those truths of which he has an immediate perception, but refusing to interpret them or assemble them into a system which he seeks to impose upon other men.

In the development of scientific thought More discovers three stages. In his essay on Huxley, he defines the first, positive science, as the observation and classification of facts, 'the discovery of constant sequences in phenomena which can be expressed in mathematical formulae or general laws'. This, More holds to be an 'honourable and profitable study', 'bringing a vision of order out of disorder, system out of chaos, law out of chance'. Then comes the warning: 'It must be remembered that a law of science, however wide its scope, does not go beyond a statement of the relation of observed facts, and tells us not a word of what lies behind this relationship or of the cause of these facts'.

5. Ibid., p. 195.
Men in general are irritated by this limitation and seek to go beyond a mere statement of the law to a theory of the reality underlying it. This gives rise to 'hypothetical' science, an ambiguous term which More seeks to examine more closely. Either it may mean an attempt to express in language borrowed from sensuous experience the nature of a cause or reality transcending such experience, or it may be taken to signify merely a scientific law belonging to the realm of positive science, but needing still to be established. For the second, the term 'science conjecture' would be more precise. It is, however, the first which constitutes the real temptation to the man of science, for it may easily betray him in turn to the insatiable desire in the human heart to erect the conclusions of his own peculiar hypothesis into an absolute philosophy of life.

Although these phases were present in the rudimentary scientific thought of earlier periods, the menace of science crossed with rationalism only became active with the Sixteenth Century. The Pre-Copernican universe, capricious, but conveniently small and intimate, had at least afforded a home for man's imagination, and beyond its bounds, a heaven for his ultimate destination. The new science of necessity, involving a complete break with the past, limited man's imaginative life.

1. Ibid., loc. cit.
2. Ibid., p. 200.
by confining it within a strictly regulated system; and deism, which, during the late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, came increasingly to be the religious parallel to the rationalising strain in scientific and philosophical thought, reduced his spiritual experience to a cold impersonal acquiescence in the order of the universe. It is not surprising therefore that, from the middle of the Seventeenth Century, many men of deeper insight should find themselves in revolt against the threatened tyranny, either by openly denying its dictates or by ostensibly accepting them whilst twisting them to other conclusions. 'If the spirit were to maintain its liberty against the encroachments of a fatalism which would reduce the circle of a man's life to a mere wheel spinning for an hour in the vast, unconscious mechanism of the world, it must be by the action of another principle distinct from and unmoved by the laws of physical energy. Bacon, and more definitely Descartes, had indeed granted this immaterial law, but quae supra nos nihil ad nos; they were pleased to leave it in the sphere of the lofty inane, with no hold upon the heart and actions of men, with no answer to the cry of the bewildered conscience, with no root in human experience—an empty figment of the reason or a sop to quiet the barkings of the Church'.

Pascal, Bunyan, Henry More, Sir Thomas Browne, all

3. Ibid., pp.166-67.
sought in their own day to do what More was seeking to do in his, reassert in different ways the existence of a spiritual realm of which science took all too little account, and to stir up in the 'new men' of science and reason the realisation 'that these solid-seeming phenomena are but the shadow, too often distorted and misleading, of the greater reality which resides within the observer himself and obeys its own law'.

But with the subsequent domination of the worlds of science and philosophy by the genius of Newton and Locke, it became increasingly difficult for the individual thinker to question the apparently all-pervasive sway of natural law. Even such writers as Mandeville and Bolingbroke, who warned their fellow-men against the conflicting eccentricities of the scientists, nevertheless, became themselves entangled in a web of assumptions influenced by the very hypotheses they repudiated. Against this deterministic philosophy the main protest came from Berkeley who, when little more than a boy, had made in his Commonplace Book two entries which were to be the foundation of his future philosophy: 'We cannot possibly conceive any active power but the will' and 'Nothing properly but persons, i.e. conscious things, do exist. All other things are not so much existences as manners of the existence of persons'. But his solution of the antinomy existing between the inner and outer worlds was to result in a breaking-down of distinctions which did more than any other factor to

1. Ibid., pp. 167-68.
3. Ibid., p 220.
bring about the romantic naturalism which, even before Rousseau, was colouring the thought of the late Eighteenth Century, in contrast to the scientific and deterministic naturalism of the earlier Eighteenth Century. 'By dissolving the outer world into personality, and by depriving phenomena of their objective material reality, his logic did more than any other writing of the day to break down the distinction between the law of man and the law of things. In his attempt to spiritualise nature, he was really preparing the way for the conversion of naturalism into a bastard form of spirituality.'

Berkeley's subjective idealism was, however, but one hypothesis among many, strangely fecund in the realm of philosophy and literature, but seemingly impotent to shake the outwardly impregnable rule of law and mechanism in the physical universe, where every new discovery seemed to confirm the existence of a changeless and inexorable sequence of cause and effect. The influence which was ultimately to undermine man's faith in the absolute regularity and inflexibility of natural law came from, apparently, the most unlikely and paradoxical of directions. In 1859 was published Darwin's Origin of Species, giving to evolution, which had previously been a mere conjecture, an importance co-equal with that of the law of gravitation, and dealing, so it seemed, the coup de grace to

1. Ibid., p.221.
all pretensions to belief in a supernatural governance of the universe. 'The new law left no place for a power existing outside of nature and controlling the world as a lower order of existence, nor did it recognise a higher and a lower principle within nature itself, but in the mere blind force of variation, in the very unruliness to design or government, found the very source of order and development.'

Here already was the seed of a new attitude to science which, within the century, was to disrupt the former servile obeisance of scientists before the shrine of natural law, although in his own day Darwin was still regarded as the chief advocate of a causo-mechanical explanation of life which dismissed on positivist evidence any grounds for a teleological explanation of life. It was this double role of both defender and saboteur of the position of natural law which made Thomas Huxley, one of Darwin's most enthusiastic supporters, one of the chief culprits in the confusion of positive, hypothetical and philosophical science, as far as More could read the lesson of the times. In an attempt to confine himself to the evidence produced by pure science, he held the only possible attitude for the scientist to adopt towards religious matters was an admission of his own inability to pass judgment. This condition of mind he called agnosticism; it was in essence

1. Ibid., p. 248.
neither dogmatical nor sceptical; it simply refrained examined the evidence and refrained from all interpretation. But as practised by Huxley in his mêlées with his opponents, agnosticism was sufficiently elastic to allow for truculent dogmatism when the errors of his enemies were to be exposed, and for elusive scepticism when the enemy retaliated. When faced with the logical conclusions of a rigid application of scientific law, he took refuge in a sceptical limitation of the term 'law' to a mere formulation of objective experience in a world ultimately moved by forces beyond man's perception. But when he himself charged against those who escaped into a region beyond scientific law, he then made it a principle of his attack 'that the fundamental axiom of scientific law is that there is not, never has been, and never will be any disorder in nature'.

'In moments of attack', comments More, 'he virtually, if not literally, takes law in the sense of an active thing,' an implication which 'in his moments of defence he vigorously repudiates'. Similarly, when on the offensive, he does not hesitate to include the spiritual realm within the province of the operation of scientific law, but when hard pressed by his opponents, he refuses to accept the logical consequences of his necessitarianism. "Fact, I know, Law I know; but what is Necessity save an empty shadow of my own mind's throwing?"

3. Ibid., passim, p. 214.
4. Ibid., p. 215.
Thus he takes refuge, which is, to More, the 'last sophistry of scientific minds', the denial of any distinction between materialistic and spiritualistic conceptions. Huxley's error is therefore fundamentally that with which the whole of modern thought is riddled, the failure to distinguish between law for man and law for thing; and, as a result, the false extension of the procedure of science into the philosophy of naturalism. 'Absolute regularity is the sine qua non of scientific law, and the moment any element of incalculable spontaneity is admitted into the system, that moment the possibility of scientific law is so far excluded; there is no science of the soul unless man, as Taine says, is no more than "a very simple mechanism which analysts can take to pieces like clock-work". But the whole body of evidence accumulated over thousands of years points to the fact that the whole world of man's inner life is outside the block universe of mechanical determinism. The validity of this evidence may be repudiated by the man of science, but at least he must be consistent, and not himself intrude into a region whose very existence he questions. Yet because of Darwin's authority in the world of positive science, his evolutionary hypothesis became the determining influence in realms as distinct from positive science as education, administration, ethics and religion.

1. Ibid., p. 216.
2. Ibid., 217.
The ferocity of the battle waged around the rival issues of evolution and revelation lent to Darwinism an importance even greater than that intrinsic in the revolutionary nature of its own hypothesis, and for the most part, men were either dazzled into acquiescence by the boldness and originality of its disclosures, or else provoked into an attitude of passionate resistance, as in the case of Gladstone. Many, after the novelty had begun to pall and the new emancipation from religious dogma was seen to be only another form of spiritual bondage, grew weary and frustrated, a mood reflected in the readiness of the English people to welcome any means of mental escape, as, for example, into the unreal atmosphere of Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*. Few had the insight shown by Disraeli in recognising the limitations of the new science, particularly in its repercussions on philosophy and sociology. The majority of men were left with a sense of profound bewilderment; they were adrift in an unknown sea, and their well-tried compass of religious faith had suddenly been snatched away from them without anything positive being given in its place. This, in the last analysis, was the tragedy of Newman and Tennyson, Henry Sidgwick and Henry Adams, as well as of others whom More studies in essays which reveal, especially at the outset, his keen sympathies with all those whom the intellectual current of the age had forced to repudiate the traditional religion in which they had been

3. Ibid., pp. 73-74; cf. Ibid, p. 178.
5. Ibid., pp. 79-81.
brought up, as he himself had been forced to turn away from the Calvinism of his fathers.

The progress — or regress — of Henry Adams is in many ways an epitome of the history of the century. Made aware by personal tragedy of the a-moral ruthlessness of nature, he passed from stoicism to atheism, and from atheism to a nihilism of his own peculiar stamp. As he had sought in history for evidence of a providential purpose among men, so in science he looked for signs of design and progress in the non-human order of creation; but just as in history he saw evil existing side by side with good, in the universe, he found a lower order of existence continuing beside the higher, and throwing an element of confusion into its progressive mutation. His discovery was in line with that of the scientists of the day, who were coming increasingly to admit a mystery residing in the dark background of inorganic forces where, before, their predecessors had contended that precise and inflexible laws were in operation. "Briefly, chaos is all that science can logically assert of the supersensuous", and Adams himself was faced with "something of the "burden of the mystery" had when this thing called chaos suddenly lurched forward out of the background of mystery and enveloped his little oasis of well-loved order."^2

Even the keenest votaries of Darwin came now to see that, whilst still acknowledging the greatness of his contribution to

2. Ibid., p. 134.
science, they would have to interpret his law of evolution and the theory of the survival of the fittest in such a way that they no longer implied a rigid causa-mechanical explanation of life, but instead admitted the basic confusion of nature eddying beneath the surface regularity of life.

The changing outlook found its chief exponent in the philosopher William James to whom 'nature was no longer an unchangeable order, unwinding itself majestically from the reel of law under the control of deified forces. It is an indefinite congeries of change. Laws are not governmental regulations which limit change, but convenient formulations of selected portions of change followed through a longer or shorter period of time, and then registered in statistical forms that are amenable to mathematical formulation'.

The supreme human factor in comprehending the universe is now no longer the reason, and here More's entire sympathies are with the enemies of rationalism. He had always felt that the Epicureans with their sense of the flux were more likely to be converted to the truth than the Stoics, the antecedents of the modern determinists, who saw only a static and mechanical order. But unfortunately, in repudiating the error of his predecessors, James ran to the opposite extreme. In his assertion that man gets into touch with reality, not through abstract reasoning, but by what he actually feels and wills, James is stating More's own view, but once he begins to deduce from the fact a whole philosophy of relativism.
he and More part company. To know reality, according to James, one must dive back into the flux itself; and from a study of its phenomena he infers that the truth of the world for us is not monistic, as the determinists asserted, but pluralistic; 'reality is an infinite group of inter-acting interpenetrating forces over which no absolute can be found to govern.' Indeed the universe itself may be seen to be panpsychic, made up of various streams of consciousness in constant mutation like the human consciousness. Thus for the monism of earlier philosophers, not he substitutes the dualism upon which More's whole philosophy of life is founded, but a pluralism which is itself ultimately, to More, a metaphysical and rationalistic attempt to account for the existence of the forces of unreason.

In our own century the hypothesis of an ever-changing universe has been extended by the work of Professor Whitehead in the field of physics. To Whitehead, as to William James, More was grateful for a reaction against Huxley and his militant brethren seeking to carry in their pocket a cosmic footrule to measure the universe. With the new philosophy there is restored


Although strictly speaking, the three volumes which form the New Shelburne Essays, published in 1928, 1934 and 1936, respectively, are separated from the eleven previous volumes by a gulf of time involving so radical a change in certain of More's ideas that they can hardly be taken in conjunction with the Shelburne Essays as one unit, nevertheless on the question of natural science, More's attitude varied so little once he freed himself from his youthful infatuation with Darwinism that we may safely consider ideas expressed in The Demon of the Absolute as a continuation of his thought in the essays previously mentioned in connection with science.

to science the power of an imaginative appeal and the sense of mystery which had been completely lost to it by the arid rationalism of previous schools of scientific thought. But More is disappointed to find Whitehead in turn topple over to the opposite extreme when he seeks to mitigate the menace of mechanism by trying to show that it is not mechanism.

'Formerly it was held that the human soul obeys the same laws as a stone; now we are to believe that a stone is the same nature as the soul. In either case we avoid the discomfort of a paradoxical dualism and reduce the world to a monism which may plausibly call itself science, though, as a matter of fact, Mr. Whitehead's theory, if carried out, would simply abolish science'. Whitehead charges his predecessors with failure to take into account certain "stubborn and irreducible facts" in that a human soul is patently something other than a stone, yet he himself runs equally in the teeth of the same "stubborn and irreducible facts" in failing to recognise that a stone is equally patently not a soul. 'Aristotle made the proper and sufficient distinction long ago when he said that a stone obeys laws and a man forms habits: you may throw a stone in the air a thousand times, it will continue to do the same thing, whereas a man learns by experience.'

To More, the merging together of the animate and the inanimate makes a travesty of the inorganic world, but its real

1. Ibid., p.47.
2. Ibid., p.48.
danger was to man. According to Whitehead and his school, 'the organic and the inorganic worlds flow together in an indistinguishable flux, wherein the soul also, dissolved by association into a complex of relationships, loses that central permanence of entity which used to mark the dignity of man'. And in the place of Aristotle's God as Prime Mover, Whitehead exalts a Principle of Concretion which, to More, by the time of The Demon of the Absolute, firmly entrenched in his belief in the need for anthropomorphism to help us in our apprehension of the supernatural, fails by being 'not a person', not 'an entity of any sort', but a mere name for the fact that concrete groups of qualities are everlastingly forming and reforming in the infinite vortex of existence.

The influence of such a philosophy is the greater because as has been already suggested, science and the creative imagination have in this century been once more reconciled and are moving together in the same direction. From the Renaissance until recently, the whole trend of physical science had been to establish the supremacy of the discursive reason, whilst the imagination, sharply divorced from it since the Eighteenth Century at least, had sought its sustenance from intuition. So strong indeed had been the domination of reason at that time that it was operative not only in the domain of science, its normal field, but also in the realm of the arts, to the exclusion of the imagination; so that both the

1. Ibid., pp. 49-50.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 43.
3. Ibid., 50.
literature and the visual arts of the Eighteenth Century reflected the same concern with law and design as pertained to the realm of nature. But with the revolt against the tyranny of law, which More is careful to designate 'pseudo-classicism' so as to distinguish it from the inner freedom of true classicism, there came an increasing emphasis upon pure instinct and unrestrained emotion such as one finds in the poetry of Blake, and the depreciation of reason as 'the false secondary power that multiplies distinctions'. Experience, however, found it impossible to preserve so radical a break between imagination and reason, between the worlds of science and of philosophy and the arts. The tendency of science, since Darwin's day has been, as we have seen, so to modify the evolutionary hypothesis as to bring it into harmony with the spontaneous part of human nature, thereby widening the distance between positive and philosophical science, whilst tending to merge together philosophical science and romanticism, as in the thought of Bergson and William James.

Man, aware of both order and disorder in the universe, yet held by the evolutionary hypothesis, was no longer able to allow for any principle of control outside of man. He came to conceive of the world as an entity containing within itself some force of vitalism, the \textit{élan vital}, which by its inherent limitation, was at once the source of constant creation and expansion, making the sum of things greater and more orderly. Such a

hypothesis seemed to get over the question of scientific law, whilst avoiding too the paradox of dualism, and offering an easy step to the modern scientific philosophy of human progress as self-causative. Moreover the concern of science with the vortex of change underlying the superficial order of the universe found a parallel in the new interest of psychology in the subliminal regions of man's mind from which rise promptings and memories which break into the even tenour of his normal conduct with wild and disconnected suggestions. Pragmatism, the philosophy of the flux, had its roots, on the one hand, in the revelation of psychology about the human consciousness, as well as in the disclosures of physics on the other, dissolving the outwardly solid fabric of the universe into a danse macabre of neutrons and electrons. Reality no longer resides in the visible and concrete; as a result, the artist has to descend into the subliminal regions of consciousness to find the truth which eludes him on the surface of appearances.

As in an earlier phase of naturalism, the Realists had repudiated the will of man, controlled by reason, as the determining factor in behaviour, and had instead envisaged man as the product of a number of inter-acting biological and sociological circumstances, so Sur-realism envisaged him as the plaything of certain mysterious and capricious urges in the dark netherworld of the subconscious, defying the ingenuity of man's most deliberate planning and resisting every attempt to impose upon them the restaint of a formal order.

1. Ibid., pp. 224-25.
2. Ibid., p. 55.
3. Ibid., p. 15-16.
The effect of modern science upon literature does not, however, end with the disillusion of creative writers. The attitude of the scientist to the phenomena he studies has influenced in no small measure the prevailing attitude of the critic of art and literature in substituting for a fixed standard of taste the pure impressionism of individual judgment. Nor are the effects of naturalism confined to the realm of science, on the one hand, and of the arts, on the other. Its influence has permeated every branch of contemporary thought. The hypothesis of a self-creating universe, based on limitless resources, is reflected in the *laissez faire* attitude of the 'man in the street', 'a belief that as the physical world had unrolled itself by its own expansive forces, so human society progresses by some universal instinct, needing no rational and selective guidance, no imposition of moral restraint, no conscious insight'. At the root of this attitude, More detects the confusion arising from the merging of the animate and the inanimate, so that it seems man has only to let himself go, follow his natural penchant, in order to evolve in accordance with the *élan vital* within.  

Were this evolutionary phase the whole story of naturalism, however, it might be difficult to explain its current manifestations in socialism, pacifism, self- or free discipline in education, reformatory schemes in criminology, all of which More traces to a common root.

The logical outcome of a scientific naturalism based on the law of the survival of the fittest, however it might be adapted to fit in with the later scientific developments, would seem to be the Nietzschean Superman, not the sentimental optimism betrayed in contemporary schemes for social amelioration. But Nietzscheism is the outcome of only one aspect of naturalism. In opposition to it may be set the motivating power behind romantic naturalism, sympathy, in contrast to the classical mainspring of right conduct, justice, with which More's personal quest for the good life was so intimately bound up. That he returned so frequently to the subject of emotionalism as the motive of contemporary conduct suggests his vital concern with it as the chief enemy of justice, in the classical sense, the aim of which was to curb those very expansive tendencies which 'sympathy' sought to encourage. 'The whole effect of calling sympathy justice and putting it in the place of judgment is to relax the fibre of character and nourish the passions at the expense of reason and the will!' There is', he writes in his 'Definitions of Dualism', a common delusion that civic virtue can be produced by instinctive sympathy and does not need the painful restraint of the inner or outer check. Now this sympathy is that supposed law of personality by which we invariably feel the pleasure of others as our pleasure and the pain of

5. I.E. of man's own higher self, or of governmental control.
others as our pain; and which, consequently, would always lead us, if free to follow our instincts, so to act as to affect others with pleasure. But by the very nature of the personality such a law cannot exist. The feeling of pleasure and pain is the sense of the increase or diminution of our life. In so far as the pleasure of another may result in activities beneficial to ourselves or creates the expectation of similar in and thus enlarges our sense of life, it pleasures ourselves, may awake sympathetic pleasure in us. And pain in another by a corresponding process may awaken sympathetic pain in us. But, on the contrary, the pleasure of another is equally capable of awakening an antipathetic pain in us, when it means an activity in the other that is detrimental to us and diminishes our sense of life; and the pain of another may awaken an antipathetic pleasure in us. The notion of this instinctive sympathy as a power in itself capable of taking the place of the inner or outer check is an error of romanticism which forgets that personal feelings belong to the flux, and tend to a variety and difference. As it slurs over the distinctions among men in the abstract conception of humanity, it is called humanitarianism.


The peculiar danger of modern sentimentalism is in its fusion with the evolutionary mood of *laisser faire*; it seemed that man had only to allow himself to be carried forward towards that 'one far-off divine event'?

To which the whole creation moves'.
and he would of necessity evolve towards an ultimate perfection. The two elements together coloured the thought of many of the early Romantic writers and determined their schemes for the regeneration of mankind with little or no effort on the part of individuals to reform themselves. To the scientific facts of progress and evolution More made no objection, but when these were made the basis for a philosophy of life, he felt constrained to point out the inevitable outcome of what he called 'a faith in drifting; a belief that things of themselves, by a kind of natural gravity of goodness in them, move always on and on in the right direction.' In 'The New Morality' he underlined the disastrous consequences of an indiscriminate social sympathy crossed with a belief in automatic progress. To the current humanitarian schemes of would-be reformers More attributed the increasing incidence of crime and suicide. That the first onset of sentimental naturalism on a large scale preceded by only a short period the bloodshed of the Napoleonic Wars was no accident. (Babbitt, it will be remembered, had similarly pointed out that the nightmare of The Terror burst upon a France indulging in dreams of a universal brotherhood.) The effect of a humanitarianism which relieved the individual of the responsibility of controlling his natural self-love by seeking to persuade him that his strongest impulse was one of altruism was invariably

2. Ibid., p. IX.
4. More, Shelburne Essays IX, p. IX.
to provoke conflict and ultimately bloodshed; and from this point of view, More saw the epidemic of sentimental 'isms', humanitarianism, feminism, socialism, equalitarianism, pacifism— as symptomatic of that spirit of indulgent laissez-faire which had made possible the horrors of the 1914-1918 War.

Almost invariably too, the effect of universal sympathy with mankind in the mass has been to render the potential philanthropist insensitive to the sufferings of individual men and women. One remembers Chesterton's comment on Thoreau that it would have been better had he loved greens less and green-grocers more. Similarly Paul Elmer More recalled William Morris' complaint to Rossetti that while the latter would do anything to help an individual in distress, he could not bring himself to take an interest in the evils of the masses; Rossetti, on the other hand, had noticed that while Morris waxed enthusiastic about socialistic schemes for the betterment of mankind in the abstract, he would not give a penny to relieve the needs of a poor beggar they might meet. In this respect, to More, Morris was at one with professional reformers in all ages.

A theoretical and abstract conception of sympathy growing out of an abstract conception of human rights had replaced the personal and concrete bond of sympathy with individual men and women which should be the bond of a healthy and well-knit society founded on the practical experience of history; and it was this abstract theory of human rights which gave the

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid., Loc. Cit.
impetus to modern socialism. From its over-optimistic and unreal view of human nature came Socialism's mistaken conception of liberty and equality. More maintains consistently throughout his work that men are not equal, although it is in the last volume of the New Shelburne Essays that he gives his attitude more explicitly. Men can be divided into three main groups, as the Communist knows as well as the Monarchist or Fascist. There are those who must be controlled by fear or by blind obedience, there are those who are the natural leaders of men, whether classes or individuals, and between these is an intermediary class which submits voluntarily to direction, and upon whose allegiance to principles embodied in the actual government the stability of the state depends. Social justice and harmony depend on each of these groups accepting its right relationship to the others, for in society, as in individual life, happiness comes not from unpitying strength or envious striving after equality, but from that order which exists only where each subordinate part occupies its own distinct place and is recognised and rewarded accordingly. Democracy, on the other hand, is the rule of the masses, resulting in a complete break-down of all necessary distinctions. This was the problem Plato was confronting as he tried to imagine his ideal Republic, and to him, as to More, an excess of liberty, whether in states or in individuals, seemed only to pass into an excess of slavery.

3. Ibid., p. 5.
and so tyranny naturally arises out of democracy, and the most aggravated form of tyranny and slavery out of the most extreme form of liberty. True liberty, on the contrary, depends on the full recognition of the distinctions inherent in a 'hierarchical' conception of society, in contrast to the 'mechanical' conception of a society depending on a Social Contract and emphasizing the natural equality of all men. 'Our most precious heritage of liberty depends on the safeguarding of that realm of the individual against the encroachments of a legal equalitarianism. For there is nothing surer than that liberty of the spirit, if I may use that dubious word, is bound up with the inequality of men in their natural relations; and every movement in history to deny the inequalities of nature has been attended, and by a fatal necessity always will be attended, with an effort to crush the liberty of distinction in the ideal sphere'.

The mainspring of socialism and its gospel of equality has been less altruism than a restless, striving personal discontent—pleonexia, or that insatiable greed which the Ancients as well as the root of all human actions. In William Morris, his preaching such a Gospel of Discontent was of a piece with his general impatience at the restraints of order, and the same mood of discontent is at the root of the Socialism of G. Lowes Dickinson, as More seeks to analyze it. It seems remarkable to

1. Ibid., pp. 7-8.
2. Ibid., p. 142.
5. Ibid., p. 172-73.
him, however, that a man of Lowes Dickinson's education and insight should not see that by espousing socialism, he is embracing the cause of the very conditions against which he is reacting. The frustration of the man of culture arises, not from the slowness of industrial and social evolution, but from the denial of certain basic truths which to him are indispensable to a healthy society, and which, under socialism, are brushed aside even more ruthlessly than under any other form of government. Socialism seeks to estimate the value of work done in terms of labour expended and thereby fails to recognize adequately the contribution of the non-manual worker whose effort cannot be measured in terms of labour-value. The old aristocratic ideal of work performed easily and graciously cannot survive in an order of society where intangible work, as in the arts or in politics, is no longer held in honour. The conception of the liberal and noble has yielded to the utilitarian, and as a result, art and literature are bound to suffer, as the only criterion for judging their value is a standard of taste no longer respected.

The tragedy of modern society arises from the fact that treachery threatens not from outside, but from within the ranks of the intellectuals, themselves ridden with the cant of humanitarianism. It is those who have nothing to

1. Ibid., p. 178.
2. Ibid., pp. 177-79.
3. Ibid., pp. 180-81.
gain and all to lose if a false idea of equalitarianism gains ground who are, nevertheless, themselves advocating a gospel of socialism, just as Babbitt pointed out that it was the philanthropic members of the aristocracy who fostered the democratic spirit in pre-Revolutionary France, thereby putting in the hands of the people an instrument which was to be used against the nobility itself. Similarly, the strength of modern socialism comes in no small measure from the 'sentimental adherence of dilettante reformers'—again victims of the spell of 'laisser faire'. The phrase 'laisser faire' has therefore, for More, under the stress of twentieth Century Pragmatism taken on an almost antithetical meaning from that generally given it in the preceding century. Instead of suggesting to More the preservation of the existing order, an inert acquiescence in stability often at the cost of justice, the phrase has now come to mean an aimless drifting with the tide of change which sweeps men and nature onward in a mere instinctive striving after new forms of life. Its appeal is to the restlessness and discontent in man whereby he manifests his affinity to the flux of nature. Whereas the conservative accepts change only reluctantly when it becomes inevitable, the socialist, like his earlier prototype, the liberal, is anxious to try anything new, believing that all change is necessarily progress. It follows to More that, whereas

1. Ibid., pp. 31-32.
the conservative's attitude to the past is one of respect and willing­ness to profit by its example and the corporate experience of the ages, the socialist, or liberal's, mood is one of indifference or even disdain towards the past. Humanitarian literature is characterised by the sense of complete emancipation from tradition, the sense that with the French Revolution a new phase of human consciousness had begun. Much of the confusion prevailing in many contemporary fields of thought is due to man's ignorance of the 'best that has been thought and said in the past. As a result we have no historical criteria whereby to discriminate between the fluctuating currents of the day. It is ironical that in a period when psychology has dis­ closed the importance of the race-memory with its far-reaching consequences for the whole of life, contemporary naturalism has brought about a state where the conscious race-memory, the spiritual and intellectual resources of the various generations incorporated in a common heritage of culture, should be no longer held in respect. Even such philosophers as Bergson and William James who, more than anyone else, have shown how our conscious­ ness carries within it an active faculty of memory, uniting past to present experience, are nevertheless infected with the 'illus­ ion of the present' when face to face with the lessons of history.

1. Ibid. p. 205.
'Sometimes', writes More, 'as I consider with myself how this illusion daily more and more enthrals and impoverishes our mental life by cutting off from it all the rich experience of the past, it is as though we were at sea in a vessel, while a fog was settling upon the water, gradually as it thickened, circle closing in upon our vision with ever narrowing circle, blotting out the far-flashing lights of the horizon and the depths of the sky, throwing a pall upon the very waves about us, until we move forward through a sullen obscurity, unaware of any other traveller upon that sea, save when through the fog the sound of a threatening alarm beats upon the ear.'

Modern man moves about in gross ignorance of the lesson of history. Tantamount to his ignorance, however is his conceit, his unwillingness to learn from the accumulated wisdom of the centuries. As a result he has no critical standards, for the one thing that an acquaintance with world culture gives is the power to select and discriminate. In this respect the conscious or objective memory which stores up the fruits of tradition differs from the subconscious or subjective memory with which modern psychology is concerned. The latter retains indiscriminately a chaotic welter of past experience, and is apt to throw these up into the region of consciousness without any conscious co-operation on the part of the individual and, as we have seen, in defiance of any principle of control.

The Bergsonian memory is thus a merely passive retention of past sensations. The objective memory, on the other hand, is active and critical, choosing rigorously its materials in order to build up a central fund of wisdom whereby to test the value of subsequent impressions, and to impose upon them the unity of a harmonious and centripetal experience.

This same impressionistic approach to things of the mind and spirit is reflected too in the modern educational system. The fallacy of its theory More traces back to that fountain head of all heresy, Rousseau. 'To make instinct instead of experienced judgment the basis of education, impulse instead of obedience, nature instead of discipline, to foster the emotions as if the uniting bond of mankind were sentiment rather than reason, might seem of itself so monstrous a perversion of the truth as to awaken abhorrence in any considerate reader! And yet it is Rousseau's educational theories as found in Émile that have at least modified, if not entirely transformed, educational practice. The results of the change are 'seen at work in the vagaries of the elective system, in the advocating of manual training as an equivalent for books, in the unbounded enthusiasm for nature-study, in the encroachment of science on the character-discipline of the humanities, in the general substitution of persuasion for authority. To some observers certain traits of irresponsibility in the individual

and certain symptoms of disintegration in society are the direct fruit of this teaching! The effects in education of this belated expression of laissez-faire are all too evident: 'a laxity of mind in those who have drifted through our institutions from kindergarten to university, a repugnance for good reading; in a word, that lack of real education which is more and more deplored by instructors in school or college'. That it should be so is hardly to be wondered at when those occupying positions of authority in the political and educational worlds decry the merits of true scholarship in favour of a certain robust camaraderie with men at large. The destiny of education is bound up with the question of social leadership, and unless college—as in the days the religious hierarchy created it was a real power—can once more become 'a breeding place for a natural aristocracy, it will inevitably deteriorate into a school for mechanical apprentices, or a pleasure resort for a jeunesse dorée. The danger that American colleges might become mere technical schools is all the more real when the attitude of such college heads as President Eliot of Harvard is taken into account. His advocating the elective system, as Babbitt pointed out in his Literature and The American College, has had the effect of encouraging students to dissipate their energies over a wide range of subjects instead of directing men to a common centre of culture, which to More is

4. Ibid., loc. cit.
to be found in the discipline of the classics. Many of the subjects chosen under the elective system are purely technical, and have a vocational, not a cultural, value for those who study them. But even in subjects which have a high cultural value, such as English or history, the modern craze for specialisation and high technical efficiency— in other words, the utilitarian desire for tangible and measurable results, influenced to a considerable extent by the aims of German education— has led students to concentrate on those aspects of the subject where pseudo-scientific or positivist methods could best be applied, or else, by the same paradox as we have seen in operation elsewhere, whereby the desire for scientific precision is accompanied by a mood of aesthetic emotionalism, they turned to some other branch of the same subject which they sought to appraise by purely subjective impressionism. Thus in English, present day students vacillate between a 'dull memorising of dates and names,' or of Anglo-Saxon grammar, and 'romantic gush over beautiful passages'. They are divided therefore into specialists in philology or shallow dabblers in literature, but of scholars of a rounded and humane culture there are all too few. The nearest attempt at a synthesis of these two extremes so far has come from those eccentrics who have sought to estimate the comparative merits of poets by a system of statistics or who have invented some machine for measuring the emotional

response to a given piece of literature. Even the arts themselves are thus not immune from the contagion of the technical spirit which, to More, tends to spread confusion and anarchy whenever it invades a province not its own.

The sweeping away from the university curriculum of any core of subjects which all students were expected to take has deprived recent generations of students of a common basis of thought and intercommunication. As a result, educated men everywhere are aware of their isolation from their fellows, a realisation which only intensifies the more general mood of individual isolation which characterises all men, irrespective of their education, in a period of chaos and disintegration. The dissipation of intellectual energy over an unnecessary wide range of subjects has divided men of learning from each other, although their ultimate aims might well have been the same, and so thrown them back on their own inner resources, to their personal discomfort and to the impoverishment of society, which might be transformed by the leaven of a corporate intellectual action on the part a nucleus of truly educated men.

But if education has failed to provide men with a bulwark against the corrosion of sentimental naturalism, religion has failed equally lamentably. Certainly More saw surviving from a period of more virile faith certain values which have delayed in some measure the inevitable disintegration consequent upon

1. More, New Shelburne Es: ays 1, pp. 5-6.
spread of humanitarianism. Equally certainly there existed in orthodox Christianity from its inception certain humanitarian principles, but these were counterbalanced by other ideals which kept them from assuming an undue proportion. With the decline of belief in the divine and the growing confidence of man in his own destiny, there dropped out of the modern consciousness those very elements which had hitherto succeeded in holding extreme humanitarianism in check. By the beginning of the Nineteenth Century, events had conspired to substitute for the omnipotence of God, the divine rights of the individual and the brotherhood of men; and by the end of the century this belief, minus its spirituality, plus a sort of moral impressionism abjuring judgment and appealing only to the emotions, had become the humanitarian religion of the day. In opposition to the belief of orthodox Christianity in the fallen nature of man and his need of redemption, humanitarian religion taught that man had only to allow his natural expansive sympathies free rein in order to bring in the universal brotherhood. Similar heresies had rent the Church long before the birth of Rousseau, notably the teaching of the Irish Pelagius that evil does not pertain to man's whole character, but only to certain acts, and that salvation is within the reach of all who choose to practise righteousness. Nature, as it comes

1. Babbitt, Democracy and Leadership, pp. 284-90
from the hand of the Creator, is essentially good, and a child is born uncorrupted, with natural and ineradicable impulses for good, which can be perverted only by an act of the will deliberately contrary to reason. From Pelagianism, it is but a step to the secular belief in the essential goodness of human nature, but that step could, none the less, be taken only when the notion of man's need of being reconciled to God had been eliminated. Once the supernatural scheme of redemption was shown to be unnecessary, as it appeared to be during the sway of deism and even more, as a result of a philosophy of evolutionary meliorism, a 'Pelagian confidence in man's ability to satisfy God might easily pass into a belief that human nature, being essentially right, had within itself the power to expand indefinitely without any act of renunciation toward some vaguely-glimpsed, far-off "divine event".'

The failure of humanitarianism was due also to a lack of discrimination between the things which belong to God and the things which belong to Caesar. It is this confusion of religious and secular ideals which has brought about the present day danger that religion itself may evaporate into 'a sort of sentimental socialism. 'A vague ideal of equalitarian brotherhood, to be introduced by an equally vague humanitarian sympathy is accepted by many as the modern equivalent to what Christ meant by the Kingdom of God and repentance', wrote More in Series Three of the New Shelburne Essays, and although by this time, his attitude to relig-

2. Ibid., pp.218-19.
ion had undergone a profound change, on the question of modern liberalism in religion he remained unmoved. Although Christian altruism has borne fruit in mitigating much of the hardness of social life, not infrequently love of one's neighbour grows stronger and more clamorous as one's love for God grows vague and unreal; but without the sanction of belief in the Divine Will— and not always with it — sentimental love for one's brother is not sufficient to hold in check natural greed and will to power. To suppose otherwise is the error of modern Pelagianism, pinning its faith in the New Morality as the 'Christian Reconstruction of Modern Life! This, to More, was to substitute for the humility and the responsibility of each individual soul towards God, a sham righteousness, dependent on the existence of virtuous feelings. Such an inverted Phariseeism, for one sermon on man's obligation to God, delivered twenty on man's obligation to his fellow-men. The result is a general lowering of the moral tone, of which all too many symptoms were evident to More in contemporary life:—the sensuality of prevailing music and dancing, 'the tone of plays stirring the country as organs of moral regeneration,' the exaggeration of the element of sex in clothing, all suggested to him a dissolution of the ethical sense which resulted from the substitution of religious emotionalism for the strenuous self-control and renunciation of true religion.

1. Ibid., p. 151.
But above all, contemporary religion has failed in the task of awakening individual men and women to the reality of sin and their need of transformation. Christianity's task is twofold: the salvation of the individual soul and the redemption of society, and because of its failure to accomplish the first, it has only helped to add to the confusion of the second. Whenever the distinction between good and evil has been slurred over, there has resulted a general deterioration in ethical standards, as in the Restoration drama, and this blurring of values has itself usually been the outcome of a loss of belief in a supernatural dogma and in the reality of sin. This was especially true of the Eighteenth Century as a whole, when deism had juggled all sense of man's proneness to sin out of the world, and had substituted for it a naïve optimism that 'all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds'. With Rousseau there arose the tendency to recognise the existence of evil, but to shift the responsibility for it on to the shoulders of society. This readiness to externalise evil and regard the heart of man as itself inherently good persisted, through Shelley, down to the later Romantics, including Emerson and his followers, who dismissed all too summarily the dark dilemma of sin and suffering, and still remains at the root of modern literature where it lies unreconciled with the element of disillusion and despair which belie its facile optimism. This is something very different from

the power of true religion which rests on its realisation of evil; to close one's eyes to the extent and gravity of the problem betokens not a solution of the problem, but some 'deep-lying limitation of spiritual experience'. The great religious geniuses of all ages have been acutely aware of the magnitude of the dilemma, and various faiths have sought to represent it symbolically by clothing it in the concrete garb of mythology. Of these, to More, even before his conversion to Christianity, the most beautiful and the most tragic was the story of Gethsemane and the Cross. But if the picture of the Atonement portrayed the grace an the love of God taking the initiative, it did not thereby deprive man of the need of strenuous self-control and the effort to improve himself. Christianity, no less than classical humanism, enjoins the importance of self-knowledge and the exercise of the inner check. Democracy, on the other hand, and the liberal theology which accompanies it, assumes that the disposition of men tends naturally to order and harmony, and the demagogues who seek to climb to positions of popularity do so by flattering the people into believing that they are alright as they are. Such too is the effect of the popular press, pandering to the ordinary selves of men instead of inspiring them to rise to the level of their better, or ethical, selves. This, in no small measure, according to More, is the secret of Browning's continuing popularity, 'for his philosophy, detached, as it may be, from its context,
teaches just the acceptance of life in itself as needing no conversion into something beyond its own impulsive desires.¹

More's sympathy is not with any 'such worldly and easy philosophy' dressed 'in the forms of spiritual faith', but with the most honest scepticism of an earlier writer who, with true uncynical disillusionment, faced the dilemma of man's weakness and his failure to find any satisfactory solution. After interpreting the thought of Lord Halifax, as it appeared to him — with perhaps rather more of More than of Saville — More adds a significant reflection upon the spiritual chaos and frustration of his day: 'I am aware that such an analysis of human nature will be hateful to an age in which, if we believe anything, it is the comfortable doctrine that men are by instinct all seeking the welfare of someone else. But, alas, there is only one thing to say to this humanitarian theory: it is not true. The very element of self-flattery in such a philosophy, the very hesitation to accept the harsh name for our guiding motives, points unmistakably to that grain of egotism in our make-up which is the last source and impregnable stronghold of jealousy. Let a man look inquisitively into the conduct of his neighbour, let him look candidly into the secret folds of his own heart, and he will discern that feeling, concealed it may be, but never quite effaced, colouring, though it may not entirely overlay, other more generous impulses. Is there not in our facile rejection of the past a touch of jealous

¹ More, Shelburne Essays II, pp. 163-64, 161.
² Ibid., p. 165.
apprehension lest something should be detracted from our easy complaisance with the aims and achievements of the present? Indeed, deep down in the democratic view of society there will be found a taint of this same egotism, displaying itself in a kind of *malaise* at distinction wherever seen and however manifested. He is the leader of men who soothes us with the assurance that our native instincts are right and not to be gainsaid and who falls in with our suspicion of those who would oppose reflection to spontaneity, and would question the clamour of the moment. It is the bitter truth that the only safeguard against popular anarchy, in this day, as in Halifax's, is just the recognition of the egotism that underlies our first motions, with its uneasy flattery of ourselves and its readiness to flame into jealousy of those who speak from the superior ground of knowledge. Certain it is that without this clear insight into human nature there is no stable authority, for lawas there is no firm basis for social order.¹

In an age that is threatened by the forces of disintegration, it is not surprising that those who have nothing to oppose to their onslaught but the feeble power of humanitarianism should fall victim to the attacks of *Giants* despair and his attendant evils, nihilism and 'futilitarianism'. ² This was the mood of a Germany suffering the extreme frustration which follows in the wake of too ardent and indiscriminate a romanticism. Against such a mood Nietzsche reacted violently,'In the

sickness of his soul Nietzsche looked abroad over the Western World, and saw, or thought he saw, everywhere futility and purposeless and pessimistic uncertainty of the values of life. An ideal, as he sees it, is embraced only when a man's grip on the real world and its good has been wakened; in the end such supernatural ideals, as they are without foundation in fact, lose their hold on the human mind, and mankind, having sacrificed its sense of actual values and having nursed the cause of decay, is left helpless and joyless. This condition he calls Nihilism—

'And in the first part of The Will to Power he unfolds this modern disease in all its hideousness. The restless activities of our life he interprets as so many attempts to escape from the gloom of purposelessness, as so many varieties of self-stupefaction.' To him the chief cause of the moral relaxation of the modern world was the humanitarianism of the Christian Gospel. He, like More, recognised the difficulty of reconciling two wholly disparate orders of virtue, the civil and the religious. The cure to Nietzsche was the complete repudiation of Christian ethics for the gospel of the Superman. For an appeal to meekness and humility and love was substituted an appeal to the libido dominandi, to Nietzsche, the strongest impulse in man. For the paradox which exalted the poor and lowly and persecuted, Nietzsche introduced a belief in a metaphysical 'survival of the fittest!'

1. Ibid., pp. 176-77.
2. Ibid., p. 177-83.
3. Ibid., pp. 180-81.
Nihilism, though a state of individual discomfort and social anarchy, was yet a necessary transition on the way to health, for it entailed the loss of ideals, which was an essential prelude to the return to sanity and to order, based on the supremacy of the strong as opposed to Christianity's exaltation of the feeble. To the man who refused to close his eyes to the naked facts of reality, and who was prepared to face fearlessly the stark brutality of life, there then occurred a striking change of focus, the Transvaluation of all Values, whereby the archaic morality of good and evil, depending on supernatural rewards, yielded to the non-morality of the purely natural Will-to-Power. As yet, this Transvaluation of all Values, and the Superman who was to be the incarnation of the change, remained in the hazy uncertainty of the future, an 'ideal' of Nietzsche's own, to which he hoped to make his own life approximate as far as possible during the existing dispensation of his time. The one thing he knew was that the Superman would be the unadulterated product of nature, and would seek to raise the level of society by rising on the shoulders of those who do the menial work of the world. 'At the last analysis the Superman is simply a negation of humanitarian sympathy and of the socialistic state of indistinguished equality'. In other words, the imperialism of Nietzsche is the reverse of the coin bearing the stamp of humanitarianism. Just as

1. Ibid., p. 181.
2. Ibid., p. 182.
sentimental romanticism is the expression of the 'soft' aspects of naturalism, altruism, sympathy, service, so Nietzscheism derives from the 'hard' aspects of Naturalism — egotism, the lust of power, the survival of the fittest, linking it with scientific romanticism. It would seem that Nietzsche's doctrine reverts back to the cynicism of Hobbes, but with a substantial difference: Hobbes had not to contend with the prevalence of an indiscriminate sympathy, the flower of German Romanticism, nor the morbid exaltation of the 'ego' bordering on megalomania, which is the inevitable alternative to a misplaced altruism, embodied for More in the utopist schemes of Tolstoy.

With the underlying mood of Nietzsche's reaction More has considerable sympathy; both he and Nietzsche were in revolt against a system of government and education which encouraged mediocrity at the expense of the distinguished man, and a variety of art which pandered to morbid sentimentality! But the cure Nietzsche proposed for these evils was itself, to More, a part of the malady. 'The Superman in other words, is a product of the same naturalism which produced the disease it would counteract; it is the last and most violent expression of the egotism or self-interest which Hume and all his followers balanced with sympathy as the two springs of human action'.

Nietzsche's tragedy was that, although seeing the danger of decay,
dence, his very effort to escape only entangled him more desper-
ately in the fatal mesh, with Hume and the Romantic naturalists
he threw away both the reason and the intuition into any super-
rational law beyond the stream of desires and passions and im-
pulses, 'He looked into his own heart and into the world of
phenomena, and beheld there a ceaseless ebb and flow, without
beginning, without end, and without meaning. The only law that
he could discover, the only rest for the mind, was some dimly
foreseen return of all things back to their primordial state,
to start afresh on the same dark course of chance— the Ev-
nal Recurrence, he called it.'-----'The end of it all is the
clamour of romantic egotism turned into horror at its own vac-
uity and of romantic sympathy turned into despair. It is natur-
alism at war with itself and struggling to escape from its own
fatality. As I leave Nietzsche, I think of the ancient tragedy
in which Heracles is represented as writhing in the embrace of
the Nessus shirt he has himself put on and rending his own flesh
in a vain effort to escape its poisonous web'.

More sees humanitarianism, on the one hand, Nietzsche
ism, on the other, as the two predominating attempts in the
Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries to solve the perennial pro-
blem of social justice. Both are rampant in American society,
the worship of the Superman in the world of 'big business',

1. Ibid., p.187.
2. Ibid., pp.187-88.
3. Ibid., pp.188-90.
often evaporating in the same individual into a vague and indiscriminate philanthropy. But in the last analysis, the problem of social justice is just the problem of the individual's attitude to himself. On what he personally thinks of life will depend the pattern of his social relationships. And so in one of the essays of the last volume of The Shelburne Essays, More returns to the problem, finding yet a third solution embodied in the thought of one to whom, as we have already seen, the prevailing chaos was an acute actuality. Henry Adams was one of the last of the New England Brahmins; his conscience, like that of his fellow-countrymen, Emerson, John Fiske, Charles Eliot Norton, 'was moving, so to speak, in vacuo, like a dispossessed ghost seeking a substantial habitation'. Unable to hold the mind in the suspension of judgment required by true scepticism, he was faced by three alternative attitudes to the contemporary dilemma, the imperialism of a Nietzsche, the humanitarianism of a Tolstoy, or the nihilism of an escape into the past charged with the emotional appeal of an aesthetic dalliance with the eternal feminine, stimulating by her irresponsibility and caprice the mind of modern man, dulled as it is by the mechanical efficiency and the materialism of his age,—the mood of a Renan in his Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse or of his Feuilles Détachées.

'Conscience,' comments More, 'was the last tie of New

1. Cf. Ibid., pp. 229-34.
4. Ibid., p. 135.
England to its past. Was it the perfect irresponsibility of
the Virgin, human no doubt, feminine perhaps, certainly not
Puritan that gave to our sceptic the illusion of having reached
a comfortable goal after his long voyage of education? There
is a fateful analogy between the irresponsibility of unreason-
ing Force and unreasoning love; and the gods of Nietzsche and
of Tolstoy are but two faces of one god. To change the meta-
phor, if it may be done without disrespect, the image in the
cathedral of Chartres looks perilously like that of the ancient
idol of Dionysus decked out in petticoats'. For scholarship, imag-
ination, vivacity, range, Adams ranked high in the world of
American letters of the last generation, but, adds More,'one
wincs a little at acknowledging that the latest spokesman of
the Adamses and of New England ends his career in sentimental
nihilism'----'The tragedy of Adams' education is that of a man
who could not rest easy in negation, yet could find no positive
faith to take its place.'

As an illuminating contrast, More quotes some words of
Adams' contemporary, John Fiske: "When we come to a true phil-
osophy and make that our stand-point, all things become clear.
We know what things to learn and what, in the infinite mass of
things to leave unlearned; and then the universe becomes clear
and harmonious"."

1. The reference is to Adams' 'discovery' of the Virgin of
Chartres as the symbol of those qualities which the modern
world has lost, to its own detriment.
2. More, Shelburne XI, p. 136
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
4. Ibid., loc. cit.
The appraisal of Adams' false philosophy is more than a merely critical summing up of another man's failure, to Paul Elmer More. If ever he spoke straight from the heart it is here. To More, Adams' dilemma was his own. Spiritually, if not by birth, More belonged to the New England Brahmins. He too had longed to rank high in American literature for scholarship, imagination, vivacity, range. He too had become terrifyingly aware of the chaos of modern life, and the inadequacy of conventionalised religion to cope with it. He too looked out upon the world and saw nihilism, a humanitarianism which culminated in Marxism and a Nietzscheism which culminated in madness contending for the possession of man's soul. But he saw too another alternative. He remembered Fiske's words, and set out to construct for himself a true philosophy. So far we have considered only those elements of the Shelburne Essays which describe man's declension from an ideal of a rounded and harmonious character to a false apotheosis of passion and instinct and the mysterious depths of the Abyss, and which in turn seek to diagnose the prevailing disease. Side by side with these lie other elements which reveal his personal bracing of the will and purging of the mind in order to grapple with the problem of the day in both its social and personal implications.
'The desire of peace, as the world has known it in past times, signified always a turning away from the flotsam and jetsam of time and an attempt to fix the mind on absolute rest and unity,— the desire of peace has been the aspiration of faith. And because the object of faith cannot be seen by the eyes of the body or expressed in terms of the understanding, a firm grasp of the will has been necessary to keep the desire of the heart from falling back into the visible, tangible things of change and motion. Yet blessed are they that believe and have not seen. It was the peculiar quest of the Nineteenth Century to discover fixed laws and an unshaken abiding place for the mind in the very kingdom of unrest; we have sought to chain the waves of the sea with the winds.'

More saw modern man in his quest for peace vacillating between two extreme philosophies, humanitarianism and Nietzscheism. There in stark opposition he saw arrayed against each other the two powers which to him had been contending for man's allegiance during the whole of the post-Renaissance period. The sense of impending disaster in the years preceding the 1914-18 War threw the two conflicting trends into a more vivid and fateful relief, but, in addition to the temporary passions of a day, they represented to More that eternal tendency in man which arises from his insatiable

1. More, Shelburne Essays III, pp. 263-64
longing for an awareness of absolute truth. The nature of man, to the Humanist, is made up of desires incapable of self-restraint and therefore limitless; and the practical basis of everyday life is this limitless sway of unrelated impulses which, left to itself, ends, on the one hand, in a violence of self-destruction, or, on the other, in a sentimentalism which provokes the nihilism of satiety. More's problem at the time of writing the Shelburne Essays was how to avoid both the Scylla and Charybdis of this eternal dialectic. Nor was it for him a purely academic question. Few Twentieth Century thinkers had felt more acutely the longing for some resting place for the enquiring mind of man, or the atrophying despair which comes upon the man who seeks refuge in some Absolute only to find himself driven from it by the inevitable mental reaction which overtakes the one who thinks to find security in some rationalised solution of life's dilemma. The wise man will accept willingly the control of the inner check, and thereby will achieve a co-ordination of his impulses around this moral centre of his character. Such a man is no longer subject to the alternations of happiness and misery, but will rise to a state of equable activity in repose which we call peace. Yet withal it must be that life in its perfection would leave something wanting to the soul; some feeling would still through to remind us that happiness in all its stages is at best but a negation of the great angry flux; we know even more clearly as we grow in self-control that the peace of this life is but the shadow and not the substance.

Remorse and misery we can outgrow, pain perhaps; but there remains

Both humanitarianism and scientific rationalism had failed to take into account the reality of man's craving for an inner peace which could not be met either by ambitious schemes for social reform or by the mere extension of material progress. Their failure was largely due to the modern confusion of two distinct types of the infinite which men envisaged as the goal of human endeavour. The Humanist, on the other hand, discriminated between the true and the false infinities: in contrast to the unending and insatiable current of human desires which More calls the 'limitless', they set the contemplation of an absolute unity which is unmoved amid all that moves, the true infinite. 'This unity not of nature', says More, 'is the infinite; it is the very opposite of that limitless which is the attribute of nature itself; it is not a state of endless infinite expansion, but is on the contrary that state of centralisation which has its goal in itself. This distinction lies at the heart of the Nicomachean Ethics; but unfortunately, Aristotle was not prepared to abide merely in the immediate apprehension of such an inner unity, and sought to find some rationalised explanation of its operation which removed his philosophy from the field of pure intuition to that of metaphysics with which, as we have seen, More had little sympathy. Nevertheless in his recognition of a central power set above the flux of nature Aristotle had entered into the deep spiritual needs of humanity, and so far at least, More was prepared to Babbitt's claim that he

1. More, Ibid., p. 275
that he had been a true humanist.

The fundamental distinction within More's thought is, as I see it, on the one hand, between the true Infinite, an intuitive perception of the One, and the so-called 'Absolute', an intellectualistic attempt to rationalise man's experience of his universe by explaining away the Humanist awareness of a dualism and exalting either the One or the Many into an absolute, monistic philosophy of life; and, also, on the other hand, between the true Infinite and the false Infinite, a purely emotional or instinctive craving after an imaginary satisfaction, an appetite which grows on what it feeds upon and is therefore merely expansive and ultimately nihilistic. The Absolute is man's attempt to satisfy the Libido sciendi; the false Infinite of limitlessness is his attempt to satisfy the Libido sentiendi. The true Infinite, in contrast to both, seeks to hold a balance between the conflicting tendencies of man's nature, and to impose upon them a control which emanates from a power outside of man, the divine Reason which operates on the human plane in the form of the inner check. Whether man's consciousness of an Infinite had an objective source or co-relative with which man could establish any personal relationship, More was not prepared to speculate during the writing of the Shelburne Essays, but in his essay on Baron Von Hügel, in the Third Series of the New Shelburne Essays, he contrasts the Aristotelian 'Absolute' with his own conception of the 'Ultimate', a distinction derived from Von Hügel. Such a conception of the Supernatural he was prepared to

entertain in 1936, although he would hardly have countenanced it during the earlier series. But his picture of the Absolute represents an attitude towards the abstractions of metaphysics and theology which had not changed during the interim period and would have been equally valid had it occurred in the essay on 'Delphi and Greek Literature' or 'Nemesis, or the Divine Envy'.

'The ultimate, forever desired and never attained by man, would be the state of a Being who lives in the succession of time, who has a past and a future, yet to whom no fragment of the past is lost and to whom no possibility of the future is veiled, whose knowledge is eternal though it move in time with a universe forever flowing and drifting and still crying out for guidance.'

But theology wishes to push further and set up an 'Absolute' conceived as an eternity in which there is no succession, no past or future but only a static present spread out in infinite monotony, with no portion in what lies before and after, with no possible reaction to a world moving in time, severed from our life, alone, self-absorbed in frozen isolation, and to all human needs perfectly meaningless,' whereas the Ultimate, on the other hand, partakes of all the complexity of human experience.

Such, however, is the final outcome of a lifetime of thought. At the outset of his career, with his repudiation of a Romanticism exalting a false infinity of feeling, and of a scient-

2. Ibid., loc.cit.
3. Ibid., p.177.
fic rationalism, seeking to set up a false absolute of positivism, on the one hand, and pragmatism, on the other, More was confronted with the problem of finding some working philosophy of life which should yet satisfy his deep spiritual consciousness of a true infinity. With Saint Augustine he could still say: Quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te'.

His own peculiar longing was representative of a desire common to every man who has come to a true intuition of the insecurity of the present world, who has 'seen the treachery that hides under the smiling face of the world's face'; 'he knows the tedium vitae, that like a sullen master drives the world in its unresting headlong course; he has caught glimpses of the frenzy of disillusion that threatens to devastate the world's heart at the first moment of repose. Yes, to one whose eyes has opened, though it be for a moment only, upon the vision of an indefectible peace, there is henceforth no compulsion that can make him rest satisfied in passing pleasures; the end of desire has devoured its beginning, and he is driven by a power greater than the hope of any reward "to fast from this earth". He may, indeed he must, pursue ephemeral things, but he will not know his content in them. This desire to put on immortality led Newman to seek for rest in the Roman Church, the desiderium Romae, but for the majority of earnest seekers after truth such a decision was no longer possible. To More, throughout the writing of the Shelburne Essays the

1. More, Shelburne Essays IX, p. 85
the peace derived from revealed religion in an age when so much
of the mythology of Christianity had been called into question
was a spurious peace akin to the Romantic thirst for absorption
in the vague of infinite desire. The reverent man might not speak
lightly of the Church or underestimate her services in the past,
but for all that he had to recognize that she was a dying instit-
ution, and that it was no longer possible to hold confidently to
the belief in a personal God as anything more than the 'projection
of man's soul into the void'. Its symbolism still retained its
vivid appeal for the imagination, but its mythology seemed to
More, prior to 1914, an anachronism which brought the rest of its
teachings into disrepute.

One of his chief difficulties had been the reconciliation of the idea of a God at once personal and infinite, such
as the Christians had attempted. Personality, as the expression
of individual desire and choice was in itself the negation of
infinity, both in man and God, as the Indian sages had seen when
they made the conversion of man dependent on a renunciation of
personality. Nevertheless, it was this very combination of irreconcilable elements which constituted the power of Christianity.
Of the theology of St. Augustine he wrote: 'Let us admit, if com-
pelled, that his theology includes an element intrinsically illogical and ultimately self-destructive, but let us humbly acknowledge

1.Ibid., pp.77-78.
3.Ibid., pp.243.
4.Ibid., p.100; Shelburne Essays V, pp.112-13.
also that the worship of an infinite personal God was no dead abstraction, but a living reality abounding in the fervour of holiness, and supremely and terribly beautiful; that the religion of an Augustine and a Pascal is a manifestation of faith beyond the comprehension of worldly philosophy, and far above the reach of worldly men. That it is no longer acceptable in his day is the worse for that generation!

But not only is the Christian metaphysic illogical; its ethic is impracticable in its entirety as a code of social life. Christ had never contemplated the introduction of a religion meant to rebuild society. 'His Kingdom was not of this world, and there is every reason to believe that he looked to see only a few chosen souls follow in his footsteps.' Both Christ and Buddha, the two finest exemplars of the religious ideal, agree on those virtues most necessary for a life of perfection, but Buddha, at least, makes it quite clear that there are two classes of believers, those who accept and practise the higher ethic, and those who acknowledge the ideal but remain in the world, encouraging, even supporting financially, but not themselves practising this higher ethic. But if the Buddhistic—and the Christian—ideal is not for men in general, the world has its own ethical code, based on the Decalogue instead of the Sermon on the Mount. To confuse the two orders is to court disaster. We have already seen how, in the transition from Classical to Christian art, a whole new series of values was introduced, with a consequent confusion which has never been properly

1. More, Shelburne Essays V1, p.120. 3. Ibid., pp.246-47.
resolved. More discusses the influence of the new beliefs objectively, as one discussing an historical phenomenon which has no immediate concern for him personally. One is reminded of Renan's saying that in order to do justice to the origins of Christianity, one needed to have believed in order to bring to the subject something of the tenderness and sympathy necessary to an understanding of its influence over men, but to believe no longer in order to be able to discuss it analytically and dispassionately. Again, when he opposes to Browning's sanguine contentment with human nature as it stands orthodoxy's sense of man's sin and need of redemption, he adds significantly: 'It was believed that the spiritual life was brought with a price, and that the desires of this world must first suffer a permutation into something not themselves. I am not holding a brief for that austere doctrine; I am not even sure that I understand it, although it is written at large in many books'.

His scepticism is complete; he is entirely dissociated from the dogmatic implications of revealed religion. The tragedy in the Garden of Eden which Milton adopted for the central theme of his great epic may be lifted up in grandeur and significance until it is made to embrace the drama of salvation; 'but for us who merely read and seek the exalted pleasures of the imagination, there lies between the scenes in hell and the panoramic vision of the world's shattered life, that perfect and splendid vision of

2. Ernest Renan, Vie de Jésus, (Paris; 1923), Introduction, p. ClIV.
pastoral bliss.'

Christianity has suffered, because of its dogmatic elements, more than Greek mythology which claimed no strict religious authority, and therefore has a flexibility and perennial freshness lacking in the more precise Christian theology. The failure to synthesise the two traditions, Christian and classical, has been responsible, as we have seen, for much of the tension in the cultural life of the past, and the modern method of obtaining unity by sacrificing the one term, the Classics, altogether is really but begging the question. Yet so convinced is More of the incalculable value of the Classics as a means of discipline and purification that he is prepared to see the whole of the Mediaeval tradition of Christianity swept away with all its riches of intense and uplifting passions which are capable of supplementing our own impoverished emotions, rather than lose the wisdom of antiquity's intuitive dualism. Upon the basis of the classical insight man may build up for himself a religious faith inassailable by the forces which flourish on the defeat of dogmatic religion. The loss of belief in revealed religion does not seem without its compensation to More, for it compels the thinker to seek earnestly for an alternative. 'Let a man cease for a moment to look so strenuously upon what is right for his neighbours—-Let him retire into himself, and in the silence of such recollection examine his own motives and the

the sources of his self-approval and discontent. He will discover that in that dialogue with himself, if his abstraction is complete and sincere, that his nature is not simple and single, but dual, and the consequences to him in his judgment of life and in his conduct will be of incalculable importance."

Nevertheless, in spite of More's temporary acquiescence in scepticism, his detached and proud forbearance in the face of the unknown, there are many passages studded throughout his work 'where creeps the eternal note of sadness'. We hear it when he contrasts the peculiar sense of solitude infusing the work of that disinherited Puritan, Nathaniel Hawthorne, with the equally profound loneliness felt by the authors of the Hindu Vedanta, aware, like Hawthorne, of man's isolation, not only from his fellows, but from the source of universal life. We hear it again vibrating through his prose when he tells of the sterility of grief of a Louisa Shore mourning for a dead brother and sister without hope of immortality, and contrasts the impotence of her sorrow with the religious resignation of Eugénie de Guérin and of Mrs. Augustus Craven. Time and again, More returns to this sense of the incompleteness of life without faith, in the haunted pessimism of James Thomson, seeing only a world of unending motion clashing and whirling deliriously down the great grooves of change, the failure of humanitarianism to offer mankind a hope to replace

1. Ibid., p. 214.
the lost consolations of religion, the discontent of Socialism
and Anarchism which is but a wistful longing for an ideal that
has perished, the abysmal gloom underlying the individual con-
sciousness of our day, with its monstrous depths laid bare by
the disclosures of recent psychology, — all these are expressions
of a perpetual hunger in man for the assurances of an eternal dimen-
sion to life which shall transcend the mere existence of the present.

It was this same hunger which was to make More,
unlike his friend Babbitt, unable to remain in the cold, hard
atmosphere of scepticism, and drove him on to a find a spiritual
home beneath the shelter of a supernatural faith. But faith was
not to be purchased at the cost of intellectual integrity: More,
like Babbitt, was resigned to walking in the light that he had,
believing that if he did so, the light would grow. Thus during
the period of the Shelburne Essays he was prepared to rest in
the mere statement of what he himself observed, in an experiential
description of immediate knowledge as it cam to him on two separate
planes, the plane of the senses and the plane of the ethical imag-
ination, and as confirmed by the experience of the wise men of the
ages. That experience pointed in one direction: 'There is no reach
of the human intellect which can bridge the gap between motion and
rest. Our senses are adapted to a world of universal flux which is,
so far as we can determine, subject to no absolute law but the law

of probabilities. He who attempts to circumscribe the ebb and flow of circumstance within the bounds of our spiritual needs, he who attempts to find peace in any formula of science or in any promise of historic progress, is like one who labours on the old and vain problem of squaring the circle.

Scepticism was, therefore, to Paul Elmer More, during the decade from 1904 to 1914, the only feasible religious attitude to adopt, and by 'scepticism' he meant something quite definite. He did not use the term indiscriminately to imply any mood of doubt or questioning, but gave it a distinct philosophical connotation. Briefly, scepticism came down to this: it showed a sharp distinction between knowledge and theory. 'Knowledge is limited to what we have, not by inference from something else, but directly and without the intervention of inferential reason; in the ancient terminology of the sect, knowledge is what we possess in the form of immediate affections'. Immediate sensations include those evoked by colour, shape, size and texture, pain and pleasure. These the sceptic sees occurring in certain patterns so that it is possible to classify them and order one's actions accordingly. 'The complete sceptic is perfectly justified in addicting himself to scientific experimentation among and pursuits if by science we mean no more than the classification of phenomena; and he is equally justified in adapting his life to a chosen system of ethics. But the sceptic stops there, and stops sharply'.

The sceptic, unlike Aristotle and Descartes and Kant and the rest of the metaphysicians, does not presume to pass judgment on nature or on the motivation of the objects which cause his sensations or feelings, or to speculate on the ultimate nature of the world. On this basic attitude of the sceptic More remains consistent, but whereas by the time of the New Shelburne Essays, he is prepared to construct a positive approach to religion and the supernatural upon it, in the Shelburne Essays themselves, he is not prepared to pass beyond a consideration of the natural and the human.

In the essay on Newman, More divides thinking men into four classes which he re-groups into two main divisions. There are the two extremes of mystic and sceptic constituting an 'outer' group, and an 'inner' group comprising the non-mystical religious mind and the non-sceptical scientific mind. The true sceptic is prepared to abide in the field of pure scientific conjecture, but we have seen how easy and how tempting it is for the scientist to pass from positive science into the realm of hypothetical or even metaphysical science. Similarly the true mystic has passed beyond dogma into a direct sense of communion with the spiritual principle of the universe, but the non-mystical religious mind demands the support of definite dogma and a system of mythology as aids to the apprehension of religious truth. The latter is interested in the observation of religious states, just as the scientific dogmatist is interested in the observation of material phenomena, but

both pass from observation to belief in certain underlying causes. 'Hypotheses, in other words, are merely the mythology, the *deus ex machina* of science, and they are eradicated from the scientific mind only by the severest discipline of scepticism, just as mythology is eradicated from the religious mind by genuine mysticism.' Newman's failure to offer his generation any satisfactory solution of the religious dilemma, and his subsequent defection to Rome, resulted from his inability to see any alternatives beyond religious authority on the one hand, and scientific dogmatism, on the other.

In the outer circle of the mystic and the sceptic, the mind never relaxes its grip on individual detail for personal and material law, whilst in the inner circle of revelation and rationalism, the mind relaxes its hold to a certain extent on details and on individual moments of experience in order to preserve its belief in the universality of some supposed personal force or natural law. The man to whom religion means revelation holds on to the idea of a Personal God, though it means that he must remain impervious to conflicting creeds or to facts that appear to contradict his belief. Similarly the man of science, to More, appears to hold on to his formula for explaining natural phenomena oblivious of contradictory formulae and hypotheses. It is generally supposed that the scientific mind searches for the actual individual fact independently of presupposition or theory, and regardlessly of consequence. But rationalistic—or metaphysical—science which colours popular philosophy today is built up around one particular

theory adopted to the exclusion of others equally valid. And even
the one theory has frequently to ignore conflicting evidence
in order to formulate an explanation. The method of scientific
dogmatism is therefore the same as that of religious ra-
imatism; and both are equally opposed to the habits of mind of
the sceptic and the mystic. The difference between the genu-
ine sceptic and the scientific 'dogmatist' may be illustrated
by the contrast between Sainte-Beuve and Taine; the latter
dominated by the desire to correlate individual facts by means
of a general cause, the former, by the desire to grasp the
individual fact at all hazards and through all losses. Simil-
arily the mystic may be contrasted with the religious dogmatist
—the latter clinging to belief in authority and revelation in
whatssoever form they might assume, whilst the former, like the
sceptic, keeps a firm grip on phenomana as they appear and sees
in them only illusion and no ruling of Providence or of a defin-
able law. It is perfectly easy for the genuine sceptic to enter
into the mind of the genuine mystic, as for Sainte-Beuve to
understand the thought of a Pascal. The mystic, however, un-
like the sceptic, knows within himself an infinite something,
unnamed, indefinable, the one absolute reality. True mystic-
ism is not, however, to be confused with the pseudo-mysticism
of the Romantic with its substitution of limitlessness for the
ture sense of the infinite. To More, the best instance he can

1. Ibid., pp. 68-73.
find of genuine mysticism in modern times is in the work of Tennyson whose openness and humility of mind strike More as a welcome contrast to Newman's desperate clinging to authority and religious formalism and to the logic by which he argued his way to Rome, proceeding on an 'initial assumption which implied a certain lack of the highest faith and needs of that sceptical attitude towards our human upon which faith must ultimately rest.'

In discussing William James' declension from the position of scepticism he advocated into a rationalistic dogmatism of his own, More goes on to say, "forces beat upon us from every side, we know their influence upon us; but we are bound to hold judgment in a state of scepticism with regard to the correspondence of our inner experience with the world at large, neither affirming nor denying; while we accept honestly the dualism of consciousness as the "irrational fact". If I have read correctly the lesson of the past and of the present, faith, I dare avow, is something that strikes deeper than the mythologies of religion, or the imaginings of a fevered Pragmatism; it is a voice from our own centre of calm, asserting through all the noise of contradiction; "I am the better self and the higher value, the stronger life and the finer joy". Many who have looked steadfastly into the

1. Ibid., p. 75.
meaning of this inner life'—'will think that John Woolman uttered the truth of dualism and of religion when he said: "The necessity of an inward stillness hath appeared clear to my mind; in true silence strength is renewed".'

From the withdrawal of man into the central calm of his being comes true self-knowledge, his safeguard against error and deception, bearing witness to a clear and unfailing consciousness of man's dual nature. This positive function of self-knowledge More calls insight, and against it he sets scepticism, the negative pole of self-knowledge, denying the right of the faculties to supplant this dualism by their own abstractions and combinations. 'Insight and scepticism are the two arms, the positive and negative aspects, so to speak, of truth. Insight includes at once both the higher, or super-rational, intuition which is immediately conscious of the inner check, and the lower or infra-rational intuition which is immediately conscious of the flux of impulses'. In other words, the philosophy of dualism, as it appeared to More, did not attempt to explain the co-existence of good and evil, nor to bridge the gulf between negation and affirmation, the One and the Many. The order of nature and of natural life, 'formed so to speak by eddies in the stream at once changing and stable, and thereby belonging purely to neither element of our being

1. Ibid., pp. 211-12.
4. Ibid., pp. 288-89.
but springing from an incomprehensible relation of the two elements; represents 'relative good'; and 'of this relative world we have no true knowledge, but only opinion.' To go beyond this insight and this scepticism is to pass from philosophy to religion.'

The majority of men find the strain of such a dualism too tense to be borne and escape into the world of dogmatic religion or dogmatic science; but a few men have attained through this very dualism to a perfect peace in which the soul can rise into a state wherein the desires cease altogether, and the other element of consciousness, the higher Self or infinite Spirit, abides in blissful liberation. 'The complete attainment of the mystical state would mean the cessation of natural existence, but to all of us moments may come when the consciousness of the inner check is so overpowering as seemingly to sever the continuity of our impulsive life.' It is in such moments of vision as these that man comes to know the positive quality of that inhibitive element that otherwise possesses unity only through its negative action. 'This conversion by which the heart of man is brought to recognise the inner check as the constantly indwelling spirit, is called faith. By faith the everlasting No becomes the everlasting Yes. Faith is thus not the will

1. Ibid., loc. cit.
2. Ibid., p. 292.
to believe, but the power of that insight or self-knowledge which grows with the will to refrain. Neither is it the arbitrary belief, contrary to experience, that all is right. Its goal is the liberation from dualism which embraces the possibility of infinite evil as well as infinite good. Faith, to those who crave a definite answer to the demands of reason and of the imagination, may seem vague and unreal. In a truer sense it is the definite and real thing in life, in so far as it implies a constant intention of character in one direction. 

As insight and scepticism are the two poles of intellectual truth, so in spiritual truth the affirmative power of faith has its negative counterpart in disillusion, 'the knowledge that this apparent order of the world is not of the world itself, and that beneath the surface of what we see and feel, beneath the very act of seeing and feeling, lies the unredeemed chaos of desires and impressions, unlimited, unmeaning, unfathomable, incalculable, formless, dark.' In some periods of spiritual apathy, the sense of disillusion may be unaccompanied by the corresponding assurance of faith, and at such times, nothing is real to men. 'They walk in a place of shadows, and feel that life is continually slipping away from them into a bottomless abyss'. Unable to surmount the mood of materialism which besets them, they become cynical and embittered. Insight, the affirmative

1. Ibid., pp. 290-91.
2. Ibid., p. 291.
5. Ibid., p. 292.
pole of intellectual truth, can, however, exist without its religious counterpart, faith, and the negative pole, scepticism, without disillusionment, although the two higher terms, faith and disillusion, cannot exist without the lower, insight and scepticism, from which they spring. Religion, in ordinary practice, is a complicated mood into which enter insight and faith, scepticism and disillusion, morality and mythology in varying combinations. Where mythology is accepted as literally true, we have not faith but belief. This had hitherto been the case with the Christian mythos, the most powerful and imaginatively satisfying of all mythologies which, to More, was seeking to represent symbolically through the idea of a Triune God the imaginative blending of the three faculties and the inner check, perhaps the farthest he ever went in the attempt to reduce the religion of the Incarnation to a mere psychological abstraction. To come to the point where he accepted religious mythology as only figuratively did not necessarily mean that he had attained to true faith, as More was to learn, although it seemed to him in 1913 to mark an important step in the transition from belief to faith. Actually he was on the verge of the slope which had led others before him to wittle down the vital reality of Christianity into a mere system of psychological entities to which it was in danger of being reduced by an excess of critical analysis. That he was saved from that last desperate plunge was due mainly to the concrete quality of his imagination, and the urgent hunger of his nature for faith.
in something more tangible than the anaemic shade of a subjective Christianity such as a Renan, or even a Schweitzer, had to offer.

But until true faith does succeed to scepticism, man is left 'Wandering between two worlds — one dead,
The other powerless to be born'.

Such was More's own position, and the position of his generation, as he saw it at the time of the _Shelburne Essays_. He could not yet attain to that state of religious beatitude wherein the conflict of dualism is suddenly released and man comes to a complete and abiding consciousness of his Higher Self, undisturbed by the warring elements of the flux. The inner check remained for him the everlasting No, the inhibitive element denying his instincts free play. It had yet to be transmuted into the everlasting Yea, whereby its quintessential power was seen to be positive and creative. He remained, therefore, on the Humanistic plane where his perceptions of life were dualistic, accepting both knowledge of the One and impressions of the Many without attempting to reconcile them.

Nevertheless, although as yet More was unable to resolve the problem of the otherworld in its relation to man, the other pole of religion offered an urgent problem, that of conduct. And because of its direct concern with conduct More turned for guidance, at the outset of his attempt to find a working philosophy of life, to Oriental religion, notably to the _Bhagavat Gita_. Here he found those elements of religious

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perception which men of faith had previously associated with Christianity; but whereas the latter religion in his own day tended to dissolve into what seemed to him an impracticable humanitarianism, Buddhism had attempted a more realistic reconciliation of faith with the demands of daily life.

'Religion, we are told, should carry us into a sphere where the claims of this world have no meaning to the soul, yet within we are men among men, with imperious needs and duties; and we see not who shall reconcile the aspirations of faith with the demands of daily existence'. The majority of men fluctuate between the demands of religion and practice. Of those who have sought to live exclusively on the plane of religious perceptions, many have become indifferent to the claims of practical morality. This was the experience of the Hindus who, seeing no connection between the finite and the infinite, the sphere of faith and the sphere of action, accepted in full their own ignorance, and as a result of this severed connection, enjoyed spiritual freedom. Nevertheless, some formula is needed which is able, if only by a compromise, to reconcile the two spheres for daily conduct. This reconciliation is the main theme of the Bhagavad Gītā which, to More, represents the very essence of the Brahmin teaching. Such an attitude is humanistic in so far as it seeks to achieve a balance between the two.

2. More, Shelburne Essays VI, p. 44.
3. Ibid., p. 46; cf. Ibid., , p. 40.
conflicting terms of our nature, rather than religious, for
religion seeks to achieve harmony by sacrificing the one term
1 to the other.

The Bhagavad Gītā is, for the most part, taken up
with the reflections of the hero Arjuna before going into a
battle resulting from a family feud. Arjuna More describes
as an 'Oriental Hamlet, thrust by fate into the necessity of
stern action and made suddenly aware of the pity of life.'
His charioteer happens to be no other than the God Krishna
who listens to his prolonged meditations patiently and does
not attempt to lull the hero into a false sense of security.
All he can do is to state boldly the paradox of faith and
action, and leave the answer to the sense of dualism within
the soul itself.'

'The world as the god expounds it, is not single but double.
Above all, is the one invisible, eternal, incorruptible, im-
perishable:

"If the red slayer thinks he slays,
Or if the slain thinks he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep and pass, and turn again".

Besides this are the touchings of matter, the many forms and
individuals that arise and perish, that swim in the flux of
time and in the feeling that we too, or some part of us, are
illusions in the great illusion. No man, however deep in wisdom,
has ever seen the bond of this one and these many, nor has any

1.Ibid.,p.21.
2.Ibid.,p.55.
3.Ibid.; loc.cit.
man laid his finger on the tie between the knowledge of faith that frees the soul from the contacts and the desires and sorrows and joys of the soul that hold it down as a seeming part of the world. We may deny our kinship to the many; yet not for a moment can we live and do nothing, for the triple modes of nature (goodness, passion and darkness) hold us now in their sway and move us this way and that.

Man is born into a world of action; he cannot utterly renounce action and live. The only course open to him is to do the duty which lies before him, obey the demands of that station of life into which he was born, and leave the rest to fate. That is, man must concern himself, not with the fruit of the work, but with the work itself. "Equally by aversion as by desire we become more integrally part of that which we do or refrain from doing; we must work, but without attachment. In this way we partake of the true renunciation, and thus through morality, or a conformity to duty, and not without morality, we attain to the great liberation."

In the Second Series of the Shelburne Essays, More quotes to the same effect:

1. "Thy service is in the work only, but in the fruits thereof never; Be not impelled by the results of works, neither set thy heart to do no work".

2. "Standing firm in devotion, and putting away attachment so ever work on, O Prince. Also in success or failure be thou indifferent, indifference, too, is called devotion."

1. More, Shelburne Essays VI, p. 56. (The italics are my own).
2. Ibid., p 57.
"For all works in all places are of a truth wrought by the blind forces of nature; in Only he that is deluded by egotism thinketh himself, "I am the doer!"

The commoner Hindu ideal is complete renunciation of works, bidding the spirit avoid all contact with the world and seek for perfect peace in its own life of self-contemplation. The Greek ideal is one of moderation in desire and action. The Bhagavad Gîtâ adopts an attitude somewhere between the two. It sees clearly the futile turmoil of the external world to which the inner world of the spirit bears no relationship, yet it accepts fully the exigencies of this world. Man must learn, however, to look not upon the changing incidents and accidents of the natural world, but into his own heart, whereby he becomes aware of his personal responsibility for his fate.

'At first it will seem that we too in our measure of happiness and pain are the sport of the same blind Fortune; but if we hold our gaze persistently upon ourselves, we begin to discern darkly that in some unaccountable way, our sorrow and joy, our profit and loss, are parallel with our own prudence and morality and that cause and effect rule here as they do in the mechanical world. It is even true that the difference between the enlightened man and the fool lies in this, that the one is aware of some deep-hidden responsibility for his own fate whereas the other complains of Fortune. And as our vision is purged by introspection, and as we dwell more confidently in our higher intuitions,

2. Ibid., p. 211.
we have always a stronger intimation of some law of moral recom­
pense extending from the present into an indefinitely remote past;
our state is no longer an isolated momentary accident, but the
inevitable consequence of our own will for ever forging the chain
in which it is bound. This is the doctrine of *Karma*, of works,
which teaches that as a man sows he shall reap, and by which man
projects himself into some myth of an original Fall or of trans-
migration!

In an essay on Carlyle, More quotes from Bhartrihari's
epigrams, stressing the inter-relation of Fate and works:

"Before the Gods we bend in awe
But lo, they bend to fate's dread law;
Honour to Fate, then, austere lord!
But lo, it fashions but our works' reward.

"Nay, if past works our present state
Engender, what of gods and fate?
Honour to works! in them the power
Before whose awful nod even fate must lower."

Carlyle, like the Hindu seers, had this same insight into the
supremacy of works in shaping a man's fortunes. 'In the midst
of innumerable mockeries and deceptions he perceived one abso-
lute certainty— that the deeds of man wove influences about him which were the creation of his destiny,' and this,
together with his consciousness of the illusion of natural
appearances, the *Mâyâ*, lifted him above the shifting currents
of the day.

The doctrine of *Karma* originally had the effect of

3. Ibid., pp. 93-94.
encouraging and steeling man's resolve to escape from mutability and impermanence, so hateful to the Hindu mind, by accepting personal responsibility for his destiny. True self-knowledge, the turning of our lower to our higher self, and the sense of responsibility develop together, and through them, 'we are made aware of our real separation from the welter of chance as this appears to us in the lived of others where we see only the physical events. Morality is the acceptance of this sense of responsibility, springing from intuition, and denying outer vision; and thus by duty alone we are carried onward to the dawning of the joyous liberation, to the escape from illusory connection with the world, and to the consummation of peace. We are moral so far as we know ourselves unconcerned, in so far as we act morally, in that sphere. Such is the paradox of works and inattachment as propounded by the sages of India. It is not a rationalised solution of the antinomy of faith and practice, for inattachment is simply another name for our ignorance of the relation between the two spheres; it is a sufficient, and to him who falters, it may be a terrible, rule of conduct'.

Unfortunately, in the course of time, this doctrine of spiritual encouragement took on a darker hue which accounts for the generally held belief that Buddhism is a religion of unrelieved pessimism. The sense of dualism came to weigh increasingly upon the Hindu mind like 'the oppression of a frightened nightmare', and

we find men sinking into that state of spiritual gloom which Schopenhauer portrayed to Europe as the essential atmosphere of the Upanishads whence come so many contemporary misconceptions of Buddhism. The Hindu could not throw off the weariness of ceaseless change and of unresting desires; he was haunted with a vision of the soul passing through innumerable existences forever whirled about with the wheel of mutation, for ever seeking and never finding peace; and from that wetering sea he reached out toward salvation with a kind of pathetic despair.

"O world, I faint in this thy multitude
Of little things and their relentless feud:
No meaning have I found through all my days
In their fantastic maze."  

More divides the religious development of the Hindus into three periods: first, the early worship of wonder and fear, secondly, the symbolic assumption of divine powers in the ritual of worship, and thirdly, the relinquishing of the symbol for the self-sufficient life of the spirit. The Upanishads belong, in the main, to the last period. Beyond that lies the period of decline with its sense of weariness and gloom. There is little of that in the writings of the Forest Philosophers; man still thinks more of the ultimate liberation of the self than of the weary cycles he of change through which they may have to pass to achieve it. The Forest Philosophers have no systematic philosophy to offer, but a gradual groping after truth through successive stages of spiritual discovery, frequently with an admixture of naivé mythologi-
cal elements. 'Through a maze of grotesque and infantile imagery,
one eventually becomes familiar with underlying truth'; 'the
eternal and infinite expectation of the soul is not to be sought
in submission to an incomprehensible and inhuman force impelling
the world, nor yet in obedience to a personal God, but is already
within us awaiting revelation, is in fact our very Self of Self'.

"The Self is not found out by study, nor by the understanding,
nor by much learning. To whomsoever it listeth, the Self becometh
manifest, and to him it belongeth."

The discovery of the true Self is the great Awaken­
ing, the dispelling of that illusion which, to the Hindu mind, is
inextricably bound up with the world of natural appearances. This
is Mâyâ 'the creative force of all this wonderful web of appear­
ances that enwrap the spirit in their mesh and charm the spirit's
attention by their mystery of beauty and seeming benevolence'.
To the Oriental, as to the Western, mind, Nature, the manifest­
ation of Mâyâ is envisaged as the eternal feminine, unfolding her
allurements before the male on-looker. She is elusive, mysterious,
loving to shroud herself in illusion, 'the very person and power
of deception, whose sway over the beholder must end as soon as
her mystery is penetrated'. But not only are beauty and the de­
lights of the senses illusory; so too are evil and suffering which
are also of the body, and they too will pass. The 'truth' of Bud­
hism is that sorrow is the attribute of all existence. Birth is

1. Ibid., p. 31. 2. Ibid., pp. 38-39.
4. Ibid., loc. cit.
sorrow, old age is sorrow; every desire of the heart is sorrow; and the mission of Buddha was to deliver men out of the bondage of this sorrow as from the peril of a burning house. The song of victory uttered by Gautama when the great enlightenment shone upon him, and he became the Buddha, was the cry of a man who has escaped a great evil. The one predominant note of Buddhism is therefore a note of joy; it is a gospel of good tidings. The builders of our prison houses are our desires; and these we may control. 'To the worldly this teaching of Buddha may seem wrapped in pessimistic gloom, for deliverance to them must be only another name for annihilation; but to the spiritually minded it brought ineffable joy, for they knew that deliverance meant the passing out of the bondage of personality into a freedom of whose nature no tongue could speak. It is an austere faith, hardly suited in its purer form for the sentimental and vacillating—austere in its recognition of sorrow, austere in its teaching of spiritual joy'.

To More, as to Babbitt, such austerity is a challenge, bracing the sinews of the will, and holding out the promise of ultimate peace. 'To both Brahmin and Buddhist this representation of life as made up wholly of sorrow and mutability was but the foil to infinite exultant faith; the shadow of the earth was all black because the light of the spirit was so transcendentally pure'.

Hinduism, as it was represented particularly in the Bhag-

2. More, Shelburne Essays V, p.188.
avard Gita, has for More, several things to commend; it is based on immediate affections as opposed to abstract reasoning, it is prepared to abide in an ultimate scepticism on all questions for which we seek an answer by intellectual processes; it stresses the moral responsibility of the individual, and in both the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, its mythology is sufficiently superficial and palpable to be removed without damaging the fundamental truths which underlie it. So far More would agree wholeheartedly with the estimate of Hinduism given by Irving Babbitt, although More’s interest lay in the Vedas and the Brahminite teaching, while Babbitt concentrated on Buddha and the Dhamma, or law. Nevertheless both sought to be critical and experimental in their approach to the supernatural which neither, at the time of the Shelburne Essays was prepared to explore. To be a critical and experimental supernaturalist’ means ‘first of all that one must deny oneself the luxury of certain affirmations about ultimate things and start from the immediate od consciousness. It is hard to see, for example, how one can affirm on strictly experimental grounds, a personal God and personal immortality. If a man feels that these tremendous affirmations are necessary for his spiritual comfort he should turn to dogmatic and revealed religion which alone can give them, adding with Dr. Johnson that "the good and evil of Eternity are too ponderous for the wings of wit"—(By the time these words of Babbitt’s were written at the end of his career, Thyrsis of his own will had gone away; his erstwhile fellow-sceptic More

had deserted him for the 'spiritual comfort' of those tremendous affirmations, and obviously Babbitt had in mind his 'defection' as he was writing those words). 'What one is able to affirm without going beyond immediate experience and falling into dogma is, in Arnold's phrase, a great power not ourselves that makes for righteousness, a phrase that reminds one of Buddha's conception of the dhamma, or human law, as one may render it, in contradiction to the law of physical nature. Not being able to find any personality, human or divine, superior to his own, Buddha got his humility, as he himself tells us, by looking up to the Law'.

In spite of More's equal concern with righteousness and humility, the impression that emerges from those of his essays which have to do with Oriental religion is that of the illusion and treachery and ruthlessness of the world rather than of man's power to achieve peace amid its wiles of which he sets out to persuade us. He tries to convince us that it was only in the decadence of Hinduism that men felt the sombre destiny they were called to endure to be unbearable and fell into the torpor of fatalism, thereby killing all moral effort, but throughout his writings on the subject there runs a brooding tone of pity which betrays his own uneasiness at the spectacle of man pitted alone against an indifferent natural order which is none the less inexorable for its transience. Less partial critics than More might have been prepared to admit that Hinduism, even in

1 Ibid., p. 531
its heyday, had within itself the seed of future pessimism and defeat. One is reminded of a similar note of weariness underlying the meditations of the Western sage, Marcus Aurelius, as he looked out upon a world coldly indifferent to the fate of man. Hinduism and Stoicism both opposed to the mutations of nature the inflexible courage and endurance of man, but in both the ultimate reaction is the same: sooner or later, the heart fails before the inexorable laws of the universe, and a mood of blank despair succeeds to the calm aloofness of the earlier belief. Man requires, as he always has required, faith in a power beyond himself if he is to confront triumphantly both the chaos of desires within and the welter of changing phenomena without. But to establish such a belief any more definitely than the sceptic can allow is to pass from the purely humanistic plane to the plane of religious, or supernatural, values. This entails the creation or the acceptance of a system of mythology, seen not as symbolism but as fact. This was a step Babbitt never took; one which More came only gradually to accept.

He was to find increasingly, however, that the austerity of Hinduism and its goal of self-abnegation was a mode of thought too alien to the Western consciousness to offer a constructive solution in the existing chaos of ends and means. That part of his own nature found a deep satisfaction in the contemplative mysticism of the East there can be no doubt to

1. Ibid., p.533.
2. Ibid., p.530.
any one who lingers over those passages of poignant beauty when he speaks of man's sudden insight into the illusion of the tangible world. But in More, as in the Romantics, according to his own definition, there was also a very real awareness of human personality; and because the Oriental conception of personality dissolved into an ultimate ideal of Nirvana, More turned away from it to seek a solution to the dilemma of contemporary conduct in a tradition where the ideal was not renunciation, but mediation.

The desire for discipline, order, harmony permeated the whole of Greek literature, but it was Socrates who raised it into a conscious ethical principle, making self-knowledge the touchstone of true human wisdom. There were several reasons why More should, in turn, be drawn away from the Orient to Socrates; the Socratic method commended itself to his naturally sceptical turn of mind where religious issues were involved; he, too, like Socrates, lived in an age when social and religious conventions were breaking up, and it was necessary for the man of mental integrity to rebuild his scale of values upon an actual experience of life; they both had, as opponents, men who denied the existence of any stable and consistent centre of being, and who therefore saw life as a series of ever-changing motion pictures thrown for a moment on the screen of nature and then

passing into the eternal nothingness. Oriental religion offered a doctrine too austere and remote; Christianity, so it seemed to More, prior to the 'Nineteen Twenties, was vitiated by an inherent illusion which cannot be severed from its body of truth'. But of Socrates and Plato, More could say: 'I am assured they are seeking what I seek, and that they attained what hardly and with their borrowed strength I may at last attain'.

This common aim was to teach men to look into themselves, for through self-knowledge lay the only path to truth and virtue and happiness; and these three are one. Justice, temperance, courage—all the virtues are but different manifestations of the one comprehensive virtue which is wisdom or self-knowledge.

The reasoning of Socrates is quite simple: every man aims to do what he thinks best for himself, and if he does what injures himself, it must through ignorance: virtue is the knowledge of what is truly best, what is best for the real self. Socrates takes no account of the estrangement of the will and the understanding, of that morbid state which led Ovid to cry out: "I see the better things and approve, I follow the worse". He had indeed never dissected the soul into these divergent faculties, and in Greece until his time the harmony of man's nature scarcely permitted such an analysis. The separation, first carefully noted by Plato, came with this very self-consciousness which was introduced into Greek life by Socrates more than by any other

If to us, with our larger experience, so simple a view of human

2. Ibid., p. 247.
nature may seem superficial, we must yet remember that today the
great struggle for each man is to restore himself to just that
state of health wherein the will and the understanding are in
harmonious equilibrium.'

The achievement of such a harmonious equilibrium
of the will and understanding based on a perception of the dual-
ism of the human and the natural became from 1909, and More's
'Studies in Religious Dualism, the motivating power behind his
form of humanism peculiar. His concern with an ideal of peace which had predominated
at the time of his interest in Hindu thought was now seen to be
intimately bound up with the question of justice, both social and
individual. A sense of inner peace came to the man who had learned
to control his impulses in such a way as to give the various fac-
tulties their appropriate place; in other words, who had discovered
the true meaning of justice. To the question of the relation of
morality and rationalism, More was to return in far greater detail
in his volume on Platonism where he devoted far more attention
to the three strands of Socrates' thought, his scepticism, his
spiritual assertion, and the relation of virtue and knowledge,
especially as they were subsequently developed by Plato. For the
present, his concern with Platonism was predominantly practical,
the re-establishment of an ideal of conduct in an age which had
individualism had confused personality and character. The nexus of the Shelburne
Essays, as we have seen in an earlier section, lay in just More's
attempt to illustrate from literature his answer to the age-old
1. Ibid., pp. 269-70. 3. Jacques Maritain, Three Reformers, (London: 1944),
question: Who is the Just Man?

In 'The New Morality' in *Aristocracy and Justice*, More states the problem in its relevance to the modern situation. 'Justice is nothing but the balance within a man's own soul self-imposed and self-sustained, the will to know clearly the middle truth between the philosophy of egotism, which declares that it is for the strong and prudent to take whatsoever they desire, and the contrary philosophy of equalitarian sympathy.'

This is the eternal problem with which Plato was concerned in *The Republic*. Plato, in seeking to decide the nature of individual justice, adopted the device of deciding first the nature of social justice, seeing the state as a macrocosm of the individual, in which the relations between the various classes were a magnified reflection of those existing between the various faculties. The three divisions in Plato's society, rulers, soldiers, producers, corresponded to the three faculties within man, reason, the personal emotions, and the instincts. Each had its corresponding virtue. Reason, the ruler of the individual character, like the rulers of the state, should be inspired by wisdom; the personal emotions, like the soldiers, should excel in courage; whilst the instinct, like the labouring classes, should be governed by temperance, restraint and industriousness. The fourth virtue, justice, did not belong exclusively to any single class in the state, but permeated all three, depending upon the maintenance of a proper and balanced relationship between them.

For example, justice demanded that the divisions within society should be clearly recognised, and that each class should fulfil the peculiar function allotted to it; that the rulers should govern, that the soldiers should maintain the order and security of the state, that the workers should supply the material needs of the citizens. Once, however, the strict line of demarcation between the various classes was blurred, or the ruling power corrupted by the desire for glory or money or popularity, the inevitable outcome was anarchy. It was therefore essential that the rulers should be 'natural aristocrats', and not demagogues or sycophants pandering to the appetites of the mob. Only thus could it be ensured that just relationships would prevail between men in all stations of life. Otherwise, Plato foresaw a gradual deterioration in the standard of government, from aristocracy, through the ever-declining stages of oligarchy, timocracy, democracy (in its Platonic sense of Mob-rule) to the final degradation and misery of tyranny.

Similarly, within the individual, unless each faculty fulfils its appropriate function, there is confusion. But over and above the virtue which corresponds to the right operation of each function—wisdom to the healthy activity of the reason, temperance to that of the instincts or appetites, courage to that of the will or personal emotions—there is a simple quint-

1. More, Shelburne Essays 1X, pp.8-9; 22-29.
essential virtue infusing each division of the personality and uniting them into a single 'character'. 'In sooth real virtue is one and not many; it is the health and happiness of the whole soul, whereas the virtue of each faculty may have the effect of vice if exercised without proper subordination; it may be called justice in so far as it signifies a just equipoise of the faculties, permitting each to fulfill its own office without encroaching on the rights and duties of the others'.

In Plato's own words, '"the just man does not permit the several elements within him to interfere with one another, or any of them to do the work of others,— he sets in order his life, own inner \textit{kronik} and is his own master and his own law, and at peace with himself; and when he has bound together the three principles within him, which may be compared to the higher, lower and middle notes of the scale, and the intermediate intervals— when he has bound all these together, and is no longer many, but has become one entirely temperate and perfectly adjusted nature, then he proceeds to act, if he has to act, whether in a matter of property, or in the treatment of the body, or in some affair of politics or private business; always thinking and calling that which preserves and coöperates with this harmonious condition, just and good action, and the knowledge which presides over it wisdom; and that which at any time impairs this condition, he will call

\footnote{More, \textit{Shelburne Essays} V1, p.336.}
unjust action, and the opinion which presides over it, ignorance!"

The impulse of modern man has been to look for an objective standard of justice in the law and operation of nature in the animate world, where he finds the 'survival of the fittest' prevailing. But although our reason may tell us that much of the cruelty and suffering and annihilation involved in evolution is inevitable, our feelings as human beings are frequently outraged by the ruthlessness of nature's processes. Thus two elements enter into our attitude to nature, and our sense of justice demands the satisfaction of both our reason and our feelings; but nature is impervious to our demands. 'The fact is', says More, 'the very idea of justice and injustice has no real application to Nature. She proceeds by a law and for a purpose of her own, and to judge her by our human standards as we inevitably do if we judge her at all, is a pure fallacy! The very irrelevance of our moral standards to the natural world suggests, however, that our sense of justice is not derived from watching her calm method of dealing with her own, but springs from something within our breasts that is not subject to her sway, — from a law, that is, that transcends the material law of evolution, being, if we use words strictly, not natural at all, but supernatural.'

In the demands of our sense of justice upon nature, More here sees reflected man's idea of what the condition of

1. Quoted Ibid., p. 337.
justice in the soul must be. As Plato saw more clearly the nature of individual justice by drawing an analogy with the rôle of justice in the state, so More proceeds upon the similar principle of drawing an analogy with our attitude to nature. Here, as in Plato's analogy of the state, 'the mind unaccustomed to the painful labour of self-study can here see itself magnified, so to speak, and projected upon a screen'. In so far as our sense of justice would be fulfilled if we saw nature satisfying two different faculties of the soul—'the reason which demands that what is the stronger and more like itself should prevail, and the feelings, which demand that the higher should prevail with no suffering, but with the happy acquiescence of the lower'—we may infer that the soul itself would be in this ideal state if the relation of its own members satisfied these demands. Justice is therefore 'that government and harmonious balance of the soul which arises when reason prevails over the feelings and desires, and when this dominance of the reason is attended with inner joy and consenting peace; it is the right distribution of power and honour to the denizens within the breast of individual man'.

But not infrequently the triumph of reason is accompanied by the mortification of the feelings. 'We can have the approval of conscience only by controlling and, on occasion,

1. Ibid., p. 109.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.
3. Ibid., p. 110.
denying a stream of desires which spring up in the breast and clamour for free course; and this act of control, when it is exercised in the form of denial, is necessarily attended with some degree of pain.'

Were this all, man would naturally shrink from a subordination of his feelings, with its attendant pain, and like the sophist, Thrasymachus, equate wisdom with the gratification of sensual pleasure. He would feel the same repugnance in seeing the higher part of his nature triumph over the lower as he feels in seeing the higher triumph over the lower forms of life in the field of natural evolution when that entails the suffering of the lower. The difference lies in the fact that in nature, the higher and the lower of her creatures are separate and unrelated entities, whereas in man, the reason and the feelings are part of the same essential self. 'The just man may be, and often is, torn by the very conflict between the knowledge that he is satisfying the demands of his reason and the feeling of pain that arises from the suppression of certain desires; but the soul of the just man is nevertheless one soul, not two souls, however it may be divided against itself; and besides the feelings of pleasure and pain that trouble one of its members, he has another feeling, greater and more intimate, that belongs to his soul as a unit. This is the feeling of happiness which is not the same as pleasure.

1 Ibid., p. 111.
and may exist in the absence of pleasure, and despite the presence of pain; and opposed to it is the feeling of misery which is not the same as pain, and may exist in the absence of pain, and despite the presence of pleasure'. ---'Happiness is a state of the whole soul, embracing both the faculties of reason, on the one hand, and of the desires, with the feelings of pleasure and pain, on the other hand, or, one might say, it is the state of some superior element of the soul, which finds its good in the harmonious action of those faculties.' Not only is happiness the reward of that deep spiritual health which we call justice, but it is the warrant and test of that condition as well. Although at a given moment we may err in our judgment of what is right, we have a sure monitor of the will to act righteously in the present feeling of happiness or misery, and we have a hope — a divine illusion it may be, for it has never among men been verified by experience — that in some way and at some time happiness and misery shall be completely reconciled by nature 'who, by mysterious deviations beyond our mortal ken, is herself also a servant of the law of justice'.

But with this reconciliation, More was not immediately concerned during the Shelburne Essays. Any attempt to pass beyond a merely positivist affirmation would lead into the realm of metaphysics, and although he did not minimise the problem of evil at work frustrating the human attempt to achieve a balanced harmony of the faculties, at the time of writing

1. Ibid., p. 113; cf. Shelburne Essays VIII, pp. 251-52.
2. Ibid., p. 115.
3. Ibid., p. 116.
Series Six of the *Shelburne Essays* (1909), he was sufficiently satisfied with the Platonic psychology of *The Republic* to accept that as a working basis of his humanism, whilst repudiating Plato's attempts to go beyond the merely human in order to establish a theology and a cosmogeny as aberrations of the meddling intellect. 'It was in this direction that his outlook was to undergo so complete a revolution in the last two decades of his life. There is something almost prophetic in his words in the essay on 'The New Morality' in Series Nine when he wrote: 'To some few the only way out of what seems a state of moral blindness is through a return to an acknowledgement of the responsibility of the individual soul to its maker and inflexible judge. They may be right. Who can tell what reversal of belief may lie before us or what religious revolution may be preparing in the heart of infidelity?'

Between Series Six and Nine of the *Shelburne Essays*, evil, for him, had taken on a darker hue; contemporary events had tended to focus his attention on the imminence of the disaster following in the wake of the disruptive trends of which he had long been aware, but even in 1914, he was still convinced of man's ability to restore to his nature its lost wholeness by the strenuousness of his inner effort, and the application to his own experience of an all-embracing Socratic dialectic.

Virtue More defined as a mean lying between the two extremes of vice. 'Thus, temperance is the mean lying between intemperance, which is an excess in the indulgence of physical pleasure, and austerity which is a defect in such indulgence. Courage is the mean lying between rashness which is an excess of desire to venture or attack, and cowardice which is a defect of such desire. And so with regard to the other virtues and vices----
The real defect does not show itself in the vices, properly speaking, but in the lack of elevation, the petty faults, the ignoble hesitations, the tepid dullness which form the vast background of life. This meanness as contrasted with the golden mean, feebleness of temperament as contrasted with the control of the inner check'. Even moderation itself may become an excess as it did with the Greeks, and thus became the cause of moral degeneration. Indeed it is noticeable that nations have degenerated by virtue of the excess of their best characteristics: the Jews by virtue of their intense monotheism, the Hindus, of their ideal of religious renunciation, the Romans, of their imperial policy, just as individuals are betrayed into extremes of conduct by those very virtues which distinguish them from the common run of men.

Justice demands therefore an eternal vigilance lest even the best of men slip over inadvertently into some extreme of conduct. The ideal man of character is a

perfect balance of all the faculties. To achieve this requires years of self-discipline, a strenuous effort to hold in check the expansive desires, and a steady cultivation of the ethical imagination, 'A man of character is one in whom a vigorous disposition is continuously controlled by the habit of attention or the will to refrain. As character develops, the disposition takes on a more regular pattern; the impulses become harmonious as if arranged upon a centre, and display a kind of unity in multiplicity. The outcome of this in conduct is consistency, self-direction, balance of faculties, efficiency, moral health, happiness. At its highest development, the will would appear to act automatically, as if the troublesome choice among heterogeneous impulses had been surmounted.' Such a man gives the impression of such ease and grace, such sprezzatura, that it would appear all his actions and desires arise spontaneously, but such spontaneity is not to be confused with submission to the merely headlong rush of expansive desires. It is the outcome of an arduous and prolonged mediation between extremes of conduct which involves a tension made bearable only by constant.

Much of More's most rigorous criticism is directed against those who flagrantly despise the golden mean in favour of an excessive enthusiasm. This is his main quarrel with Tolstoy, Swinburne and Browning. They offend against the fundamental tenet of the Humanist ethic, the exercise of the inner check.

and the fundamental tenet of the Humanist aesthetic, that good taste is the mediation between sympathy and selection, the expansive and restrictive tendencies in literature. He admires, on the other hand, men of balance and moderation, even if by the world these characteristics are misinterpreted as compromise and time-serving. 'The place of Halifax is with those moderates who in the noise of tumultuous times often seem to be jostled about as weaklings, yet in the end, somehow, when sanity returns, appear to have had the stars and the forces of nature with them. When Falkland lost his life at Newbury—deliberately threw his life away, said some, in black despair—it may have looked as if his temporising course between King and Parliament had been as futile as it was perilous. Yet after Charles and Cromwell had played their parts, it was at the last the policy of Falkland and his kind which became the government of the nation, and, on the monument raised where he fell in battle we now read with commendation the inscription taken from Burke: "The rest is vanity, the rest is crime". And so, when Halifax died in retirement, it may have seemed despite the titles and decorations which were mocked by the Bishop of Salisbury, that his powers had been spent in a career of vain protest against the forces of the age; yet in the longer event England of the eighteenth century can be seen

to have owed its strength mainly to the balancing policy of him and a few men with him who resisted the current of the day.'

More's sympathies are with all those who, like J.H. Short-house in John Inglesant, are anxious "to promote culture at the expense of fanaticism, including the fanaticism of work" He too seeks to "to exalt the unpopular doctrine that the end of existence is not the good of one's neighbour, but one's own culture"! It is because of this that he resents the intrusion of humanitarianism with its constant emphasis on social service where he feels men would be better employed in cultivating their own souls. Similarly he resents the utilitarian or socialist conception of work, seeing it always in terms of labour value, which has replaced the intangible but invaluable achievement of working upon oneself. The ideal of the humane and rounded character has yielded to the emphasis on an aggressive and egocentric individualism, replacing reason as the ruling faculty with the personal emotions or even the instincts; and this chaos within the individual in turn aggravates and is aggravated by, a parallel confusion in society at large.

We have already seen that what is true of the interrelations within the self is true also, with reservations, of the state. More, however, saw the problem was not so simple as it

3. Ibid., p. 239.
had been posited by Plato. The unity within the individual is necessarily more intimate than that which exists within even the most organically conceived state. If the triumph of the higher element has frequently to be accompanied by the pain of the lower, the supremacy of the leaders, Plato's guides, must entail a certain hardship on the part of the working masses. Although when illuminated by the ethical imagination, the hierarchical conception of the state has a powerful appeal to the affections of men, moving them to coöperate of their own volition and thus operating on the purely human plane, nevertheless, for the majority of men, authority has to be imposed from above in order to coerce the various classes into a right relationship. ¹ Society, therefore, partakes in part of the nature of the natural world where the advantage of the higher form of development is achieved at the expense of the lower, by the operation of law. That, however, is but a half truth, and, by erecting it into a whole philosophy of life, the Nietzschean has brought into society the spirit of the jungle, the survival of the fittest, with its code of might is right. But equally false and dangerous to More is the erecting into a whole philosophy of the other half-truth, that an appeal to the imagination is sufficient to establish social harmony. This is the error of humanitarianism, socialism, equalitarianism. It would be pleasant, no doubt, says

¹ More, Shelburne Essays IX, p. 117.
² Ibid., pp. 117-19.
More, 'to feel that every man had all his desires gratified, but reason which is the faculty of seeing distinctions, binds us to believe that the State cannot progress in the orderly manner of evolution unless there, as in Nature, a certain advantage of honour accrues to those individuals who are themselves governed by reason, with the privilege of imposing their will upon those who, from the rational point of view, are inferior to them'.

'Social justice, then, is neither Nietzschean nor egalitarian. It is such a distribution of power and privilege, and of property as the symbols and instrument of these, as at once will satisfy the distinctions of reason among the superior, and will not outrage the feelings of the inferior. And if no precise rule can be given for striking this balance in law and institution, any more than an absolute code of morals can be formulated for the conduct of the individual, yet we have the same criterion for determining practically our progress towards this ideal as towards the ideal of individual justice. For there is a "pursuit of happiness" which is the right of every society and which differs totally in principle from the license of pleasure—a feeling, which, by permeating society, may in a measure transcend and reconcile the envious divisions of discontent. Social justice and personal justice are both measured by happiness'.

In society itself there is a perpetual tension between the individual and the social unit. To find the middle way

1. Ibid., p. 129.
2. Ibid., pp. 120-21.
between these two extremes was the dilemma of the Nineteenth Century. Whereas in the individual, the principle of control is the inner check, in society this function is fulfilled by law, the sovereign power behind all government. For More the wisest attitude to law is represented by Halifax and the Trimmers. "He looketh upon them as the chains that tie up our unruly passions, which else, like wild beasts let loose, would reduce the world to its first state of barbarism and hostility. The good things we enjoy we owe to them; and all the ill things we are freed from is by their protection. When all is said there is a natural reason of State, an indefinable thing grounded upon the common good of mankind, which is immortal, and in all changes and resolutions still preserveth its original right of saving a nation, when the letter of the law perhaps would destroy it, and by whatsoever means it moveth, carrieth a power with it that admitteth of no opposition, being supported by Nature, which inspireth an immediate consent at some critical time unto every individual member to that which visibly tendeth to the preservation of the whole."  

Such a conception of law is based, not on the Rousseauist belief in the natural goodness of man, but on a settled mistrust of the first motions of human nature. 'It is the experience of time against the desires of the present, a restraining force imposed upon the action of the nation com-

2. Ibid., loc. cit.  
parable to the habits grafted upon the individual man in childhood! With the decline of the older prescriptive aristocracy, it becomes essential that authority should pass to those best fitted to rule by right of natural, rather than of inherited, nobility. But they must first clear their mind of much that of the prevailing cant of equalitarianism and answer honestly questions which to More are fundamental to a true conception of the ruler's function: 'What is the true aim of society?' Does justice consist primarily in levelling the distribution of powers and benefits, or in proportioning them to the scale of character and intelligence? Is the main purpose of the machinery of government to raise the material welfare of the masses or to create advantages for the upward striving of the exceptional? Is the state of humanity to be estimated by numbers, or is it a true saying of the old stoic poet: *humanum paucis vivit genus*? Shall our interest in mankind begin at the bottom and progress upward, or begin at the top and progress downward?

The answer More finds in Shakespeare, in two speeches of Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida*: 'Take but degree away, untune that string' and 'For time is like a fashionable host'; nor was it an accident that these words were put into the mouth of the wisest of the Greeks. The same vision of universal order and degree has been shared by men of insight in many periods. More quotes from Sir Thomas Elyot's *Boke*

Named the Governour, published in 1531, which he describes as 'the Magna Carta of our education'; a book to which attention has been directed even more recently by Mr. C. S. Lewis in The Abolition of Man. "The scheme of the humanist might be described in a word as a disciplining of the higher faculty of the imagination to the end that the student may behold, as it were in one sublime vision, the whole scale of being in its range from the lowest to the highest under the divine decree of order and subordination, without losing sight of the immutable veracity at the praise and surname of virtue."

The power of such a conception of the State, blended with a belief in the mysterious and God-given power of law, is in its appeal to the ethical imagination. It was upon this secret that Burke seized in order to add colour and warmth to his advocating of prescription and prejudice. To the ideas of Hobbes on the social contract he added those of Hooker on the sweeping of divine universal law, harmonising them both with the newer conception of evolutionary growth, and appealing to the public, not on the plane of discursive reason, but of a living and vibrant insight into the mystery of Past, Present and Future as they are caught up in the primordial organism of the State. Much of Burke's appeal to man's profound love of pomp and pageantry is now no longer valid or desirable, but the ethical imagination

3. Ibid., p. 15.
4. Ibid., pp. 18-20.
is still the instrument whereby control of public opinion is to be effected, and a respect of law and social order restored. But whereas in Burke's union of aristocracy and inherited oligarchy with its outward splendour and dignity, there was a visible appeal to the corporate imagination of the people, the new 'spiritual' aristocracy which More hopes will take its place someday as the ruling body in society, has nothing definite or tangible by which to capture the native affections of men in general. More sees the educated classes comprising this new aristocracy, and before they can appeal to others, they must themselves recapture a sense of pride in their heritage and their destiny, in order to help them grasp in a single firm vision the whole course of human history. At present, education with its stress upon specialisation and individualisation is against such an object; but More looks forward to a restoration of the former ideal of an education inspired itself by a principle of mediation, a rounded and harmonious culture, holding itself one's responsibility to society and the perfecting of one's own inner life in a just and adequate balance. To this end he advocates the reintroduction of the Classics into the university curriculum as a compulsory mode of disciplining and humanising the intellect, in place of the existing elective system with its emphasis upon vocational training.

In so far as New Humanism is patently a reaction

1. Ibid., pp. 36-38.
against the cult of humanitarianism, it is obvious that, pressed to its extreme, it would of necessity pass over into its antithesis of Nietzschean imperialism or totalitarianism, as many of its opponents have accused it of doing. But this to fall into the trap of running to extremes against which More inveighed consistently during his whole career. Humanism, on the contrary, claimed to be a middle way, a philosophy of mediation in whichever of its aspects we consider it, individual, social, religious or literary. More's own ideal for the just society was one which depended on an attitude of mediation, temperance, toleration permeating all classes so that every man might go about his own business with integrity of purpose and freedom from jealousy and covetousness, holding in check his own expansive desires and working for the corporate good of the State, not only in its present actuality, but also in its symbolic potentiality, embracing past, present and future generations. Such an ideal is founded on an enlightened recognition of class distinctions and division of labour, on a conservatism infused with the light and warmth the ethical imagination can bring to play upon it and examining vitally its own premises lest it relapse into an inert authoritarianism. Such an ideal More claimed to hold in common with the men of insight throughout the centuries, from Plato through Burke down to Disraeli, and in theory at least it has a majesty himself and, as far as More is concerned, a disinterestedness, which engage the respect of even those who cannot accept it as

1. Cf. pp. 69-70
their own. Socialism he saw seeking to level mankind to a common mediocrity and uniformity; Conservatism, he believed, sought to raise men in accordance with their individual capacities, thus maintaining all the variety and efficiency of which nature is capable. Unfortunately, however, when it came to examining the state of contemporary society, More too often equated justice with the status quo. In his dread of social anarchy he saw threatening on all sides, he was prepared to tolerate injustice and individual hardship rather than unsettle further the social fabric by seeking reforms of which he was unable to foresee the consequences. 'It is better that legal robbery should exist along with the maintenance of law, than that legal robbery should be suppressed at the expense of law'. Such an assertion outrages our modern sense of justice to such an extent that that, and similar statements, have alienated from Paul Elmer More the sympathy, not only of out-and-out radicals, but of moderate thinking men who see in them only the vituperation of a sinister and obstinate reactionary. The majority of those who condemn him overlook the paradoxical basis of his thought. His dualism is founded on the consciousness of a deep and concise cleavage between the condition of our physical life, on the one hand, and our spiritual life, on the other, between our social selves and the deep underlying reality which no legislation or economics can touch. That there is an element of cruelty in the existing nature of law, More admits, but he also holds that 'there is a large portion of human activity lying quite

1. Ibid., p. 14.

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outside of the domain of physical constraint and legislation, and it is supremely jealous that the arms of government should not extend beyond their true province. All our religious feelings, our aspiring hopes, our personal morality, our conscience, our intellectual pursuits, all these things, and all they mean, lie beyond the law—all our individual life, as distinguished from the material relations of man with man, reaches far beyond the law's proper comprehension. But only in a society where the framework of legislation is fixed and stable has man freedom to develop his personal relations, just as only in a society where property is secure is it possible for men to be sufficiently free from financial cares to be able to develop the things of the mind and spirit without material distractions.

When it comes to applying his Platonic theories of statecraft to the actual situation in the America of his day, More tends to overlook the fact that society is already deeply vitiated by the false worship of Mammon, and that by upholding the order already firmly entrenched, he is seeking to stabilise the power, not of a true aristocracy, but of a plutocracy which has the virtues of either a prescriptive or a natural superiority to commend it. Too often in point of fact, during his Aristocracy and Justice, in seeking to re-establish some unpopular and forgotten truth, such as the necessity of each man's cultivating the just balance of his own inner life before becoming absorbed in schemes of social amelioration, More appears to be addressing

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his admonitions exclusively to the underdogs of society, and to the demagogues who claim to represent them, whilst overlooking the crudeness and selfishness of the leaders of industry and finance. It is this tendency which gives colour to the charge of his liberal critics that More was at heart one with the J. Pierpoint Morgans of his day, of the 'same temperament and habit of mind as a conservative banker'. Plato would never have advocated a society in which power depended on an accumulation of private property, for, as H.E. Cory pointed out in discussing More's plea for private property, property today is private in a sense formerly unheard of, and its influences upon its owners are ethically such that it cannot 'arouse the old spartan integrity, the old Horatian tenderness and solicitude'. Cory can sympathise with the demand for an aristocracy, for in the past the stability of an aristocracy 'gave the leisure necessary for the development of that kind of spirit which makes its economic necessities beautiful to a considerable extent.' But nowadays its influence has passed to the middle-class 'democratic' régime which might in turn produce its own species of art, were it not for the instability of fortunes made in industry and commerce. The bourgeoisie is the victim of financial fluctuations such as the landed aristocracy never had to undergo. Fortunes are made and lost overnight, so that its world is one of paupers and nouveaux riches, the latter,

as Ruskin and Morris knew, too vulgar to found a great art. Before they have time to develop aesthetically and ethically, their money evaporates, and there is a new crop of *nouveaux riches*. This world of American plutocrats was certainly not the New Humanist dream of the new aristocracy which was to foster the claims of art in F.J. Mather's vision of the future.

Not that More himself was under any such illusion, but to him the evil he knew was better than the evils he foresaw resulting from a widespread reign of socialism and culminating in the inevitable reaction of tyranny and repression. Against such a prospect of chaos, he sought to foster the gradually leavening effects of culture, the awakening of men of education and goodwill to a realisation of their responsibility towards themselves first of all, and then towards their fellow men, in making a right conception of the good life prevail. But in the intransigence of his absorption with justice, More at the time of *Aristocracy and Justice* seems to me to have made two mistakes. He failed to see that, in the onslaught against the positive powers of evil, the practical crusader has frequently to ally himself with others who may not be of the identical shade of opinion with himself, but whose ideals nevertheless tend in the same direction. In his dissatisfaction with humanitarianism, feminism, liberalism, he refused to discriminate between the true and the false elements within each idea, and because of the excesses to which certain phases

1. Ibid., loc. cit.
2. Cf. pp. 41-42.
of each movement had run, he repudiated violently the whole idea, thus denying in practice the very spirit of humanistic mediation he sought to expound in theory. He failed to make that very vital and pregnant distinction with which V.A. Demant is concerned in his *Religious Prospect* between liberal dogma, the naïve over-optimistic belief in the natural goodness of man advocated by the Rousseauist school, and liberal doctrine, the balanced and temperate assertion of the ultimate worth of the individual, inspite of all his weaknesses and inherent contradictions.

More serious, however, was More's failure to realise that few men are in a position to free themselves from their situation in society or from their own spiritual condition by a mere effort of the will. Dewey has commented on this weakness in the humanist campaign for moral re-armament: 'To ask the individuals who suffer the consequences of the general undermining and sapping produced by the Industrial Revolution to put an end to the consequences by acts of personal volition is merely to profess faith in moral magic'. But, as it happened, it was not to the masses that More's appeal for strenuous inner action was in the first instance addressed. Rather it was to the natural aristocracy that he appealed, that its members should be prepared to walk in the light as they saw it, and if anything of that light was conveyed by them to the benighted multitude, the better. Otherwise, the masses had to abide in their darkness, and be led by the few men who had seen the gleam. In the last resort, More's only

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message to the masses was the injunction that they should allow themselves to be led, to suppress their truculent, self-assertive appetites, and submit to those to whom they owed allegiance as their natural leaders. It was the leaders who had, by an effort of their personal volition, to bring their various faculties into a right and balanced relationship, to assume authority and responsibility, in short to become perfect in order to bring others to perfection, or at least to an approximation to it. But such an effort involved a tension wellnigh more exacting than could be borne, for not only was it necessary for such men to mediate and hold a balance between the claims of society and of their own individual lives. Even within themselves they had to mediate between two separate orders of values, religious and social. In their hearts 'the religious instinct murmurs' and yet 'at the same time the voice of the world may speak with equal weight'. In days of faith, as in the time of St. Francis, it was not so difficult to keep to a chosen path, but when faith grows dull and the 'all-levelling power of democracy has brought things spiritual and things worldly to the same plane — or so at least it looks to the eyes of men', the path is beset by countless difficulties. The essential is to try and keep one's balance. In Emerson's words: 'A man must ride alternately on the horses of his private and his public nature, as the equestrians in the circus throw themselves nimbly from horse

to horse, or plant one foot on the back of one and the other foot on the back of the other',

'Such a double life', comments More, 'he must lead, balancing between the two laws, but above all things taking care not to confuse the regions in which these laws are valid or to lose the distinction between this public and his private duty. To lose such a distinction is to fall forthwith into the shadows of hypocrisy and charlatanry; to maintain it ever before the inner eye and to judge honestly between the conflict of claims is the great problem which is left to the conscience of every man and to him alone'. But this is to reimpose upon the heart and conscience of man the very burden from which the Ancient World had, according to Matthew Arnold in his essay on 'Marcus Aurelius' so gratefully escaped into the fuller liberty of a religion of vicarious redemption; to bring back a religion of law for the religion of law which, to More, had become watered down to a mere impotent and anaemic sentimentalism. New Humanism, in its purely secular form was little more than an attempt to put back the clock to the pre-Christian era, to re-introduce the mood of Stoicism without its intellectualistic philosophy. In the last analysis, its philosophy of the just life for the individual presupposes that man has within him the power to follow the light as he sees it; that, knowing wherein his true interest lies, he will be strong.

1. Ibid., pp. 252-53.
2. Ibid., p. 253
and swift to pursue it. But to believe this is to overlook the deep fissure within human nature of which thinking men have been agonisingly aware since the dawn of civilisation. Ovid's \textit{meliora video probo\textit{, meliora sequor}} has been the experience of all men, in varying degrees, but especially of those who, wise and just themselves, have sought to lead others to the fullness of wisdom and justice. The question is bound to arise: 'Can humanism of itself, unaided, provide the purpose and values it needs for its fulfilment, and without which it cannot pass from the purely critical to the productive?' During the period of \textit{The Shelburne Essays} More had sought to prove it could, but there was something wanting. He was still left at the end of his spiritual journey through the realms of Hinduism and Platonism, like another Marcus Aurelius, 'wise, just, self-governed, tender, thankful, blameless; yet, with all this, agitated, stretching out his arms for something beyond—\textit{tendentemque manus ripae ulterioris amore}'. It had become increasingly evident to him that man's deepest aspirations could never be met on the purely human plane, and it was now imperative that he should explore how far he was entitled to probe into the realm of supernatural verities without forfeiting the claim to be still critical and positivist.

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Vll. Cosmos.


'Such then is the dualism of Plato in his latter years: on the one side God and Ideas, and on the other side this Necessity in the nature of things, which is his name for the incomprehensible fact that has kept men wondering since first they began to observe and question—the fact that somehow this world of harmonious interplay, this cosmos, is built upon a chaos of clashing individual forces.' But where is the place of man, and what in the cosmos corresponds to the innate sense of moral responsibility and judgment which sets him apart from the rest of creation? What in the sum of things responds to the cry of conscience for a spiritual peace that resembles the pacification of nature yet demands more than nature can give?

In an earlier chapter 'Chaos' we saw certain currents of contemporary thought which to More were militating against man's achieving a complete and satisfying life, whilst in 'Crisis' we examined various attitudes which More contrasts with the modern outlook and which he sought to adopt as a substitute for it; notably Orientalism, Platonism and then a fusion of the two in Humanism. The three were never as clearly defined or clearly distinguished from each other as the use of such terminology

2. Ibid. p.81.
might suggest, but the emphasis upon the respective constituents of his thought varied accordingly during the years of the Shelburne Essays, Hinduism yielding pride of place to Greek elements, which nevertheless were tempered and supplemented by vestiges of his former Orientalism.

The two basic questions of Plato's Republic were still possessing his mind even at the end of the Shelburne Essays: who is the just man, and what is justice in the state? With the second he had dealt in the Ninth Series of the Shelburne Essays Aristocracy and Justice, and the conclusions he had reached through an examination of the state of contemporary society confirmed him in his adherence to Platonism. Nevertheless, there still remained the question of finding a motive power sufficiently strong to put the conception of the just State into action once it had been formulated. And here once again More was faced with the problem of the individual. Even if the State reflects on a magnified scale the inner harmony and integrity of the just man, our contemplation of the State does not necessarily help us to discover what makes a man will to be just.

The Socratic thesis in the earlier dialogues, notably the Gorgias, had equated virtue and knowledge; it is ignorance that makes a man act wrongfully. No man would deliberately act contrary to his true interest, which is to do justly. Nevertheless, the Dialogue ends on a note of scepticism; how is a man to know in what his true interests consist; does happiness...
i.e., the satisfaction which derives from right-doing, coincide with pleasure; is it better under all circumstances to act justly, even if it involves present pain, or will the wise man enjoy his pleasures even though they are purchased at the price of justice? This is the issue which Plato takes up in The Republic, and in reply to the sweeping assertions of Thrasymachus and the more timid and tentative suggestions of the two sons of Ariston, he undertakes to show that it is better to be just under any circumstances. To make his case the more convincing he will imagine the most extreme instance in which the just man is adjudged unjust by his fellows and as such, subjected to the utmost ignominy and persecution, while another man who is really unjust and depraved has the reputation of justice and is loaded with every kind of honour. Is it better to be just or unjust under such circumstances, even if there is no hope of redress in a future life?

To the problem as he actually posited it, Plato fails to provide an answer within The Republic. What he does prove is that the unjust man cannot be happy under any circumstances, and he concludes that, conversely, the just man must be the happy man. But that is not to prove that the just man, however much he is misjudged and persecuted, is still, although without any hope of a reversal of his lot hereafter, the happy man.

The realisation of Plato's failure to come to grips with the fundamental thesis of the Dialogue became for More the turning-point in his own attitude towards religion.
The fact is that Plato's evasion of the issue raised by himself tacitly anticipates the verdict pronounced by Aristotle: "Those who say that a man on the rack—is happy, if he be good, either wittingly or unwittingly speak nonsense." How can it be otherwise? How indeed can there be any question of justice or the effect of justice? How can there be any moral philosophy in a world so constituted that the good man, for no fault of his own, with no prospect of release, with no hope of a future life with no lesson to learn, with nothing but the blank and hideous present, may be subjected to killing torment? In such a world is it anything but mockery to talk about eternal Ideas and the blessedness of dwelling in their contemplation? And so suddenly, in the Tenth book, Socrates makes his appeal to the belief in the immortality of the soul and in the providence of a God who so governs the world that in the long lapse of time the justice of circumstances shall correspond with our inner sense of what is just, while righteousness and happiness become truly and fully synonymous.

But to introduce the gods and an after-life was to go back upon the very condition proposed, for belief in the immortality of the soul and in the existence of a just God had been voluntarily suspended at the outset of Plato's argument as non-essential to the purely philosophical thesis that the just man may be shown to be happy even in extremis.

'There is, I admit', More continues, 'something startling, almost disconcerting in this view of The Republic. Did Plato
really believe, as he seems to assume, that the unmitigated hypothesis of the second book was established by the illustrations given in the eighth and ninth books? Did it escape his notice that the religious concession of the tenth book is not, as he declares it to be, a mere addition to, or confirmation of, the argument of the earlier books, but is virtually an admission that the great philosophical thesis, if taken literally, was untenable and at bottom meaningless? I will not presume to answer this question, but I can see that what lies behind the apparent opposition of the two theses of the dialogue is a shift in interest, or emphasis, relatively to the two elements, morality and otherworldliness, which enter into religious philosophy."

This was something which More had not realised at the time of writing The Religion of Plato, and which was to have far-reaching effects upon the direction of his thought in the final volumes of The Greek Tradition. Its importance has been strangely under-estimated by many of his critics who do not appear to recognise the clear break it was bound to cause with More's previous views, including those expressed in the earlier volumes of The Greek Tradition. More himself, however, made no secret

1. Ibid, pp. 257-258.
of the change. We have his *Confessio Fidei* in the Preface to
the third edition of *Platonism*, 1931, in which he reviewed the
final scope of *The Greek Tradition*, and put forward his explana-
tion of the inconsistency the reader might feel between the first
edition of *Platonism* and the later volumes on Christianity and
*The Catholic Faith*. To illustrate the shift of emphasis which oc-
curred some time after the first edition of *Platonism*, More
quotes from the Preface to that volume, and then sets beside it
comments which reflect his attitude at the time of the third
edition. The two passages are of the utmost importance to a
correct understanding of the development of More's religious
thought, and so, in spite of their length, I give them in full.

"Only through the centralising force of religious faith or
through its equivalent in philosophy can the intellectual *light*
life regain its meaning and authority for earnest men. Yet, for
the present at least, the dogmas of religion have lost their hold,
while the current *philosophy* of the schools has become in large
measure a quibbling of specialists on technical points of minor
importance, or, where serious, too commonly, has surrendered to the
that flattery of the instinctive elements of human nature which is
the very negation of mental and moral discipline.

"It is in such a belief and such a hope, whether right or

Vide Appendix C

2. The change had, however, taken place before the Second edition,
wrong, that I have turned back to the truth, still potent and fresh and salutary, which Plato expounded in the troubled and doubting days of Greece—the truth which is in religion but is not bounded by religious dogma, and which needs no confirmation by miracle or inspired tradition. The first task before me was to see this philosophy in its naked outlines, stripped of its confusing accessories and cleared of the misunderstandings which, starting among the barbarians of Alexandria, have made of Platonism too often a support instead of a corrective of the disintegrating forces of society. This I have attempted to do, with imperfect success, no doubt, in the present volume.”

‘The truth which is in religion but is not bounded by religious dogma,—it is this that I sought to clarify and expound in the Vanuxem Lectures, and it is to this that I looked for a guiding thread through the projected study of Christian origins. And from that point of view there has been no retreat. It seemed to me then that in the Platonic doctrine of Ideas such a truth was once given the world, and that without a conviction of spiritual and moral values as dynamic realities to which all our thinking and all our acting are in some way held responsible, to which even the lower behind the world, whether it be named the Demi-Urge of Plato or the Jehovah of Christian theology, must submit for the norm of creative energy—it still seems to me that deprived of this conviction our I. Platonism, Series 1.
talk about philosophy is empty chatter and our religion a progress to the abysmal void of pantheism or absolute transcendentalism. It is the same truth, somewhat differently formulated, that, in the wisdom of the East appears as the stupendous belief in Karma. It is the truth, I am sure, by which the man in the street, so long as his mind has not been perverted by confused echoes from the schools, guides his faltering footsteps. It springs from the deepest and most constant experience of life, deeper and more constant than the syllogistic conclusions of reason, and without it our discussions are vain and our hopes of mutual understanding foredoomed. As St. Augustine says: Si non sit intus qui doceat inanis fit strepitus nostrer.

'But is it a fact that this truth needs no confirmation by miracle or inspired tradition? Fresh and salutary the Platonic doctrine of Ideas still is, as it has ever been, but of its potency, unsupported by outer signs, I began to be not so sure. Longer reflection on the events of history, and on the needs of human nature raised the persistent question whether just such a confirmation was not required if Platonism was to be converted from a mental luxury for the few to a faith which could stir the sluggish heart of the world, to a power indeed which could meet the spiritual demands of the individual soul. So it happened that I came in the course of my studies to see in the central dogma of Christianity as it were a realisation in fact of the dualism which Plato had divined as a theorem of
philosophy, and the foreordained consummation of the Greek Tradition. What had allured the mind as a beautiful myth assumed gradually the awful dignity of revelation. In this sense it may be affirmed that Christ the Word and The Catholic Faith are not inconsistent with this introductory volume though the point of view has in a manner changed.¹

Exactly how and when the change took place, apart from its preceding Christ the Word and The Catholic Faith, More does not tell us; but obviously the crux of his thinking was the issue of the Platonic Ideas, of the potency of which, he tells us, he began to be in doubt. It is not too much, I believe, to identify this shift of emphasis with More's discovery of Plato's failure to answer satisfactorily the problem he had posed at the beginning of The Republic, a discovery which we know took place between the composition of The Religion of Plato in 1921, and of Christ the Word in 1927. Even Professor Shafer, in his most competent treatment of the genesis and growth of The Greek Tradition, tends, I feel, to overemphasise the shift of opinion between Platonism and The Religion of Plato, at the expense of the much more radical break with his previous thought which occurred sometime after The Religion of Plato.

The core of the volume on Platonism is More's study

². Cf. p. 120 and Platonism, p. 90, giving note from Second Edition.
⁴. Ibid., pp. 252-53.
of the three Socratic theses which prompted Plato's search for truth: an intellectual scepticism, a spiritual affirmation, and a tenacious belief in the identity of virtue and knowledge. Scepticism to Socrates was no mere indifference to the truth. It entailed a rigorous questioning of the solicitations of both reason and the senses, and a continuous exercise of the will which made it the most difficult of all intellectual positions to maintain. Honest doubt was to Socrates the beginning of both philosophy and morality; 'of philosophy, since only those are prompted to philosophise truly who are ignorant and, at the same time, aware of their own ignorance; of morality, since only those will feel the compelling of a higher will who have seen through the illusory curtain of the senses.' Scepticism is, therefore, complementary rather than antagonistic to true spiritual insight, 'the negative aspect of the same intuitive truth of which spiritual affirmation is the positive aspect.' Only by a constant interrogation of a host of affirmations which claim to speak in the name of the spirit can one guard against deception.

But whereas scepticism and a spiritual affirmation may well concur, it is not so easy to see where the third thesis fits in. The 'term 'Knowledge', as used by Socrates, obviously refers, not to a Pyrrhonic acquiescence in the solicitations of the present, but to that larger calculation of life in the terms of pleasure.

1. More, Platonism, p. 4.
2. Ibid., p. 6.
3. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
4. Ibid., p. 8.
and pain which from his day to this has been the mark of the rationalising utilitarian. As we know better, he would say, the near and remote consequences of our acts in those terms, we are enabled to conduct ourselves more prudently, and this prudence is virtue. 'How,' goes on More, 'one asks in some bewilderment, can a teacher maintain such a thesis as this, yet as a sceptic reject the authority of the senses, and as a mystic avow that his morality depends on a superrational intuition? How can the same man be an rationalising utilitarian and a sceptical mystic?'

It is of interest to notice, at the outset of The Greek Tradition, More's own awareness of the paradox, for this is the very inconsistency with which Mr H. Bamford Parkes taxes More himself when he accuses him of confusing a morality which answers to certain transcendental laws, i.e. a spiritual affirmation, with a morality which is purely empirical and utilitarian. The difficulty, it would appear, lies not in More's thought, but is inherent in the Socratic approach to philosophy, and it was with this very paradox that Plato himself sought to grapple in order to find some means of reconciling the three separate strands of Socratic thought. Socrates himself, it seems, never attempted to find an interpretation of the word 'knowledge' which would reconcile his third thesis with the other two. For the most part, he was content to enunciate his three principles as independent truths, and to

1.Ibid., pp. 9-10.
2.Ibid., p. 10.
3.Cf. p. 269., and Appendix C.
enforce now one and now the other of them as occasion prompted, leaving to his disciples, the creators of the so-called Socratic schools, the labour of constructing from them what properly may be regarded as a philosophic system.

At the outset of his philosophical career, Plato was thus beset by a double problem, first of justifying separately his rationalism and his higher intuition, and then of harmonising these two seemingly contradictory positions. According to the evidence, it would appear that Socrates himself had faced and solved the problem of rationalism raised by his identification of virtue and knowledge, and to this extent Plato could draw upon the philosophic experience of his master. At the end of the Charmides, Socrates drops a hint that virtue and knowledge may both be identified with the sum of pleasures ordinarily called happiness, and upon this hint Plato proceeds to build in the Protagoras. "Virtue is an act which will result in a greater sum of pleasure, and he will be the virtuous man who has the knowledge that enables him to calculate the consequences of his conduct, and to strike a balance in the terms of sensation. Knowledge has been defined by the content of pleasure and pain, and by such a definition we can say that no man errs, or sins, willingly, but only through ignorance." Such is the kernel of the Socratic equation of virtue and knowledge which still persists in the form of utilitarianism in the modern world.

1. Ibid., p.13.
2. Ibid., p.32 ff.
3. Ibid., p.41.
4. Ibid., p.43.
When combined with other teachings of a different order, utilitarianism, or hedonism, as More also calls it, has an element of truth, but when taken alone, as it is expressed in the *Protagoras*, it is inadequate, if not false. This brought out in the *Gorgias* where Callicles, the advocate of sensual indulgence is forced by Socrates to admit at last that some pleasures are so degrading that even those with the most coarsened appetites recoil before them. This admission introduces a qualitative standard of discrimination where before Callicles had been upholding a purely quantitative standard, and so, under the pressure of Socratic argument, he has to confess that it is the temperate man who is the good man. "And the good man must do well and honourably whatever he does, and he who is doing well must be blessed and happy, and the bad man who is doing ill must be miserable."

So Socrates appears to have won a victory over his adversaries, but, as More points out, it is a victory illegitimately gained. 'To do well in Greek means both 'to prosper', 'to be fortunate' and 'to act righteously, justly'. Callicles would have been ready from the first to admit that to do well in the sense of 'being fortunate' was 'to be happy'. If now he makes no objection to the other meaning, that 'to do well' in the sense of 'acting righteously' is 'to be happy' it is because he has been browbeaten by Socrates into subjection. But such a confusion

between the natural standard of prosperity and the moral standard of righteousness, which More, with typical humanistic optimism, calls also 'the common sense of mankind', ought never silence to have been allowed to pass without comment. Plato's dilemma is obviously evidence of his dilemma, whether conscious or unconscious, and Socrates is made to fall back on his usual scepticism, saying that he cannot tell 'how these things are' although he still affirms that virtue is happiness. The moral standards would appear to be based, not on rational argumentation, but on an insight frequently at variance with the evidence which reveals the just man suffering and the unjust enjoying the prizes of life. In support of his affirmation, Socrates can produce no positive logic or facts of observation. Instead he turns for his vindication from philosophy to mythology, ending with an account of the pagan day of judgment when the soul is sentenced to reward or punishment according to its merits. If the myth were true, the sanction of religion would certainly strengthen the common intuition of morality, but what if the myth be rejected? More himself at the time was far from willing to admit such a succedaneum to a feeble cause. Unless the case could be proved within the limits of philosophy it was suspect. To grapple with this problem, Plato in the Republic sets himself, as we have seen, to prove that even if there be no gods, or if they are unjust or indifferent, the just man is still, even in an extremity of suffering, the happy man.
on his ability to prove his case depends the legitimacy of his assumption in the Gorgias.

We have already seen the outline of Plato's argument in The Republic, and know that after tracing the moral declension of the tyrant into the slough of abomination, he concludes that the happy man must necessarily be his opposite, i.e. the just and temperate man. Nevertheless, we know too, what More did not realise at the time, that Plato had not fulfilled the original premises. At the time of the first edition of Platonism More was perfectly satisfied with the conclusion Plato had reached and felt that it confirmed philosophically the truth already reached intuitively by the exercise of the 'common sense of mankind' in the Gorgias. So far the outstanding merit of Platonism to More was that it proceeded upon a philosophical basis, and only when it had satisfactorily established that did it soar into the realms of religion and mythology.

We are still left, however, in some doubt about the Platonic use of the term 'knowledge'. It becomes plain that Plato not only distinguishes between the natural and the moral, but also between the corresponding emotions which are experienced within those two separate orders, pleasure and happiness. Likewise the activities which those emotions accompany and the motives underlying them will be distinct. Pleasure, deriving as it does from our contact with the phenomenal world of nature, depends on

1. Ibid., p. 55.
2. Ibid., p. 77; cf. pp. 388-95.
4. Ibid., pp. 77-79.
5. Ibid., p. 100.
those impressions and sensations which are known to us by
means of opinion. But Plato asserts that besides opinion we
have knowledge. 'The operation of this faculty we may not be
able to analyse, but it is there, within our souls, giving us
certain information of the everlasting reality of righteousness
and loveliness in themselves, as things apart from the flux,
and bidding us look to God of these realities for the measure
of our nature. The 'knowledge' with which virtue is equated
in the Socratic hedonism is mere opinion, as distinct from the
knowledge of the spirit; but in contrast to"virtue" taken to
indicate correct conduct and including the specific virtues of
courage, temperance and justice, there is a wider meaning of
virtue as synonymous with 'morality', used for that higher unity
in which the individual virtues converge and are consummated.
'It is a kind of wisdom— not prudence, but the mind or intell­
igence— working in him who is able not only to discern the
many different activities of life but to look beyond them; the
divine vision of him, who, whatever may be the field of observ­
behold
ation, is able to behold the changeless law above all change. It
is the knowledge, religiously speaking, of the gods, that they
are and that they govern the world by a beneficent design.'
It is this spiritual intuition which constitutes true knowledge,
and it is in this context that Plato employs normally the name
of Reason. When, however, he passes from epistemology to ethics,

1.Ibid., p.113.
2. Ibid., p.104.
he fails to distinguish clearly between his use of the term for the higher of the two elements of the soul whereby it aspires to true knowledge, and the prudential element of the lower element whereby it operates on the level of opinion. The higher reason, according to More's interpretation of the Platonic ethic, manifests itself negatively in the form of an inner check upon man's restless appetites and personal emotions, but when it comes to explaining the relation between the inner check, or spirit, or higher Reason, and the concupiscent element of the soul, man has never been able to find a satisfactory answer. All the same, the heart of man craves for some solution, and here it is that Plato introduced his great doctrine of Ideas, seeking through an effort of the imagination to effect practically and intuitively what could not be effected intellectually.

'The central truth of dualism is a recognition of the absolute distinction between the two elements of our conscious being, and an admission of the impossibility of finding any rational positive explanation of the mutual interaction of these two elements—- But the human mind cannot rest comfortably in this state of mere negation; it is impelled by its very nature to seek some positive expression for these super-sensational facts of consciousness, and it is just here that another faculty, the imagination, steps in to perform what was impossible to the

2.Ibid.,p.169.
reason. In its lower activity the imagination is the power by which the sensations derived through the organs of sight and the rest are projected outside of the mind as objects of perception. The imagination can also go beyond this function and, after recombining at pleasure the data of perception, can project these new combinations into the void as things having to the mind a certain degree of independent existence. Thus, the landscape conceived by the poet is thrown out into the world of objective existences. And so, by a still higher activity, the imagination essays to deal with those of sensation. Justice, which, to the reason, was only a negation of our positive impulses, is, like the creation of the artist, projected outside the soul so as to become a positive entity with a life and habitation of its own, and the soul under the control of moral force seems itself to be reaching out to touch and take into possession that to which it has given form and motion from its own experience.

'These imaginative projections of the facts of moral consciousness are the true Platonic Ideas.'¹ There is here obviously a certain confusion in More's own mind with relation to Idealism. He recognises the validity of the Platonic myth of pre-existent and eternal Ideas in human experience, but when he seeks to discuss it, he tends inspite of himself to give the impression that he is attempting to dissolve the

1. Ibid., pp. 187-88.
Ideas into a mere imaginative projection of the human desire for a centre of abiding calm and reflection amid the impressions of the flux; in other words, a mere wish fulfilment without a reality prior to, or separate from, the human mind. He thereby seems to fall into the very error for which he blames the modern romanticists like Professor Santayana, who, while seeing clearly enough that Ideas are the property of the image-making faculty, treat them as if they were something created by a purely spontaneous power ex nihilo, and so deprive them of their eternal and authoritative validity. Such an attitude Plato would have repudiated scornfully, as More knows. He 'would not say precisely with Santayana that the imagination furnishes to religion those large Ideas in which alone a great mind finds itself at home, but rather that the imagination gives vitality to the moral facts that are furnished it by religion.' Further Plato would have denied that the correspondence of Ideas with truth cannot be demonstrated; the work of the imagination unless it answers in the fullest measure to known truth is not an Idea at all. 'Ideas are the product of the imagination, but of the imagination working upon material given to it by the immutable law of morality; the truth is present to our consciousness before this act of transformation, and has no more authority, though it may be clothed with more persuasion, after it has been evoked for the inner eye as a form than it had previously to that evocation.' Without this amplification, More's 'imaginat-

3. Ibid., p. 190.
4. Ibid., p. 183.
5. Ibid., p. 193.
ive projections of the facts of moral consciousness leave us with a very different impression of his meaning.

Although Plato, at the outset, divides his Ideas into rational and ethical, the former conveniently drop out of consideration, and, focussed on and his main concern is with the ethical Ideas which appear to the soul as his models appear to the artist as he strives to imitate them. So entranced does Plato become with the similitude that he carries it beyond the demands of imagery into the region of mythology. By the time of the Phaedrus, the Ideas are no longer described as images floating before the soul but have been transmuted into shining realities existing forever in an empyrean realm which was the prenatal home of the soul and whither the soul, purged of mortal passion, may return in visionary mood, to behold, unimpeaded by earthly distractions, the divine spectacle of justice and temperance and knowledge in their unadulterated glory. Normally, as Plato shows, in the Meno, man is haunted by dim and transient memories of what he once beheld face to face, but in the Symposium, he draws a clearer, more definite picture of that Uranian love which carries the desires of the soul upward to a participation in the divine Ideas, and which in itself constitutes the true philosophy.

The question naturally remains whether Plato himself considered the Ideal world as a metaphor, or are the Ideas in fact bodied forms that reveal themselves to us in moments of exaltation. To More the answer seemed to be that they were at once a reality and illusion, but the very soul of Platonism is to leave these higher

2. Ibid., p. 200.
matters in their own evasive liberty. None the less for that, the concept is charged with an emotional power which, especially in the allegory of the cave, seems to offer man the noblest intuition of divine and eternal values to which man had yet attained and as such, passes from pure philosophy into the realm of religious insight.

As the plan for the Greek Tradition unfolded itself more clearly during the years succeeding Platonism, More came himself to see that the Platonic humility in the presence of these mysteries was inherited, not by any of the would-be Platonic doctrines which derived in different proportions from the various emphases on the three Socratic theses, but by Christianity which was also content to abide in the consciousness of human dualism without forcing man's experience into a rationalistic reconciliation of the paradox. Platonism had in the first edition been announced as the foundation for a series of studies on the origins and early environment of Christianity, and on various modern revivals of a philosophic religion. By the time of the Religion of Plato (1921), More had modified his previous plan, and now envisaged the core of the work more or less as it was subsequently to be published, its second volume dealing with Hellenistic philosophies, notably Epicureanism, Stoicism and Neo-Platonism, the third on Christianity, and the fourth 'containing a number of essays on fundamental questions raised in the course of the foregoing studies.'

A last volume on Aristotle had been contemplated, but remained

1. Ibid., pp. 195-97.
unfinished on More's death.

These together with The Religion of Plato were to form a single connected thesis to which Platonism was to serve as an introduction. Owing, however, to the fact that when it was written the whole project of the series was not clearly formed, some things in it were included which belonged more properly to the body of the work, and some were omitted which might naturally have been expected there in an introduction to the whole series. It follows too that had of necessity to be a shift of emphasis in order to reconcile the Platonic tradition more intimately with what was to come after it, and so in the opening chapter, More proceeds to examine the components of religion and their relative importance in Greek and Christian thought. These he divides into philosophy, theology and mythology. Philosophy, to both classical and the later Patristic writers, had 'a double application. At one time it was taken ethically or practically, to designate a certain self-mastery in conduct, while at another time its sense was intellectual, appearing in More's judgment, to rise into the regions of pure intuition. Nevertheless, even when most theoretical, the term philosophy, as he uses it, still retains something of its simple practical value; 'it implies always a theory as concerned with actual life and as resting on a definite experience of the soul', thus bridging over the apparent gulf between the two applications of the term, while remaining completely distinct from 'the abuse of reason to which the name of metaphysics may be restricted', the sense, unfortunately which is all too often

1. The earlier Christian writers were merely hostile to a mode of thought which they considered opposed to Revelation.
3. Ibid., p. 10.
attached to it. The other two components of religion are theology and mythology, and in order to emphasise their distinctness from philosophy, More restricts his use of the term 'religion' to them. By theology More means the study of the being and the nature of God, and again he excludes from his usage of the term the various attempts at a rationalised explanation of the divine mystery. Theology finds its natural concomitant in the symbolism of mythology, a term the use of which More is careful to explain to orthodox believers. 'Because the unsavoury escapades of a pagan god are called myths, it does not follow that any disrespect is intended to the incarnation of Christ by treating it also under the head of mythology. A myth may be false and silly; it may be the vessel, more or less transparent, of sublime truth.'

These three elements are common to all the thinkers whom More would include within the Greek tradition, from Plato to St. Chrysostom. But to the pagan, particularly the Platonist, philosophy was the dominating element: this was the starting point of religion and the sphere where certainty is attainable by man; here he thought he was dealing with facts and standing on a foundation of proved knowledge. In theology he thought he was still close to ascertainable truth, yet removed a step from the region of immediate experience. Mythology carried him further afield from positive assurance, though it might be indispensable as the expression, more or less, symbolical, of necessary truths.' The mind of the Christian moved in the reverse way. For the orthodox believer, what the pagan

1. Ibid., p. 15.

2. Ibid., p. 17.
called mythology was the starting point of religion and the field of certainty. 'The incarnation, with the whole economy of salvation, he regarded as a verifiable event, in which the imagination had no part; unless this fact was nakedly and objectively true, his faith was vain and his preaching a lie. Symbolism for him entered with theology; and though he might be ready to perish for his conception of the Trinity, he would not deny that his terms for the relation of the three persons, one to another were inadequate translation into human speech of truths that surpassed mortal comprehension. In a way, his theological definitions were admittedly more symbolical than the Platonist's. The divergence becomes again complete when we pass to philosophy. Here where the Platonist thought he could move securely if anywhere, the Christian, so far as he distinguished philosophy from revelation saw only the blind groping of a ruined intelligence, which, unaided by divine grace, might catch a glimpse afar off and shrouded in clouds and thick darkness, of its true home, but in the end must sink into doubt and despair'.

At the time of *The Religion of Plato*, More holds the balance evenly between the two approaches to the burden of the mystery. His immediate concern is with the Platonic approach, but he is equally sensitive to the need of many devout men for religious sanctions founded on mythology. The central problem of Platonic philosophy is the existence of a law of righteousness prior to, and if needs be independent of, God, and the

1. Ibid., p.19.
2. Ibid., p.43.
happiness which comes to the man who lives in accordance with it irrespective of his circumstances in this life or in the world-to-come. For the religious man, 'whose faith is founded primarily on mythology there is no certainty in the life of righteousness save in the judgment to come—

"As He pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed'.

Without this expected reversal of the conditions of the actual world there is no moral law; right and wrong, justice and injustice, are but empty names; we live under clouds of confusion and ignorance beyond which rides no sun. For the Christian our existence must ever be a state of hope nourished by belief in the particular myth of Christ's redeeming act of sacrifice, and if we are deceived in this belief, then are we, as St. Paul says, "of all men the most miserable". ¹ On the other hand, it was precisely the hypothesis of Plato that this judgment to come should be eliminated, and that by an exaggeration of the apparent confusions of this life, the difficulty of determining right and wrong should be faced without flinching. To More at the time of *The Religion of Plato* it was still possible to say of Plato attempted reconciliation of rationalism and morality that 'his method has at least the merit of boldness'. ²

In *Platonism*, More's own interest had been centred largely upon Plato's attempt to solve the problem of knowledge and justice in the light of this human consciousness of

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¹Ibid., pp. 44-45.
²Ibid., p. 46.
³Ibid., loc. cit.
dualism, but by the time of The Religion of Plato, he was prepared to probe further into issues which spring immediately from it, such as the question of the soul's immortality with which Plato dealt in the Phaedo and the Symposium. This question, as More admits, carries us to the borderline between philosophy and theology, for throughout the whole of the Greek tradition, life beyond the grave was intimately bound up with the being and nature of the Divinity. And so it is not surprising that in the Laws, one of Plato's most elaborate arguments for the immortality of the soul should also seek to prove the existence of God. Nevertheless, as long as in discussing the duration of the soul we build on the soul's knowledge of itself, according to More's definition of philosophy, we are still within its province. What Plato, however, affirms intuitively, the Christian upholds by an appeal to mythology, adhering to belief in an immortality confirmed and illustrated by the Resurrection of Christ. What the Christian finds symbolised in a myth and afterwards proceeds to discuss philosophically, Plato affirms philosophically and then proceeds to confirm and illustrate by a myth.

Similarly when Plato considers the existence of the Gods, he derives his primary evidence from the soul's own consciousness of itself. Upon this foundation of immediate experience and intuition, he builds a superstructure of religion, including both theology and mythology. The philosophy of the soul taught us that there is something within us set apart from the sway of passion,

2. Ibid., pp. 66-67.
unchanged amid all that changes, our truer Self; and by analogy, God, who is conceived in the likeness of the soul, ought also to be immutable, incapable of falsehood, without blushing of evil'. Goodness, wisdom, truth — all moral qualities — these are the attributes of God, but of omnipotence, omniscience, ubiquity and the other abstract qualities of metaphysics, More finds not a word. It is on this very issue that it seems to him so many of Plato's would-be followers have gone awry, in the first place by identifying God with Ideas, and in the second, by denying to God a personality. God is good and wise and true, but He is not Goodness or Wisdom or Truth. Ideas are separate and independent entities, a pattern from which God worked, but not synonymous with God, or even, as supposed, conceptions of the Divine mind. Although hitherto he has stressed the splendour and potency of the Ideas as self-existent realities, here More tends to turn back on his argument as he contrasts them as merely philosophical entities with the vivid anthropomorphism of God. Of anthropomorphism, he has more to say in another volume. Here he is content to refute the fallacy that because the Greeks had no term corresponding to our 'person', they were deficient in the conception of personality, and the further fallacy that personal immortality is incompatible with Plato's Idealism. The God whom Socrates served and Plato preached was no empty generalisation of metaphysics, although More admits that their reticence before the divine mystery to which the Jews had access by prophecy and the Christian through the In-

1. Ibid., p. 118.
carnation, left the Platonic Deity 'a pale conception by the side of Jehovah or of the divinely compassionate Father, a conception lacking comparatively in driving force and wanting in some of the deeper human considerations.' Nevertheless, for all that is necessary to the religious life of a man, for the large things of the spirit, it seemed to More at the time that the theology of Plato was sufficient. This much we know— and it is the gist of the matter— that 'the souls of men are not set adrift in a soulless world, either to fortify themselves in the harsh pride of indifference or to sink down in abject terror at the thought of their loneliness'. The Platonist is not called upon to endure the blank misgivings of a practical atheism that has not numbed the imagination into sleep, such as haunted a Lucretius or a Spencer. Not only is there a Supreme Being, but the religion of Plato allows the individual believer to participate fully in the corporate worship of the state, whilst infusing the traditional ritual with a new insight which varies with the degree of inspiration to which he has personally attained.

But even with the immediate persuasion that the Creator and Sustainer of the universe is just and wise and true and immutable, man is still left with apparently insoluble problems. Providence may be the working of God's goodness and wisdom, the inexorable rigour of divine justice may be the corollary of His truth and immutability, and yet the evidence of our senses

1. Ibid., p.125.  2. Ibid., p.126.  3. Ibid., pp.288-91; cf. Ibid., p.297.  4. Ibid., pp.126-27.
drives us to admit a certain degree of injustice and confusion in
the lives of men. Plato's answer to the dilemma is to be found in
not the Timaeus and elsewhere. God is omnipotent, as metaphysics would
assert, nor was creation an act complete and definitive in itself
whereby the Creator of his own volition created something out of
nothing. Rather was it 'the approximate and continuous subjection
to law and order of a subsisting chaos which never succumbs per-
fectly to restraint and never entirely yields up to its own spasm-
odic impulse.' To the age-long question: Unde malum? Plato returns
what seems to More the most satisfying answer of all thinkers. To
Plato the thought of a Creator and a thing created implied neces-sarily
the presence of a substance out of which the object is creat-
ed: this sullen and resistant substratum of matter he called Nec-
essity or Ananke, and from it he envisaged God, as the Demi-urge,
fashioning his creation as far as possible in accordance with the
pattern of the Ideas. Necessity thus corresponds at the lower end
of the cosmic scale to the Platonic conception of Ideas at the
higher. Within the human soul itself there are two parts corres-
dponding to the cosmic dualism of Ideas and Necessity, though as
we have seen before, the division, especially in connection with
Reason, is a delicate and frequently an elusive one. Indeed the
whole creation of the soul of man is seen by Plato as a complic-
ated process, for, after creating the lesser gods, the Demi-urge
took what remained of a now-deteriorated soul-stuff to create in
dividual souls which he then handed over to the lesser gods for

further guidance and shaping. 'From their hands is derived the mortal element of the soul,' having in itself dreadful and compellin passions—pleasures first, which are the greatest incitement to evil, then pains to frighten away good, and besides these confidence and fear, witless counsellors both, and wrath hard to appease, and alluring hope. Having mingled these with irrational sensation and love that stops at nothing, they composed as they could the mortal soul of man'. It is not that pleasure and pain, or the desires and emotions connected with them, are totally depraved in themselves— but they contain the principle of evil in so far as they belong by nature to that which in itself is without measure and tends by inertia to endless expansion. Whereas orthodox Christianity has seen overweening pride and ambition to be the root of evil in man, Platonism finds it in that deficiency of energy, indolence, effeminate slackness (rhathymia) whereby the soul of man is kept from attending to the higher promptings of the inner check. Without such control, man's instincts run to evil, and the art of life consists in disciplining them by some external standard which may reinforce the divine veto power and counteract the effects of rhathymia, and its companion evil, amathia, or ignorance, which are the true enemies of the Delphic oracle, 'Know thyself'.

Such a mythology does not attempt to solve the problem of evil rationally. It leaves evil in the cosmos as a mysterious, unaccountable fact for which no one is responsible. It leaves room too for a personal creating God, who is good, but not omnipotent in the Christian or metaphysical sense; whilst in his treatment of

psychical evil Plato avoids what More can only call the 'abyss of monism' by distinguishing between the mortal and immortal elements in the soul, and by the myth of transmigration which sees each successive state of the soul as the consequence of its conduct in a former life, a doctrine as deeply enshrouded in mystery as the Hindu *karma*. Above all it holds the individual responsible for his own conduct; he can choose between lining in conformity with the superrational order of Ideas or sinking into the chaos of infra-rational instincts, themselves part of the dark substratum of Necessity. By this emphasis upon the importance of individual responsibility Platonism is allied to Christianity which stresses the need of individual perfection. Although Christianity brought into the world a new sanctity of love and solidarity of mankind which More admits one does not find in Platonism, nevertheless both hold that the primary requisite of salvation is the private harmony of man himself with his divine source and end, and from this spiritual atonement, the unison and concord of society will follow as a natural consequence.

The serious rift is not between Christianity and Platonism, but between the Greek Tradition as it developed, unchanged at core between the death of Socrates and the Patristic period, and the modern religion of humanitarianism which dates ostensibly from the Romantic Revival but which to More had its roots in the various perversions of the Greek tradition which sprang up, both before and after the spread of Christianity. As More passes from his studies of Platonism to those of the Hellenistic philosophies which claim to

1. Ibid., pp. 295-99.
2. Cf. The Catholic World, August 1932, Vol. CXXXV, No. 809, Peter J. Bart, "The Christ-
derive from it, he turns from the mainstream of the Greek tradi-
tion to consider the way in which its current was diverted into
tortuous channels carved out by thinkers who were unable to abide
in the mystery of Platonic dualism. The interest of the Platonic
'heresies', as they appear to More, is not merely that of the anti-
quarian in delving into buried strata of thought for the sheer
love of unearthing forgotten secrets. To More, the same pervers-
sions of thought were alive and active in his own day, and to
expose the excesses to which the Greek mind could run, once it
repudiated the difficult but experientially acceptable norm of
religious dualism, was, he hoped, to undermine the popular cred-
ence in their modern counterparts.

The volume on the Hellenistic Philosophies has been
generally acknowledged as the finest and least controversial sec-
tion of The Greek Tradition. In the marshalling of historical fact
and philosophical opinion, More is at his best, blending intimate
anecdote and recondite argumentation in a lucid survey of the
various leading schools of post-Socratic thought. Setting aside
his brief accounts of the Cyrenaic and Cynic schools which are
of interest mainly as the precursors of Epicureanism and Stoicism,
we may say that More's interest is focussed upon the four rival
philosophies of Epicureanism, Stoicism, Neo-Platonism and Sceptic-
ism. The aim of each is the same: to attain to tranquillity amid
the bewildering currents of life. The fabled ataraxy of the Epi-
curean, the apathy of the Stoic, the ascent of the Plotinian to
the Supreme Reality, the One—the flight of the Alone to the Alone.
the aloof acquiescence of the Pyrrhonianist, all are attempts to solve the problem with which the Platonist had been concerned, the nature of human happiness. Moreover each seeks to find the answer to it by the practice of a definite ethical system. Unfortunately, however, not one of them is prepared to abide in the apprehension of that wherein the Platonist sees happiness to reside. To him, man, in order to attain to harmony, has to take into account the inner cleavage in the human consciousness between mind and matter, the moral and the physical. This paradox offers a stumbling block to the rationalising element in man, and in order to resolve it, he seeks to explain his own intuitive ethical sense in terms of a detailed cosmogony, a rationalised system of the universe which is made the basis of his conduct. In this respect, Epicurean, Stoic and Neo-Platonist are all alike in being unwilling to abide by the paradoxical data of consciousness and to employ reason only in the service of such data. They, on the other hand, are convinced that reason can transcend the facts of experience and explain the nature of things by an hypothesis of its own. Rationalism in its search for a closed system of cause and effect, has invariably tended to escape the implications of dualism by defining mind and soul in terms of matter and body, or matter and body in terms of mind and soul. Of these two adjustments, the former is the easier, for the body forces itself upon our senses whereas the soul is more elusive and can be more easily argued out of sight.

Thus Epicurus came to conceive of all life, including the soul and ultimately the Gods, in terms of matter,

1 Ibid., pp. 299ff. 2 Ibid., p/77-78.
matter, adopting the Democritean hypothesis of an infinite number of atoms in an infinite void as a basis for a purely mechanical system notable for the legerdemain by which he proceeds to bring freedom of will, even voluntary caprice, out of sheer theoretical determinism. There is to More actually little to choose between this and the Stoic attempt by Zeno to reduce the immaterial element, call it soul or what one will, to a merely mechanical operation by falling back upon the ancient hylozoistic philosophies which found the source of nature in some primordial stuff possessing the characteristics of life, or, more specifically, upon Heraclitus who made an element similar to fire the universal substratum. From this Zeno deduced an inexorable physical order in which events obeyed a prearranged order, and to which man, in order to find the happiness and security he sought, had to conform. But—and this to More is the revanche of Stoic logic—by the very system which ensued for the Stoics the security they so desired—they deprived themselves of liberty, which is equally the end and aim of philosophy.

'If Cyrenaic and Epicurean saw in the world a place of liberty without security, it may be said that the Stoic universe is for the soul of man a place of security without liberty. Yet both Epicurean and Stoic knew and felt deeply that our security and liberty cannot be severed but are craved as one thing.'

The ultimate effects of the mechanistic effects of the Stoic conception

1. Ibid., pp. 55-56.
2. Ibid., p. 79.
3. Ibid., pp. 81-83.
4. Ibid., p. 92. For an interesting contrast of the two schools, vide Shelburne Essays VI, pp. 111-114.
of the universe are very little different from those of the Epicurean physics of chance and change. In both, the would-be monist, by his rejection of human dualism, seems to More to be betrayed into innumerable subsidiary paradoxes which the true Platonist avoids by the acceptance of the one central paradox of human experience.

The future of Greek philosophy, More felt, might have been very different had some thinker arisen who would have adopted a system of physics and logic based on a Platonic intuition of human dualism, and then on that sounder foundation, have adopted and adapted the larger achievements of the Stoic teachers in the field of ethics. Such a conversion was to More perfectly practicable, and the result might have been a body of thought unshakable at the base and majestic in its superstructure. He considers at length how the ethics of Stoicism might have been transformed and revitalised by an infusion of Platonic Idealism until 'the bleak negation of the Stoic acquired a positive aspect in the true life of the spirit'.

The words in italics are, I think, of profound significance. More's own version of the inner check, based ostensibly on the Platonic veto, has so often been condemned by his critics as a merely blank negation that it is interesting to see him contending here that the true nature of Platonic Idealism offers a positive and virile power of control. It is unfortunate that by his constant emphasis upon the negative function of the frein vital, More should have undermined that positive and potent appeal which he now attributes

2. Ibid., p. 161.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
to Platonism and have given the impression of the bleak negation of Stoicism. There are, I believe, two reasons for this. The one, upon which we have already touched, is that there was ultimately, even within Platonism itself, a certain sterility, an inability to cope with the final fact of good and evil, of which More became fully aware only after his volume on the Hellenistic Philosophies while grappling with the Christ of the New Testament and Christ the Word. And secondly, there was in More himself, on the side of practical, as opposed to intellectual, morality a streak of that indomitableness in the face of life's harsher realities which he must have inherited from his Puritan forefathers and which gave him a natural affinity with the Stoic rather than with the Platonist. Reinforced by his earlier interest in Manichaeism and Hindu renunciation and illusion, this natural austerity must frequently have battled within him against his equally natural susceptibility to beauty and made him long for some philosophy of life which would offer a reconciliation between these conflicting tendencies. That is why there is nothing more poignant in the writings of Paul Elmer More than the wistful close of the chapter on Epictetus where he dwells upon the final inadequacies of Stoicism to satisfy the soul of man.

To the Epicurean with his ataraxy and the Stoic with his apathy, the good they set out so valiantly to find becomes in the end the mere deprivation of evil; in the third great philosophy which springs from Platonism, Neo-Platonism, it is significant that

evil is considered as a mere deprivation of good. Epicurean and Stoic both erred to More by reason of their obsession with a rational and monistic explanation of life's riddle, intellectus sibi permissus. Neo-Platonism was doubly suspect, for not only did it add to the core of pure Platonic philosophy and attempted rationalization of the mystery of the universe, but it also had its peculiar form of mysticism which to More was equally subversive of true intuition. Both the metaphysics of rationalism and of mysticism were attempts to ignore or submerge vital distinctions and to wrest from, or impose upon, man's dilemma, a unified solution of the nature of things.

In dealing with Plotinus, More seeks to distinguish as far as possible between his philosophy and his metaphysics, although in the original they are intermingled. His philosophy springs universal from that sense of the soul's imperfection and the instability of all its worldly pursuits, which he contrasts some power of which he is aware in the soul which stands apart from the world of confusion and corruption, and aspires to some pure and unchanging Reality above itself. Hence the ascent of the soul to God by any one of three paths, the aesthetic, the ethical or the intellectual, corresponding to Plato's threefold division of Beauty, Goodness, and Truth. Whatever the repercussions of Plotinian mysticism, More is ready to allow that in his description of the ascent, Plotinus was drawing upon his own experience. He had, we are told, experienced the ecstasy four times, and when he seeks to convey some intimation of

1. Ibid., p. 28.
vision, his the final language acquires a strange and impressive beauty. So far he was drawing on actual psychological experience; his flight from the world and its distractions is an element in all philosophy: 'the goal of wisdom is always an ataraxy in one form or another'. But Plotinus, like Epicurus and Zeno, was not content with what he could learn psychologically of life. Reason, instead of limiting its function to analysing and clarifying the psychological data at its service, sought rather to build up a theory of the cause and genesis of the total sum of things, the rerum natura, in accordance with its own demands for a logical absolute, even if it meant doing violence to the facts as they stood. This method of approach, although Plotinus evidently thought it derived from Plato, comes, according to More, from the influence of Aristotelian metaphysics coloured by certain Oriental currents of theology. The whole problem of creation which in Plato is left clothed in ultimate mystery, corresponding to the mysterious inter-relation of body and soul in man is by Aristotle translated into terms of a supposed law of mechanics, so that the whole cosmos is set in motion by an initial attraction emanating from a first motor which is itself absolutely apart and immutable. This is the Unmoved Mover, acting upon the world as a final cause, the end to which all moving things aspire, as they are set in motion by an innate love of the Absolute. Such an Absolute seems to More to come from a blending of the Platonic God with the Ideas of the Good and the True, whilst eliminating all that, to him at least, was valuable

2. Ibid., pp. 203.  
3. Ibid., p. 205.
and real in both. Such a God can be neither Creator, as He is entirely remote from His universe, nor Providence, as He cannot be moved by the needs and destinies of men. He is an Absolute, an Abstraction, abiding in the complete solitude of self-contemplation. By such a definition of God, Aristotle has left the realm More ascribed to philosophy for the vasty vacuum of metaphysics, thereby to More opening up a long trail of heresies.

It was a simple transition from the mysticism of Plotinus whereby the soul lost all identity in the One, lifted up in a dark vacuity above both Mind and Being, to the metaphysical abstraction of Aristotle. But it was a union fraught with difficulties which Plotinus could meet only by launching into an attempted rationalisation of his cosmology, where he too, like the Stoics and the Epicureans, became lost in innumerable self-contradictions.

As a protest against the material monism of Epicurus and Zeno, the spirituality of Plotinus had a lasting religious value, but when, turning from the intuition of dualism which informs its philosophy, it sets up as its metaphysic a spiritual monism, it also runs into a mockery of tantalising paradoxes no less bewildering than those which mar both Epicureanism and Stoicism. 'The inevitable result of grasping at the forbidden Tree of Knowledge is to dissolve philosophy and religion into the limbo of metaphysics. And the end of metaphysics is a Pyrrhonic agnosticism, or a lapse into gross superstition.'

1. Ibid., p. 211.
2. Ibid., pp. 216-17.
3. Ibid., pp. 228-38.
4. Ibid., pp. 258-59.
For the majority of men in the post-Socratic period, the ancient Gods of their race had lost their meaning, and with the break-down of local traditions as a result of the increasing centralisation which came in the wake of the Roman Empire, superstition brought immorality, and immorality, wide-spread disintegration. The need was for a new religion which would be able to reconcile intellect and emotion. Of the various attempts to meet this need, More was most interested in that of the Emperor Julian who realised man's craving for a mediating deity between God and humanity, and whilst utilising the older myths which hinted at such an atonement, raised the figure of the old Cynic philosopher, Diogenes, to be just such an embodiment of the divine amongst men. In choosing Diogenes, Julian had entered into the mood of his times. Socrates was too much the philosopher of reason, of the intellect, to appeal to a generation of heart-hungry and restless men. For centuries, the world had been growing further away from the old hope of finding salvation in the clear conception of truth and knowledge. This was an insight shared by the Church Fathers—even those most favourable to Plato—and summed up in the phrase of Ambrose: "It hath not pleased God to give His people salvation in dialectic." Nevertheless, looking back over the history of Christianity, More asks himself whether God meant to save His people by emotions alone any more than by the understanding alone, and whether the tragedy of standing

1. Ibid., p.298.
2. Ibid., p.299.
Christianity does not lie in its failure to achieve, or at least to impose upon the world, a sound combination of dialectic and emotion.

*The Greek Tradition* is just such an attempt to reconcile intellect and emotion, combining the desire, on the one hand, for a working basis of truth, and on the other, for the consolation of a living faith. But, as I see it, More, at the time of *The Hellenistic Philosophies*, was still approaching his would-be synthesis primarily from the angle of the head. At heart he remained a sceptic, holding judgment in suspense on all issues where he had no intuitive proof, and hesitating to commit himself to the positive implications of faith. The chapter on *Scepticism* is more than a survey of an attitude held in classical times in opposition to the dogmatic contents of Stoic, Epicurean and Neo-Platonist alike. It is part of his own spiritual autobiography, the story of the one defense to which he clung against the corresponding modern dogmatisms of positivist, pragmatist, and romanticist alike. The triumphs of scepticism were his triumphs, and if it fell short and left its adherents ultimately unsatisfied, it was Paul Elmer More who felt its inadequacies and suffered its frustrations.

As he himself had turned to scepticism as a reaction on the one hand against romantic sentimentalism, and on the other against scientific naturalism, so Greek philosophy turned to Scepticism from the confusion latent in Epicureanism, on the one hand, and Stoicism on the other. While the Epicurean took over from Socratic

thought its rationalism and hedonism, and the Stoic adopted its rationalism, tempered with a mood of what More describes, rather euphemistically, as 'optimistic endurance', the stress of the true Sceptic lay upon the Socratic doubt. To Pyrrho, founder of the school, man is the measure of things only in so far as his immediate sensations are concerned. His judgments may or may not correspond with the nature of things; the complete absence of agreement among men shows that we have no criterion to determine whether or when they are true. Hence the Pyrrhonic suspension of all certain knowledge. In practice, however, such scepticism leads, not to antinomianism, but to a tacit acceptance of the conventions of his society without the Sceptic's trying to establish their ultimate validity. So far More himself would gladly go with the Pyrrhonist; the fact core of knowledge which comes to us by immediate sense knowledge, not by inference, he makes the basis of his own attempt in The Sceptical Approach to Religion to construct a system of belief confirmed by positive experience. The Sceptical Approach to Religion is in essence the main conclusions of The Greek Tradition condensed within the limits of a single coherent thesis.

But the Sceptic is bound to exceed the evidence of these immediate impressions if he is to live fully, and the question naturally arises on what basis shall he conduct his life to avoid falling into the same sort of theorising as he condemns in the dogmatists. Here More brings once more into play the distinction between 'Philo-

1. Ibid., p. 375.
sophy, as a manner of life, and 'Metaphysics' as an abstract system of thought. The Pyrrhonist 'philosophy' asserted fully the right of the sceptic to work in the field of science, properly defined and limited, though once the scientist sought to go beyond the facts of observation and their classification, and indulge in abstract speculations, the sceptic was bound to oppose him. The opposition of a healthy scepticism tends to drive such dogmatists from one untenable position to another until at last the absurdity of their case is exposed for what it is,— a function which scepticism is seriously needed to perform in modern society.

But although in the intellectual sphere, More feels the Sceptic's conclusions would be acceptable to ancient and modern Platonists alike, in the practical and emotional spheres Scepticism is handicapped, inspite of its apparently acquiescent calm in the face of prevailing traditions, by an underlying deficiency. Deriving as it does from the Platonic theses without the spiritual affirmation, it cannot fully meet the needs of men, and cannot therefore be compared with Platonism itself in which intellectual scepticism and spiritual affirmation are, as we have previously seen, both reconciled. The scepticism of the Platonist stands necessarily on a wider basis than that of the Pyrrhonist for the good reason that the Platonist admits as recognisable by the immediate affections a whole sphere of knowledge which the Sceptic rejects, the spiritual realm. Because the impressions of this whole order of affections are necessarily less

1. Ibid. More, Hellenistic Philosophies, pp. 334-38.
2. Ibid., p. 339.
palpable and more transitory than those of the body, the reason is apt to explain them away as illusory in order to rid itself of an unwelcome dualism. To the Platonist, however, who refuses to be tempted by reason into a betrayal of these promptings of a higher reality, it is possible to extend into the spiritual sphere the sceptical attitude parallel to that in which it operates in the physical sphere. Actually his experience of the moral law seems to him more exact and cogent than that of scientific law because it comes down to the very centre of his being. Hence, for the ataraxy of the Pyrrhonist which consists of the mere cessation of the disturbance of physical pain and pleasure is substituted the eudaimonia of the Platonist, for to physical pain and pleasure, the Platonist adds another distinct order of feelings, eudaimonia (happiness) and misery which accompany our spiritual volitions according as we live in conformity with or opposition to the philosophy of Ideas. Eudaimonia is not necessarily antagonistic to ataraxy, but supplements and transcends ataraxy as a rule of conduct owing to its vastly greater significance and cogency in the fullness of life. This is it which appears to More, at the end of his Hellenistic Philosophies, as the motive power impelling men to live in accordance with the canons of justice, for by virtue of his complete scepticism, the Platonist may attain to a peace in the soul incomparably more precious and more complete than the bare imperturbability of mind boasted, but rarely attained, by the Pyrrhonic half-sceptic.
'After all, any true philosophy of God demands the Incarnation'.

We have previously seen that Plato's assertion that happiness was possible to the just man even under the most frightful persecution was never legitimately vindicated, and because of his discovery of this, More's thinking, by the time he comes to write *The Christ of The New Testament* has undergone a radical change. For some light upon the way in which he reached his new conclusions, we must turn to *The Sceptical Approach to Religion*. Here he recounts step by step the way in which his belief in the validity of the Christian Revelation was built up on a basis of pure observation of those immediate affections of which he was aware on a spiritual, as opposed to a physical, plane. Man's intuitive perceptions tell him he is a free and purposive and responsible being, but another order of perceptions deriving from observation show him that in common with the rest of nature, he is bound by a predetermined pattern over which he has no control.

To this paradox, man may react in three ways. The true sceptic, refusing to admit the claims of reason to legislate between these two orders of experience, seeks to hold judgment in suspense, although ironically the claims of practical living make it increasingly hard not to fall into the temptation of

theorising, with the result that all too often would-be sceptics pass imperceptibly into the second category which includes those who, accepting the data of observation as true, reject by explicit or covert inference, the contrary data of intuition as illusory. Into this category, as we have seen, More puts all the modern exponents of evolution from Huxley on; they to him are dogmatists masquerading as agnostics. But if the members of this second group seek to resolve this paradox by dismissing the facts of intuition in favour of the data of observation, there is a third group which reverses this procedure. It consists of those who, accepting the content of intuition as valid, reject, if not the data of observation, at least the dogmatic inferences therefrom, as illusory. Both the second and third are therefore emphases on a single aspect of experience which thereby gains in importance until the other aspect comes to be regarded as an illusion. The second category More equates with rationalism, the third with faith; and this, when it directs and controls man's living, becomes religion.

At the time of his essay on Newman in The Drift of Romanticism More condemned both these attitudes equally as expressions of the dogmatic spirit, which he contrasted on the one hand with true scepticism and on the other, with true mysticism, as opposed to the various forms of spurious mysticism with which we have seen him do battle. But by the time of The Sceptical Approach to Religion, More has revised his attitude to religion, largely, I sus-
pect, as a result of the aggressive attitude of modern science. Whereas inference from observation seemed to him by nature fanatical and sweeping, denying man's basic intuitions of freedom, responsibility and purpose as mere illusions, he felt the attitude of faith was more modest and reasonable, transcending rather than rejecting the inference from observation. Obviously More is not here concerned with certain sects of fanatical believers who reject out of hand even the best established scientific facts which have come to light during the past century, but with those men of good will who, whilst accepting the discoveries of science as valid upon the purely physical plane, yet believe that the whole truth of which man is capable cannot be confined to a physical interpretation. 'In other words faith normally does not transfer our consciousness of freedom and responsibility and purpose to, or into, the observed phenomena of the objective universe, but rather infers the existence of a free and responsible agent, whose operative purpose is _subjective_ in the world, while He Himself is transcendent to the world.' That is, faith is prepared normally to reside in the consciousness of the dualism of spirit and matter, and to concern itself primarily with the intuitions of spirit. Belief in such a God as we conceive by faith must react in turn upon these intuitions of ourselves from which faith draws its content, thereby both consummating and justifying our sense of freedom, responsibility and purpose by belief in a cosmic, as well as a personal teleology.

'If cosmic teleology is an inference from a teleological knowledge of myself, if faith is a transference of this triple form of consciousness to a Being who transcends the world, then we are bound by our faith to a corresponding conception of the nature and operation of such a Being'. More sees the same inference of freedom, purpose and responsibility in religion at all its stages: in the mysterious object of primitive worship as well as in the God of the most advanced theism. The true development of religion, to him, is marked by a movement, not away from anthropomorphism, but in the direction of a deeper and broader anthropomorphism.' But if God is envisaged as a purposeful Being, He must be imagined as working out a design, just as man is conscious of doing, through some sort of obstacle or hindrance, and through the lingering processes of time. This is the Platonic conception of God and creation. More finds it impossible to conceive of purpose apart from the existence of obstacles to be overcome. Again, like man, God will be responsible to the moral law, although man's own 'knowledge' of these two aspects of the spirit may itself be moderated as his experience grows greater. Thirdly, God's freedom will correspond to man's liberty of choice, developed to that determination to choose only good which man sees as the far-off goal of his own endeavour'.

Such a God will be very different from the Unmoved Mover of Aristotelian metaphysics, lost in remote and solitary

1. Ibid., p.16.
2. Ibid., p.17.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
self-contemplation, and entirely detached from the world of men.

Too much of Aristotelian conception came later to colour the Church's own conception of God, but More sees the primitive and unadulterated beliefs of the early Fathers to have corresponded to his own view of anthropomorphism. The choice to More seems to lie between the abstract Absolute deity of Aristotelian metaphysics, or the Creator-redeemer God to which his own intuition has led him; and he decides in favour of the inference of faith against the abstract reasoning of pure logic. That such a decision is determined by the needs of the human heart More is the last to deny. In his Pages From an Oxford Diary, he wrote: 'Perhaps I cling to the notion of purpose in the world and to the corollary notion of a personal God because without that the whole sum of things becomes to my mind horrible beyond endurance!—'Now the thought of a naked soul journeying for ever on and on through inanimate Ideas with no personal guide or consoler, with no glimpse of the eternal majestic spirit whose home is there— the thought of such a journey sends a shudder through me. I cry out: Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.'

Such a statement seems to lend a foundation to the attitude of the modern who, like John Dewey, calls faith a 'wishful belief', 'a defence attitude', and goes on to suggest that we believe (in God, the soul and immortality) simply because we wish to believe, because we are afraid not to believe. More does not

1. Ibid., p. 18.
2. More, Pages From an Oxford Diary, Section XV.
attempt to contradict such an identification of faith with desire. This was the very position adopted by the writer to the Hebrews when he spoke of faith as the 'substance of things hoped for.' But with regard to the challenger's assertion that the theist is afraid not to believe, More adopts a stern attitude. In the first place, to make such a statement whilst claiming to be an 'agnostic', i.e. a sceptic, is to abandon the position of true scepticism for a positive dogmatism. In actual effect, the position of practical scepticism is impossible to maintain. One is forced to decide either for or against belief in a world with a purpose, and to More the rejection of this intuition demands an act of even more strained credulity than does its acceptance. The choice is between belief in an order corresponding to man's deepest intuitions, or in the world envisaged as a 'vast determined machine, impervious to man's sense of purpose and freedom and responsibility. But religion to More is more than lip-service to the greater probability; it requires the decision of the will to live in accordance with faith, an unremitting determination to transmute the probability of belief into a truth of experience', and here it is that most men find infidelity much easier, the 'facile surrender to the streaming impressions that crowd upon us from the outer world and to the tides of sensation that ebb and flow within us.'

But if God is such as our intuitions of His nature

1. Ibid., p. 22.
2. Ibid., pp. 23-25.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
4. Ibid., loc. cit.
lead us to suppose, is it likely that He would leave us to grope
after Him, unaided by some outward confirmation of our faith?
So it is that More is brought to accept the inevitability of the
Incararnation. Our intuitions lead us to think of God as a person,
and as such, He is one who can be revealed to man by an assumption
of humanity, although our intuition of a universal dualism leads
us to expect that He can do so without forfeiting thereby His
divine nature. But further than that, our own sense of responsibil-
ity to God Himself leads us to expect a God who, as a person, is
morally implicated in the responsibility of His actions. 'By the
very necessity of His supreme rôle, God could not easily shift
from his shoulders the heavy burden of the world's life. In some
sense the imperfection of the creature is the weakness of the
creator; no amount of sophistical theology can avoid the shudder-
ing conclusion that tracks the causes of evil back to the first
Cause of all'. Plato had tried to face the problem of evil inherent
in the very nature of things by attributing to dark unfathomable
Necessity, but he had shrunk from bringing his God as the creative
Demi-urge into contact with this obstinate residue of chaos by
inventing the lesser gods to bear the responsibility of the actual
faulty work of genesis. Herein enters the boldness and splendour
of the Christian view, although, to More, the Church has not faced
up entirely to its full implications.
'The Epiphany, as it shows God suffering in the world, might have
taught the wonderful lesson that in some way and in some measure

1. More, Pages From an Oxford Diary, Section XXI-XXIII.
2. Ibid., Section XXII.
responsibility for that suffering. He is implicated in the terrible Necessity clings about His robes as it does about the robes of Plato's fashioning deities'. The Christian idea of the Creation needs therefore to be supplemented by its idea of the Redemption.

'If there be any meaning in the tragic end of the Incarnation, if the Cross have any cosmic significance, it must be simply this, that as God is the Author of an imperfect world, so through His suffering He made Himself voluntarily its redeemer'.

Indeed More came to look upon the two processes of creation and redemption as fundamentally one and the same. In The Catholic Faith More sees the act of creation as involving the imposition of form upon the formless substratum of matter, thereby delivering it from its inherent impotence. Creation and deliverance are thus in the case of matter, one and the same act regarded respectively from above and below: God creates, matter is delivered from the bondage of Necessity. Similarly there is in the human soul such a principle of inertia and disorder as in the physical world. To Plato, man himself was called upon to bear a part in the work of creation and redemption by the imposition of form upon the formless; to the Christian, this redemption is accomplished in some mysterious way by the mediation of Christ, the Logos, delivering the soul of man from the bondage of Necessity, or Sin. More had come to believe that as evil and involuntary pain were in some in-

1. Ibid., loc. cit.
2. Ibid., Section XXIII.
explicable way bound together as part of dark Necessity, in some
equally inexplicable way, evil might be redeemed by voluntary
suffering. On Calvary the grand peripeteia took place, the demands
of Necessity were satisfied, the awful responsibility was acknowled­
ged, the debt of creation paid. God in Christ voluntarily assumed
not only His own, but man's share of the responsibility for the
wreckage of human life. The Incarnation was thus seen indeed as
a work of vicarious atonement, though in rather a different way
sense from its Calvinistic interpretation which had so long proved
a stumbling block to More. He had found something savage and repul­
sive in the idea of a so-called righteous Deity sacrificing an inno­
cent Christ to satisfy His divine wrath, as he had met it in the
works of Jonathan Edwards and the other Puritan theologians who had
shaped the thought of the Church in Which More had been brought up.
But he had been held back too by another factor, his unwillingness
to admit the need for forgiveness or to accept grace. He resented
the idea that he was incompetent to shape his own destiny, or that
he in any way merited divine displeasure. But with his gradual
shift of emphasis, More had come to see that evil was not a private
concern, and therefore to accept the humiliating limitations which
are common to all men. God and man are linked together in a great
struggle against the stubborn residue of evil in creation, and we
need to seek the pardon of God because we have been 'false to One who
has counted upon us for aid in the bitter war against Necessity,
ungrateful to One who has honoured us with the call to partake in
the glorious order and beauty and joy' and by doing so we 'have
wrought confusion and in our little blind egotism have added to the evil of the world, to the misery of ourselves, and— so the tragedy of the Incarnation would tell us— to the burden of the Creator.  

Nor is it man alone who has come, through the Atonement, to realise this need for forgiveness. It seemed to More that there too God was asking the forgiveness of man for the suffering in which He had involved him by the imperfection of His handiwork and was redeeming the evil of the world by participating in the penalties of that imperfection.

The Incarnation is then no accident or afterthought in the divine economy, but an integral part of the eternal purpose, a necessary condition in God's final end of imposing order upon chaos. As such it is reasonable to expect that it will be no isolated act involving a complete break with all that has gone before, but the crowning act of a long series of preparation. The whole aim of The Greek Tradition from now on is to show that the Incarnation was no contradiction, but the natural consummation, of the highest insight into the divine to which Greek philosophy had attained. 'Platonism and Christianity are at one in their vision of cosmic creation and deliverance, and we can see how in its young enthusiasm the new religion needed the wisdom of such a philosophy to preserve it from erroneous overgrowths; how the doctrine of Ideas might restrain a jealous monotheism from plunging into a fatal monism, and how the doctrine of Necessity might save theology from entangling itself in the insoluble problems of evil'.

1More, Pages From an Oxford Diary Section XXIV.
More has, I believe, overemphasised the identity of the Platonic and Christian conceptions of Creation, and thereby minimised the Hebraic influence upon the Christian view. Whereas Plato, in his attempt to account for the presence of evil in the universe, represented it as an essential constituent in the act of creation, the Old Testament Genesis has no place for evil in the initial drama. The refrain of the Creation story is: 'God saw that it was good.' Evil only finds its way into the world afterwards as an essential consequence of the defection of man, although man too, in his original state, was good, 'made in the image of God'. Man's tragedy was his failure to accept his finite, and therefore necessarily subordinate, position in the divine economy, a sin, not of the flesh, but of the mind and will. In Hebraic thought about man, there is no clear-cut antithesis between mind and matter. Man is a psycho-physical being in whom pride of spirit leads to corruption of the body. 

The Christian faith in God as Creator of the world transcends the canons and antinomies of rationality, particularly the antinomy between mind and matter, between consciousness and extension. God is not merely mind who forms previously given formless stuff. God is both vitality and form and the source of all existence. He creates the world. This world is not; but it is not evil because it is not God. Being God's creation, it is good!

'The consequence of this conception of the world upon the view of human nature in Christian thought is to allow an apprec-
iation of the unity of body and soul in human personality which idealists and naturalists have sought in vain. Furthermore it prevents the idealistic error of regarding the mind as essentially good or essentially eternal and the body as essentially evil. But it also obviates the romantic error of seeking for the good in man-as-nature and for evil in man-as-spirit or as reason. According to the Biblical view, a created and finite existence in spirit, both body and spirit obviously a view which depends upon an ultrarational presupposition is immediately endangered when rationally explicated; for reason which seeks to bring all things into terms of rational coherence is tempted to make one known thing the principle of explanation and to derive all other things from it. Its most natural inclination is to make itself that ultimate principle, and thus in effect to declare itself God. Christian psychology and philosophy have never completely freed themselves from this fault, which explains why naturalists plausibly though erroneously regard Christian faith as the very fountain source of idealism.

With the part of this paragraph which I have italicised Paul Elmer More would have been in complete agreement. It is simply a statement of the dangers threatened by the Demon of the Absolute. Where he would disagree with Niebuhr is on what has gone before, his classification of Plato with the rest of the Greek philosophers as a rationalist, and the tacit inclusion of Platonism itself, as opposed to the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus, as a rationalistic idealism. More's whole contention, as we know only too well, is that the

1. Ibid., pp. 12-13.
2. Ibid., pp. 6-12.
the Platonic conception of creation and evil and the nature of God are all based on an intuitive, not an intellectualistic, apprehension. We are thus faced with two contrary views of man, both of which are claimed by their exponents to rest on an intuition of truth. More would claim that it is the Platonic view with which the Christian view is to be identified, but in so doing, it seems to me that he misses, a little wilfully perhaps, the indisputable influence of the Old Testament conception upon the thought of the New Dispensation, and thus finds evil even more firmly entangled in the robes of the Creator than the Biblical picture suggests. The darker cast of More's imagination, I have no doubt, is a vestige of the influence of Manichaeism upon his thought during one of its most formative periods, and it is against this deep distrust of the material world that he had to struggle, torn as he was between his keen emotional responsiveness to beauty in the physical world and his constant suspicion of the evil of matter.¹

That there is an element in Christianity which does not derive from Platonism he is, however, ready to admit. This is its sacrificial element. The idea of atonement through the slaying of a sacred victim is to be found among the early cults of most tribes, but it comes to Christianity strengthened and purified from Judaic tradition. The sceptic would see in the common origin of the principle of sacrifice proof that the Christian idea of redemption through the death of Christ was but another version of an age-old superstition. To others, however, More amongst them, the analogy

would seem to point in the opposite direction: the very universality of the idea of sacrifice would suggest to them that behind its reality of a profound truth whether it be recurrent forms there must be the principle of costliness or some law other less obvious form of man's being. This would fit in with the idea of a cosmic teleology consummated in the Incarnation. If we accept the teleological conception of the universe, it is natural to expect some kind of development in religious thought, either through a clearer manifestation of the working of the divine agent, or through man's increasing ability to grasp the significance of the truth already manifest. Although it was generally agreed that there had been an intense and concentrated preparation for the coming of the Word in the experience of the Jewish people, Christian writers in the past had been kept from finding any development in the idea of the coming of the Messiah by their belief in an absolute and direct revelation. Higher criticism, on the other hand, has traced the development of the idea, though minimizing or rejecting the teleological significance of the process, leading to a consummation in a historical Messiah. As the heat of the strife engendered by the new approach dies away, there are signs of a rapprochement of the teleological and the evolutionary views in which Moses himself is obviously seeking to play a part. He sets out to trace several strands of development running through the Old Testament to their final apotheosis in the Incarnation. The idea of God, of morality, of redemption, the nature of the cultus, and finally, the conception of the Messiah and his Kingdom, all meet and are consummated in

in the advent of Jesus Christ. Thus the true telos of Judaism was in Christianity, and in Judeo-Christianity mankind has its only true example of a complete teleology of evolution. The Greeks had come to the verge of such an insight with Plato, but had slipped back into a vague pantheism or an ineffective transcendentalism for the philosopher, and for the populace at large into a welter of daemonic cults. Even the highest form of a teleological philosophy had been impotent to maintain the spirit of man on a consistently high level of insight. Christianity went beyond the best Platonism could do, and so philosophy was transmuted into religion, by the introduction of another element—the myth. The whole story of the Incarnation answers to the inference of a divine purpose revealing itself progressively in the stratified phenomena of creation.

Originally it had been More's intention in writing *The Greek Tradition* to limit his study of the New Testament to an episode in that treatise. But direct treatment of his subject brought home to More the fact that it was impossible to bring Christianity into *The Greek Tradition* without a fuller consideration of the person and teaching of Jesus, and so the 'episode' had to be extended into two complete volumes. In the development of Christianity More sees two main elements uniting, eschatological the otherworldliness of Jesus, inherited by St. Paul, and the more abstract otherworldliness of Plato. The eschatology of Jesus is bound up with the *parusia*, the coming of the Messianic Kingdom,

envisaged now in typically Jewish fashion as a national restoration, now in terms influenced by Iranian mythology, as a vast cosmic regeneration. In either case the imagery in which the parusia is described is concrete and tangible and it is this power of visual appeal which held the secret of the triumph of Christianity. Platonic eschatology had its imagery too, in addition to its wider and more spiritualised conception of the eternal world of Ideas but it was the second element which triumphed in Platonism, becoming fused with and eventually superceding the Hebraic vision of the Day of the Lord. More discusses at length Jesus' own attitude to the Parusia, and the extent to which the delayed realisation of His Messianic sayings has affected the validity of His claims.

Certainly the delay was to have far-reaching effects upon the development of the early Church. There is an element of truth, says More, in the theory that the whole inner history of the Church turns on the procrastination of the Parusia, and on the effect wrought in the minds of believers by the continued disappointment of their hope: the growth of religion has been the slow 'de-eschatologising' of Christianity. For three centuries after the death of Jesus the evolution of Christianity was marked by a slow merging of the eschatological otherworldliness of Jesus with the philosophical otherworldliness of Plato, as gradually the Kingdom of Heaven lost its mythical actuality,

2. Ibid. p. 83.
and became transformed into a name for life in the eternal world of Ideas, as it had become, for example, by the time of St. Basil in the Fourth Century. Nevertheless, the true motive power of Christianity lay, not in the disembodied vision of a Basil, but in the concrete eschatology of Christ. That is because to him belonged in a supreme degree the gift of spiritual imagination, the divine energy of vision without which all teaching and preaching fail to move the will, and so leave the hearer wondering perhaps but unconverted. For Christ the other world was the one absorbing reality, and it could possess this reality for him and for others by standing forth in palpable living images. It was so with Plato also, who created the Ideal philosophy by the poetry of the Phaedrus and the Symposium. But there was needed something more than the poetical philosophy of Plato to stir the sluggish heart of the world and that something was given by Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth. And so, despite the delay of the Parusia, it is within the symbolism of Christ's view of the Kingdom rather than in the Platonised view of the Church that truth and power reside; and in that hour of death when things visible and invisible change places that hidden truth shall be revealed without its veil of imagery bringing to the individual soul a full realisation of its responsibility in the sight of God.

The eschatology of Jesus was inherited in both its native and Iranian elements by St. Paul who added to it a new and potent idea in the identification of the Messiah of Jewish

1. Ibid. p. 87.
2. Ibid. p. 88.
expectation with the crucified Jesus of history. To this More believes St. Paul came through his realisation of the inadequacy of the Jewish Christology to provide a Saviour who should stand between the sinning soul of man and the final condemnation of God. But then Paul would remember the principle of vicarious suffering—the animal ceremony of the scape-goat and the mystical imagery of Deutero-Isaiah—and by a fusion of these ideas, would come to see in the crucified Jesus the Christ who, to overthrow the power of evil, had first to bring salvation to men by vicariously suffering the penalty of death and satisfying the Law. From this insight grew the whole of Paul's soteriology, 'the new Gospel, the astonishing truth that gave saving power to the old Messianism,' the full significance of which can be understood only in the light of Paul's deep-seated aversion to transience and death, and to that sinfulness which combines with death to form the horror of corruption.'

But Paul, like certain of the Greek philosophers whom we have already seen, was not ready to abide in the intuition of that which had its basis in his own psychological experience. He sought to explain the operation of the new soteriology, to give a rational account of the process whereby man is saved through the death and resurrection of Christ, thus fathering a number of harsh and contradictory doctrines. More points out especially the discrepancy between Paul's two doctrines of justification by grace and justification by faith. For the latter there are psychological grounds for its

1. Ibid., pp. 190-91.
support, although in Paul's case the issue is complicated by his identification of faith with belief in a series of eschatological events which are seen as a mere prolongation of the chain of history, but the former is to More simply another 'form of monistic rationalism' from which, as we might expect More sees springing a whole crop of antagonisms and paradoxes, which are quite contrary to the spirit of Jesus, and which, by the time of the German Reformation and the growth of the Presbyterian Church in England, had driven the mind away from the true dualism of religion into a pure naturalism or into the half-way house of a humanitarian Christianity. It is because the Greek Church, on the other hand, on account of its intense concentration on the Incarnation, simply passed by the antagonistic aspects of Pauline doctrine that More looks to it for inspiration in his attempt to reconcile the two great dualistic intuitions of Platonism and Christianity.

The weakness of Pauline theology resides therefore in its metaphysics, not in its mythology. It is not the spiritualism of his setting of the religious life, nor the corporeal dimensions of the whole economy of salvation which proves the stumbling block to More. Indeed he cannot see how, without a tangible imaginative attire, religious perceptions can be made real to the mind of man. Apart from spiritual realism, theology is apt to become diluted go the metaphysical idealism of the German interpreters of Paul. 'The difference lies in the use of the imagination. In the realism of St. Paul the imagination works unconscious-

1 Ibid., pp205-10.
ly or involuntarily: the figures which clothe for him the life of glory are regarded as substantial realities. In the metaphysical theology of the German stamp the things of the spirit are kept apart from the imagination, or, if the fancy enters at all, into play, it is a kind of voluntary and conscious poetry. This means practically that to the modern mind things of the spirit must remain unexpressed and, as a consequence, unreal, for the good reason that, as we are mentally constituted, we possess no other mode of expressing and realising such things than just the spatial and temporal figures of the imagination. Herein lies man's deep embarrassment; he can no longer accept the realism of St. Paul which imparts significance and vigour to religious hope, nor has the religious life any driving power without it. 'I see no escape from this dilemma,' adds More in what, I believe, is one of the most significant passages of *The Greek Tradition* for an understanding of the sacramentalism which was to become the key to his deepest problems, 'save into a kind of symbolism which admits the complete duality of spirit and matter, Ideas and phenomena, yet at the same time knows that the figures of the imagination may correspond with the facts of the inner life, and hence may be profoundly true. That was the essential character of the Platonic philosophy which succeeded in making the laws of the other world at once consciously imaginative and ethically realistic; and as we have seen this was the turn given to the eschatology of the Kingdom and the *Parusia*

1. Ibid., p. 205.
by the master thinkers of the Church, building on the foundation laid by Paul. Such a symbolism use of the imagination, hovering midway between realism and metaphysics, may seem to suffer from the instability attendant upon all compromises; it does certainly require an effort of the will to prevent the mind from slipping into one of the two extremes of materialism or metaphysical vacuity. We shall learn, as we go on, that the great advance of Christianity over Platonism lies in the addition of the new element of religion — faith in the dual nature of a person, which demands no such compromise of the imagination as does faith in the dualism of things.

In addition to the purely eschatological element in the teaching of Jesus and the complementary thought of St. Paul, there is also an ethical element intimately bound up with it. Repentance not only looks up to the otherworld; it also implies such a change of life as would ensue upon the awakening of faith, and is therefore to More a link between otherworldliness and what he sees as its fellow-constituent in religion, morality. The two essential Christian virtues are to him purity and humility, both of which have their counterparts in the Platonic scheme. Humility involves the humbling, not only of the intellect, but also of the imagination, and it would appear that it is in this very quality of humility that the poetical imagination is transformed into the Ethical or Religious Imagination, touched with a sense of supreme

1. Ibid., p. 207. (The italics are mine).
2. Ibid., pp. 94-99.
4. Ibid., p. 106.
awe before the wonder of God. But not only is there a humility before God, but also before man, and More sees the two-fold aspect of religious humility expressed in the petition, 'Forte

give us our debts as we forgive them that trespass against us' and in the equivalent command, 'Judge not that ye be not judged'. The most practical utterance of this spirit is found in the Golden Rule, which has its parallels in all great religions and philosophies; but whereas in its Judaic and Hindu and Chinese forms, it is negative in nature, the Christian form of the command is positive. It is worthwhile here recalling that hither, in outlining his doctrine of the inner check, More has stressed the purely negative and prohibitive function it performs.

In the light of that fact, the significance of the words that follow is heightened, as though More were admitting that, whereas on the humanist plane our highest authority in matters of right conduct is a negative inner check, on the religious plane, a new and positive spirit prevails. 'Now superficially considered it might seem to make little difference whether you say, Do not do unto others as you would not have others do unto you, or Do unto others as you would have others do unto you; but in that shift from the negative to the positive there does enter something new, an emotional content that connects the Golden Rule with the more distinctive Christian rule of love.'

Actually More interprets the Golden Rule as

1. Ibid. p. 108. 'AS ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise', Luke VI. 31.
2. Ibid. p. 111.
he reads its significance in the Gospels more in terms of purity and humility than of the law of love on which the Church has subsequently laid its stress and which to More, still haunted by memories of heresies ancient and modern, is liable to confusion with sentimentalism, eroticism and humanitarianism. More finds it easy to say what Christian love is not: when it comes to stating its positive nature, he can only define it as the affirmative aspect of the function of the Religious Imagination, humble of which humility is the negative aspect. The humble man, in the religious sense, is he who sets a check upon the tendency of the imagination to magnify his personal importance above that of other persons, or to visualise himself, so to speak, as a reality in the world to the overshadowing of other selves. Love, as we define it, would be that outreaching power of the imagination by which we grasp and make real to ourselves the being of otheres, a task to be accomplished, adds More, only in so far as we are enabled to make real to ourselves the presence of God.

Contrary to the school of Liberal thinkers who hold that Christianity taught only an Interimethik, a morality valid only for the brief and exceptional period before the imminent Parusia, More sees Christianity presenting an ethic of universal and eternal significance. He does not minimise, however, the difficulty of that ethic for the majority of men who live on the plane of average daily relations. He falls back on the distinction

1. Ibid., pp. 113-16.
2. Ibid., p. 123.
3. Ibid., p. 124.
between the religious and the humanist morality which he first made as early as the First Series of the Shelburne Essays in 'The Religious Grounds of Humanism'. The law of Humanism is the Golden Mean, its ideal is that honesty which seeks as its reward a fair share of earthly pleasure for a life of wise activity; the law of Christianity is the Golden Rule and the Great Commandment, but taken literally, as Christ intended it to be taken, they are hardly relevant to the complexities of society as it stands.

The choice lies between the rôle of mediation and of meditation; and the important thing for saint and humanist is to realise and accept the implications of his choice. The danger comes from an attempt to merger the two realms, as, for example, in seeking to make the 1914-18 War, which belonged to the world of human compromise, a religious issue, thereby throwing the two realms into utter confusion.

But even though we elect to live on the shifting plane of humanism, we still have need of the saints. Without Jesus and Plato and the slender line of their true disciples, Western civilisation would be deprived of its richest inheritance. 'So closely knit is the organisation of society, so much of our best we possess by a kind of vicarious participation in the lives of those who are strong and know. It is the thought of their liber- ty which supplies a place of refuge and refreshment for the imagination of those who at times must fret under the bondage of

3. Ibid., p. 139.
compromise. It is in the clear unswerving proclamation of the unaltering truths of religion that the voice of Jesus has still, amidst the mechanised complexity of our day and inspite of all the exacting analysis of historical criticism, a note of arresting conviction.

But in addition to the eschatology and the ethics of Jesus there is also a third element within the New Testament, primarily within the Gospel of John, where Jesus appears to be speaking, not so much as the Jewish Messiah, but as the Saviour of the World, basing His claims to loyalty, not on any predicted glorification, but upon present authority of a spiritual order. The whole trend of modern Liberal theology has been to disprove the superhuman nature of Jesus. Strauss had assumed that nothing supernatural could be historical. But More's whole thesis has been directed towards proving that such a preconception is philosophically unjustifiable and that, on the contrary, the supposition of a higher nature resident within our own nature is of itself no more irrational than that operation of mind and body which every act of existence forces us to accept. Even More is ready it does not automatically follow that to concede that because the union of the divine and human is not to be rejected out of hand as psychologically impossible, Jesus of Nazareth was actually divine as He claimed to be. Nor is it within the scope of More's purpose here to defend the validity of these claims. Enough if each reader will honestly entertain the possibility of the divinity of Christ and weigh the consequences

1. Ibid., p. 141.
2. Ibid., p. 244.
But if indeed Jesus did possess supernatural qualities, how could he have fallen into the serious mistake regarding His own mission? How can we marry such ignorance to such a being? Here, once more, More falls back on the mystery of dualism; in the hard language of the Council of Chalcedon, Christ was both man and God. From this paradox so repugnant to reason, orthodox theology has frequently tried to break away; the early heresies of the Church were attempts to circumvent it, and from the time of Cyril of Alexandria, the Church itself has inclined to avoid it by minimising, or eliminating, the humanity of Christ, whilst emphasising His divinity. Faced with Christ's own admission of His ignorance regarding the 'way of the Kingdom, those who uphold His 'infinity of knowledge' must take refuge in the so-called economical reserve of Christ which led Him to pretend, for the salvation of His hearers, to be ignorant of what He really knew. But this is contrary to the formulation of doctrine on which Christianity still rests: it makes nonsense of the Gospel record, for, if anything is plain, it is that the Jesus of the New Testament, whatever else He may have been, was one who lived under the conditions of humanity. He was 'in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin'. The hated paradox of dualism cannot be argued away into a 'rationalised monophysitism'.

How it is that the divine and human could dwell together without cancelling each other out, More cannot undertake to explain, but this alone makes sense of the mystery of the Kenosis, whereby the preexistent Son of God submitted to the voluntary inval-

Ibid. pp. 252-55.
idating of His divine powers, including knowledge, while yet His lordly prerogative remained intact. In turn the doctrine of the Kenosis throws new light on the relation of Christ's spiritual claims to His Messianic rôle. 'Suppose He was the divine Son, the Logos, but was only vaguely, perhaps increasingly, aware of this through the veil of His manhood. His consciousness would be coloured by His environment. He would think and speak in the language of the Messianic hope of His people and His age, though, even so, with a profounder grasp of its real import; while occasionally the sense of His universal mission of revealer of God and Saviour of mankind would break through'. There had been something of this in the Prophets, speaking now as though only Israel was to be saved, now as if all the righteous of the earth were to be gathered in. Only in Israel, indeed, with its tradition of prophecy could the divine economy of salvation have been effected; it is inconceivable that the new faith could be grafted on to the popular mythology of Greece. 'No, the Incarnation in its divine simplicity cannot be imagined outside of Israel, nor in Israel save at that juncture of history. And the Incarnate could not have appeared to the Jews who first accepted Him save as their Messiah, nor could His appeal to repentance have been effective save through the preaching of the immediately expected kingdom'. All that involved in is what Strauss and the other Liberal theologians try to dismiss as the self-deception of a mere fanatic: if Jesus was, as they said, a Schwärmer, adds More, the word thus viewed, loses its sting.

1. Ibid., p. 253.
2. Ibid., pp. 254-55.
3. Ibid., p. 255.
When he comes to discuss the "resurrection, More dismisses the Disciples' evidence that they beheld the corporeal presence of Christ. These appearances More holds to have been of the same nature as the revelation to Paul on the Damascus Road, but that does not mean that he rejects them altogether as mere hallucinations, after the manner of Strauss. The appearances of Christ may be regarded as subjective, but not necessarily therefore as vain and illusory dreams. They would have been genuine manifestations of spirit to spirit, the warranty of knowledge, based on miraculous intervention, that he whom they mourned as dead was living with God, their Saviour and victorious King, the dispenser of the Holy Ghost. So the Resurrection would be the supreme act of grace, the divine confirmation of our faith in the other-world as an ever-present reality behind these veiling clouds of phenomena; without it the Incarnation would be left a tale of sound and madness, signifying nothing."

Though it may be inconceivable that Christianity, as a religion of compelling power should take its rise anywhere but Palestine, or in any other way than through the preaching of the Messianic kingdom, it is equally inconceivable that it should become a world religion unless it was translated into the universal more spiritual terms of Greek intuition. The Messianic kingdom, valuable as it was, and always may be symbolically, fades, in the larger light of history to a temporary expedient, and the hard

1. Ibid., pp. 272-75.
2. Ibid., pp. 279-80.
fact soon forced itself upon the attention that the Messiah did not appear in any such realistic fashion as He had prophesied. 

On the other hand, the Ideal philosophy of Plato, with its verification in immediate experience and spiritual consolation beyond which the mind cannot warrantably pass, could not conceivably become a religious power until its intuitional conjectures were confirmed by the certainty of revelation. Platonism, as we have seen, commenced with a philosophy and thence developed a theology and a mythology with diminishing claim to certitude. Christianity started with a myth, and to the Christian, theology, as a system, and philosophy were true only in so far as they could be made subservient to his faith. The extraordinary thing to More is that, despite the alien source of the new myth, the theology and philosophy of the Greek Fathers should have turned out in essential matters so thoroughly Platonic, or even more accurately, should have been adopted from Plato with so few modifications. Such a coalescence, says More in the opening chapter of Christ the Word, may lead us to conjecture that the mythology which Plato sought to substitute for the old tales of the gods was not so much antagonistic to the Christian faith as imperfectly Christian. He goes on to point out how the poetical flights of the Phaedo and the Republic and the Timaeus need only to be stripped of their more fanciful elements to fall bodily into the Christian scheme, and how, from the hints scattered through the Dialogues, it may be

1. Ibid. p. 287.
2. Ibid. p. 291.
surmised that Plato himself was digly aware of a theophany to come of which his allegories were a prophecy.

The chief agent in the attempt to reconcile Christianity and Platonism during the Patristic period was Clement of Alexandria to whom More looks back with veneration. The trend of modern theology has been to repudiate such a synthesis; the need, so it seems to More, is rather to correct it where it was left unfinished, and 'so to make of Christianity a home adequate for the ever-questing spirit of man'. 'Truth, for Plato, Clement says, lay in the Ideas of justice and beauty and the like, whose being can be inferred from the operation in the world while they themselves dwell in remote isolation; but to the Christian these Platonic Ideas are known as the eternal Word of God which has been uttered in the process of creation and at the last made manifest in the flesh. "I am the truth", said Christ, and in that sentence the hard problem that had so vexed Plato's philosophy seemed to be solved. We need no longer inquire how phenomena participate in Ideas, or look for the bond between the abstract and the concrete, the universal and the particular; in the person of Jesus the two are actually brought together dynamically by the union of his divine and human nature, and truth has been made, as it were, visible and invisible!

But all too few were able to hold this just balance between the divine and human elements of Christ's nature. The

2. Ibid., p. 193
3. Ibid., p. 102; cf. p. 118.
rationalising intellect at work in the early Church, as it had been among the philosophers of ancient Greece, drove many to repudiate such a dualism for a monism which absorbed the divine in the human or the human in the divine. Hence the incidence of sects and heresies which struggled within the bosom of the Early Church during the first four centuries. Christ the Word is a study of those particular heresies which arose from the rejection of the intuition of dualism in the Christology of the Church; it is in that sense a companion volume to Hellenistic Philosophies which had been a survey of the particular heresies which arose from the rejection of the Platonic intuition of dualism.

The reader's first reaction to the various controversies - Gnosticism, Sabellarianism, Arianism, Nestorianism, Dyotheleticism, Monophysitism, Apollinarianism - is to feel that it is the time-honoured pettifogging of Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-Dee, and then one recalls More's outburst on a former occasion when discussing the Plotinian attitude to evil: 'Oh, it is not the case of Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee — far from that. These speculative differences, though they seem to be spun out of thin air, have a way of reacting on our attitude towards the very solid facts of life'. One recalls too Professor G.R. Elliott's story of one of his few personal encounters with More when the latter was en route for a lecture engagement. Elliott had written him a critical letter in reply to which More called upon him in his study. 'He was warm with his new convictions; and the weather was provokingly hot.

1 Cf. Ibid., pp. 136–38; 144, 271–72.
2 More, Hellenistic Philosophies, p. 234.
He accepted a glass of cold milk, nothing else; and somewhat to my surprise, he took off his coat and rolled up his white shirt sleeves. "Now", he said grim-smilingly, with a light flourish of his right arm, as though wielding a rapier—instead of Babbitt's broad sword—"now you will please to tell me plainly your religious beliefs and I shall then inform you just what sort of a heretic you are".

'I told, or tried to tell, and he proceeded to pierce me through and through, sipping his milk the while. I could not well parry his swift logic or hold my ground against his amazing knowledge of the history of theology, orthodox and unorthodox. He so fascinated me that I forgot the heat. But now I have also forgotten just "what sort of a heretic" I was. In fact, it seems that I was several sorts all mixed up together'.

To the unsympathetic observer this might have appeared a mere display of pedantry; to More himself it was a matter of meat and drink. A man's beliefs were the most important thing about him, and his interest in his fellow-men might well be measured by the degree of his concern with what they believed. The distinctions which divided heresy from heresy, and heterodoxy from orthodoxy were to More vital to a correct perspective of life. Without them man fell prey to the Demon of the Absolute, and ran to one extreme or other of a rationalistic or mystical metaphysics. 'Reason in its progress towards a transcendental monism and the imagination in its progress towards a pantheistic monism may seem

to be moving in divergent routes, but the difference is only apparent; their starting point is the same desire to escape the limitations of experience, and in the end they lose their identity in an indistinguishable abstraction. So at the close of our period we find the two ultimates of pantheism and transcendentalism wedded together in the mystical rhapsody of the pseudo-Dionysius, where the mind jumps from the "positive way" of regarding God as the sum of all Being to the "negative way" of regarding Him as pure Non-Being or vice versa from absolute isolation above the world to absolute confluence with the world, and back again, with no appreciation of its acrobatic agility in these dizzy heights. —

Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

And, indeed, when once you have overleapt the barriers of common sense it makes little difference in which direction you turn, and whether you say that God is all or that God is nothing. For the personal compassionate Fatherhood of God for which More craved there is substituted the abstract metaphysical One of Aristotelian rationalism. Similarly once you repudiate intuition in favour of metaphysical speculation, Jesus the Logos, the Son of God, combining mysteriously the divine and human natures in one person, becomes rationalised into a mere emanation of the divine nature whose humanity is but an illusion as in Gnosticism and Sabellarianism, or into a purely human Jesus as in Arianism. Such are the two extreme terms of the Christological heresy, involving not only the

1. More, Christ the Word, pp. 33-34.
2. ibid., pp. 71-75.
actual nature of Christ, but the relation of the Son to the Father. The great debate of the 'homoousios' and the 'homoi-ousios' was not merely the verbal contention of Tweedledum and Tweedle-dee; it represented to More the vital insight of the Church, embodied in a single gigantic figure, Athanasius, pitted against the rationalizing tendencies of the various groups of heresies. By the decisions of the great Councils of Nicea in 325 and Chalcedon in 451, a halt was called to the presumptuous attempts of reason to explain away the mysterious paradox of the Incarnation. There was need, says More, 'just such a statement of orthodoxy as that provided by Chalcedon—a formula which, in hard, precise, immitigable terms, should set a check upon the claims of reason to extend the faith in one direction to the exclusion of the other. It had come to this pass: either the central fact of Christianity had to be abandoned, or such claims of reason had to be transcended. You may rationally reverence Christ as an inspired man (at least you may if you do not inquire too closely into the meaning of inspiration), or you may rationally (if it so pleases your fancy) dissolve an event of history into a fiction of the mythopoeic imagination, and to one or the other of these extremes all the heresies were inevitably sloping. You cannot rationally worship the incarnate Saviour, as both the orthodox and most intransigent all but the most intransigent heretics understand worship'. In some respects the various heresies had their

1. Ibid., pp. 168-69.
2. Ibid., p. 239.
3. Ibid., pp. 240-41.
advantages; on its positive side each of these sects laid hold of
a necessary aspect of the truth and developed it to the utmost, so
that the sum of all their contentions was to bring out the infinite
riches of the faith. 'But individually, and on its negative side,
each of these major heresies was a blow levelled at the very spirit
of faith and worship which it sought to elucidate, in the one case
by slurring over the function of the Saviour as representative of
the human race, in the other case by clouding his mission as revealer
of God. More than that— and the point I would now make would be
clearer if the innumerable subsidiary heresies had been brought into
our survey— in the period under consideration every possible means
of reconciling the Incarnation, 'that thing truly paradoxical' as
Athanasius admitted, with the monistic demands of reason had been
tried, and all had ended in logical confusion and moral disaster'.

That the Church in the face of so many conflicting
emphases was enabled to safeguard its peculiar insight into the true
nature seems to be the surest proof of its God-given inspiration.
After Chalcedon, with the growth of the legalist and scholastic theo-
logy of the Roman Church, More saw it frequently falling away from its
highest point of vision, by substituting the transcendental One of
Aristotelianism for the God of anthropomorphism envisaged as a Father
suffering and caring and providing for men, and by stressing the
divinity and omniscience and omnipotence of Christ at the expense of
His identification with mankind. The insight of the Greek Tradition

1. Ibid. pp.239-40.
at Nicea and Chalcedon becomes to him a point of repair to which he resorted from the clamour and turmoil of conflicting creeds, and the cold inhumanity of the Thomist scheme. Yet More in accepting the Incarnation as the Revelation of God in time which consummates the highest attainment of Plato, accepts too the fact that, if God has revealed Himself to man, He will have provided a means of safeguarding that Revelation for future generations. This receptacle, if one may so call it, for God's redemptive act, is the Church through which the consequences of redemption may be transmitted. The particular means of this transmission is the Eucharist. But immediately the question arises: how can a Church which has so often betrayed and perverted and renounced the peculiar dualism which More holds to be her true inspiration in favour of varied rationalised speculations be the instrument of God's activity in the world? Again More sees the confusion arising from man's obsession with Absolute solutions. If God has desired to reveal Himself to the world, argues the undisciplined reason, He will have done so absolutely. In so far as there has been no cataclysmic Parusia, no Absolute Supernatural appearance, the would-be rationalist looks for revelation, still absolutely—through an infallible book to the Protestant, through an infallible Church to the Roman Catholic. But in the light of historical criticism, the honest man finds it impossible to accept an infallible book or an infallible Church. There is, to More, but one solution for anyone who would be both honest and critical. 'He who today would retain at once
his faith as a Christian and his integrity of mind can do so only by denying the right of logic to set up any such dilemma, and by arguing for the probability of a revelation which is authoritative without being absolute, and reasonable without rationalistic. The position of the Protestant believer in 'the verbal inspiration' of the Bible is easily undermined by the application of Higher Criticism, although to Mote the central message has come down to future generations with more rather than with legible cogency, on account of the very vagueness and elusiveness of its outer form. It is not so easy to attack the a priori claim of the Catholic Church to absolute authority; but in fact Mote sees its claims intimately bound up with the authenticity of the Bible record as the depositum fidei; why, if any word spoken by human lips can be clothed with the precision of infallibility, should the message of the Incarnate Word come down to us in a form open in so many details to doubt and perplexity? Moreover, the evidence of history makes us reject even further the Catholic claim, especially at times when the Popes themselves have come near to the skirts of heresy, or fallen into immoral practices. Nor has Catholicism avoided the rigid literalism which has brought about the weakening of the Protestant position with regard to the Bible, but has rather extended its petrifying influence to include all the teachings of the Church. It is impossible, therefore, to exclude Roman Catholic Faith (Princeton, 1931).}

1. Ibid., pp. 177-79.
2. Ibid., pp. 17-79.
3. Ibid., 182.
4. Ibid., pp. 184-85.
Roman Catholicism from the judgment historical criticism is bound
to pass against the authority of fundamentalism.

At first it would seem there are but two positions, the fundamentalist and the agnostic, as both fundamentalists and agnostics would assert, holding that he who renounces the one must of necessity run to the opposite extreme and espouse the other. Between the two, however, there is the intermediate position of those who profess to follow the inner light of spiritual insight without accepting any organised form of worship, which, indeed, they assert frequently, tends to raise a barrier between God and man, and to deaden the finer intuitions of the soul. Such a position had indeed long been More's own and it is of the utmost importance to an understanding of his inner development to notice his reflections upon it. That it may in the case of such people as the better Quakers yield a rich inner reward he does not deny; Whittier may be taken as a case in point. But although in comparison with the 'withering graces of Protestantism', More can admire the more manly independence of a Whittier, on the ordinary level the spiritual he sought appears to More terribly fragile and precarious, lacking even at its best what a true Church can give. For the greater part, however, the 'religious' aspirations of those who seek to dispense with traditional forms of worship are mere cant, dissolving into the vaguest sort of pantheism or the flimsiest aura of transcendentalism. He who does not deign to join in public praise or prayer

1. Ibid., 202.
does not in most cases, worship or pray in private, nor read the Bible or other devotional book. The God he worships requires of him nothing, gives to him nothing, and is rarely in his thought at all: 'his faith costs him nothing, and is priceless in the sense of being without value'. And in answer to the question: What have these individuals got to show for their faith? More can only say that, if we put away cant, the answer is 'Nothing'.

In order to justify and nourish his spiritual affirmation, man needs the corporate worship of the Church. 'For our growth and sanity in religion we must have something to supply what the inner light will not afford to the isolated souls of men, something to make us conscious of our citizenship in the communion of the saints, to supplement our limited intuition with the accumulated wisdom of the race, and in our moral perplexities to fortify the individual conscience with the authority of ancient command, some agent to present before our eyes in consecrated form the everlasting drama of the divine condescension and to force upon our understanding the symbolism of these transient phenomena and the spiritual potentialities of this material world, some organ to express our wavering faith in an abiding creed and to help us utter our common instinct of praise and prayer in the beauty of holiness. And the Church, so far as it answers to this spiritual need, we hold to be an inspired institution'.

1. Ibid., p. 201.
3. Ibid., p. 203; Cf. pp. 97-100, for an extension of this theme to include the idea of the communion of saints.
Such a church is not infallible or absolute. No finality is granted us here more than in any other fields of life. Although religion is not individualistic in the sense that man can dispense with communal worship, it is individualistic to this extent: that no man can waive the ultimate responsibility of either choosing the form and dogma of the Church as complying with the verity of his own inner life or rejecting them as expansions in the wrong direction. But the wise man will hesitate to set up his private judgment against a formulated tradition, and will prefer to abide in humble, yet not abject, submission to the authority of a wider experience than his own. He may even find his peace by uniting himself to a corporation with which he is not in complete sympathy, and by participating in a liturgy which he cannot interpret to himself in quite its literal sense, knowing that only by such concessions can any stability of worship be maintained.

This is what More means by an authoritative, as contrasted with an absolute Church. Such a religious attitude does not, like the Roman position, after the first plunge of abnegation, relieve us of all the anxieties of decision; it demands the constant exercise of our own will and intelligence in making an adjustment never quite final. In the words of his essay on Baron Von Hugel it is the position of mediation, which More there equates with that of Anglicanism; its characteristics are tension and costingness.

The tension arises from the fact that every man, even the least

1. For the penalties of spiritual individualism, cf. Ibid., p. 96
introspective, finds himself drawn in two directions, owing to the dualism of human nature; but 'with reflection and deepening experience', i.e. through the awakening of a definite religious sense, this polarity of attraction becomes more permanent factor of consciousness and a more sharply defined division of obligations'. To the Christian, this polarity of experience appears objectively in a contrast between the Creator and the creature, and subjectively in alternations between attachment and detachment in varying interests and occupations, ranging from the purely physical to the spiritual, worship, prayer and adoration. 'This tension of the inner life is the distinctive mark of humanity. It may be very low; men drift from attachment to detachment, from worship of the Creator to obsession with the created, as merely passing strong-willed moods. On the other hand, in many men, attachment to worldly objects predominates. But to Baron Von Hugel, and here I think More might well have been speaking about himself, 'both worlds were powerfully and coincidently present'. His interest in both was vividly real, and the whole set of his will was to live in both 'by comprehension rather than by alternation'. 'Hence the polarity which ordinarily produces only a fluttering from side to side is felt by him as a constant problem of consciousness in the answer to which lies the measure of the fullness of life! "The measure of the fullness of life". That, I am sure, was what More had been looking for all along. So acute had been his consciousness of the two worlds that he had been tempted

1. Ibid., pp. 163-64.  
2. Ibid., p. 164.  
3. Ibid., loc. cit.  
4. Ibid., pp. 164-65.
at one time, during his 'Brahmin' period, to resolve it by a renunciation of the one pole, the material. But the sacrifice would have meant the deadening of senses all too keen to the beauty of the created world, so he found refuge in a Platonistic humanism where virtually he lived in the two worlds by alternation, seeking to hold a balance between the apprehensions of the One and the Many. The passage to Christianity did not mean for him the easing of that humanist tension; one almost wishes the aged pilgrim could have found rest in the ethereal raptures of mysticism to which, undoubtedly, he felt a strong attraction, but his feet were two firmly planted on the earth. There was no escaping the burden of mortality. But what the acceptance of Christianity did for him was to deliver him from the fear of the material world of which he had retained an almost Manichaean suspicion, and allow him to enjoy the stimulus of the tension in which he now found 'the measure of the fullness of life'.

Of his religious position there have been many criticisms; Mercier has censured his exploration of realms where the psychological positivism of Humanism no longer holds good, a writer in the Catholic World has reduced the Greek Tradition to 'the last word in private judgment' and suggested that we may conclude from his works that in More's own opinion he 'is the only man living today who understands Christianity'. The latter, inspite of More's distrust of higher critics, relegates him to their company, whilst Professor G.R. Elliott, on the other hand sees his

3. Peter J. Bart 1-75.
Christology, not as too 'advanced', but too static and conservative. Of Professor G.S. Brett, More's writings both critical and religious, it can be said, as it was of Paradise Lost, that 'proved nothing', but that they too are essentially works of art, as well as a sincere profession of faith. All these criticisms are in part true. It was his misfortune that he had to use the medium of a rational argument to define a position that was not reached primarily by such argument, and that as a result, his attitude necessarily gave rise to criticisms which seem to cancel each other out by their inconsistency. Further, to those who distrusted authority he seemed to be setting up a Demon of the Absolute as tyrannical as those he sought to overthrow, while to those who wanted the strong support of orthodoxy, his views seemed perilously individualistic and unorthodox.

This is not the place for the weighing up of the respective merits and demerits of these criticisms. The important question is what these new-found beliefs meant to More himself. He himself might shrink in horror from so personal and pragmatic an evaluation of his religious position, but in the last resort, its value must be decided by its effects upon the inner life of the believer. That is not to deny the existence of an ultimate Truth, nor to bring it down to the plane of relativity. It is only to allow that there may be different paths along which the pilgrim may journey to it: whether he has finally arrived can be humanly

ascertained only by the reflection of its joy and serenity in his life in the present dispensation and the strength of his sense of affinity with the eternal order.

How More's position worked in practice we see from two essays in *The Catholic Faith*: 'The Creeds' and 'The Eucharistic Sacrament'. In the former, More takes individually the various articles of the Apostles' Creed and considers the possibility of assenting to them on different levels of belief, literal, psychological and symbolical. More is fully aware of the possible objections to such an approach. He knows that 'a certain type of mind, more honest than subtle', will receive all he has to say with moral indignation. Why, if the traditional creed cannot be accepted without the reservations and accommodations More suggests, should it not be jettisoned *in toto*, or at least the dubious part of it, and a new profession of faith be compiled to express precisely what the modern intelligence can believe? In answer to this, More sees two objections, one negative, the other affirmative. On the negative side, it would be impossible in our day for a single man or body of men to formulate a creed likely to meet with general acceptance; and on the positive side, to rewrite the creed in terms to meet the more rationalistic demands of the present would be to lose its power over the hearts and imaginations of men. The Apostles' Creed is to More 'the lyric, or rather the brief epic, of Christianity—poetry in the sense that behind the symbols, vivifying and justifying them, lie truths of the eternal spiritual life as revealed in the
divine economy of the Incarnation.' Superficially it would appear that More was on the verge of a danger we have previously noticed, a danger common to men who have desperately desired faith in an age of intellectual doubt, that of substituting aesthetic titillation, as More himself calls it, for spiritual conviction. But then we remember how strenuously he seeks elsewhere to distinguish between the Religious Imagination and the Poetical Imagination; and how, in the last resort, the imaginative appeal of the beautiful is given eternal and universal validity by his acceptance of the Platonic Ideas as its objective co-relative, existing in their own right with a reality of their own. It is this fusion of Platonism and Christianity which forms the peculiar basis of More's symbolism and sacramentalism, the ground upon which he takes his final stand and on which he attains to that spiritual satisfaction for which he had long been in quest.

The full force of this position becomes apparent in the article on 'The Eucharistic Sacrament'. As the Incarnation is the central and essential dogma of the Church to which alone it is all-important that a man should cling, so the Eucharist is the central and essential sacrament, prolonging throughout the ages the historic revelation of the Incarnation. In what light then should the modern Churchman regard it? The first prerequisite to More is that he should not seek, as modern liberal theology does, to explain away the mystery. The reformers seemed to him to have

2. Cf. pp. 149-51.
pronounced, for their successors, something like the death warrant to true religion when they rejected, explicitly or implicitly, any mystery connected with the celebration of the Eucharist. The sacramental ordering of life now seemed to More essential to Christianity of any colour, and without the specific sacraments of the Church, centering in the mystery of the Mass, worship lost its significance and the sacramental life was rendered thin and precarious. It might be wise, before proceeding further, to consider just how More uses this word 'sacramental'. The sacramental idea, I take it, is a distinguishing note of western religion generally and more particularly of Christianity. It rests ultimately upon a dualistic conception of the world in accordance with which matter and spirit are essentially distinct yet mutually interdependent. It implies on the one side that matter can be indefinitely adapted to spiritual uses, and on the other side that spirit requires now, and so far as our knowledge and imagination reach, will always require the aid of some corporeal instrument. It points to a divine purpose unfolding itself in a continuous process wherein the stuff of existence is miraculously transformed into an ever finer medium of order and beauty and righteousness and joy. And in this scheme, it holds that men are called to play a subordinate part under the eye of the supreme Artificer, and that

1. Ibid., p. 127.
their every act, even the least, may be dedicated to this end:

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine:
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws
Makes that and the action fine.

This is that famous stone
That turneth all to gold:
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told.

Something like this, an alchemy that would transmute the leaden materials of life into a finer element, is meant by the sacramental faith of Christianity. It requires from him who would accept it, let us admit, that he should sit somewhat closely to the immediate reports of the senses and to the dictates of the narrower reason; for here, as everywhere in religion, the law is fixed that the path of assurance in the world of the spirit is closed to all but sceptics of the physical world.

It is in this sense that the Church Fathers thought of the Eucharist as involving some mysterious or miraculous change in the elements, a 'metabolism' in the Catholic sense of the word. Rarely, if ever, is there evidence of their regarding it, in the Protestant sense, as a purely commemorative act. Unfortunately, however, the Roman Church at a fairly early date, faced with two alternative interpretations, chose the one which could be the more easily perverted into a crude materialism. Of the realistic interpretation left by Ambrose, or the symbolical interpretation suggested by Augustine, the Western Church chose the former, identifying the Eucharistic body with the

1 Ibid., pp. 122-23. (The italics are mine).
the actual historical body of Christ, and so the Roman attitude became hardened into the dogma of transubstantiation, giving rise on the one hand to the gross and sensuous realism of a Paschalis Radbert or a Humbert, or the elaborate mediaeval scholasticism of St. Thomas Aquinas, on the other. The Church, however, was not entirely misguided in its choice, for the Augustinian symbol in the hands of a Berengar or a Ratramm, appears, upon closer examination, to give only a pale imitation of the sacramental metabolism by confining the change in the elements to their being made capable of producing a spiritual effect of which before they were incapable. This, to More, however, is no substitute for belief in the real presence and is little better than the purely commemorative act of Protestantism the efficacy of which depends entirely on the faith of the communicant. How then is the antinomy of a gross materialism and an insubstantial spirituality to be resolved? And her More turns once more to the Platonic system of Ideas for what is obviously the crowning stroke of his whole philosophy of religion. Repudiating once more the Plotinian tendency to evaporate them into merely subjective ideals, he recalls that they constitute a separate order of being, distinct from the world of phenomena, although phenomena may participate in them, or in other words, they may dwe in phenomena as a real presence. A beautiful object participates in the Idea of Beauty, or, in other words, the Idea of Beauty is indwelling in the beautiful phenomenon. How this may be Plato fails to explain rationally. In a later dialogue, the Par menides, he
brings every logical conclusion forward against this belief in
the doctrine of participation, or the real presence, yet in the
end has to affirm that without such a belief, we see the world
fall into mental and moral chaos.

What Plato, however, failed to prove rationalistically, he seeks to confirm mythologically in the *Timaeus*, where
in the allegory of creation, involving both Ideas and Necessity,
More finds a sacramental approach to the cosmological problem.
The word to him signifies the purposeful adaptation of material
resources to spiritual ends, whether it be seen in the cosmic
work of Providence or in some specific act of human design: the
realisation of purpose in righteousness and beauty; and in the
picture of creation which depicts God imposing order, as far as
Necessity will allow, upon the formless resources of matter.
More finds a parallel of the process of redemption wherein man
co-operates with God in the imposition of order upon the formless
chaos which forms the substratum of our humanity. The act
of creation is performed in accordance with the pattern of Ideas
which are thereupon present in the model fashioned in their likeness. Similarly in the act of redemption, may it not be that the
Logos who descended amongst men in the Incarnation, is present
once more in the material elements through which He seeks to im-
pose order upon the restless chaos of man's unredeemed nature?
True, More sees the Eucharist as all this, and more; for to the
sacramental Idealism of Plato Christianity brought its own pecu-

liar intuition of the principle of costingness, as it had been apprehended by the Jewish tradition of sacrifice. The God of Platonic Idealism, apart from His one act of creation, retires from active participation in the world He has called into being, leaving even the task of producing and governing concrete phenomena and mortal souls to the lesser gods. 'He initiated, gave the chiquenade, to the sublime drama of deliverance out of the bonds of Necessity. But there His part ends. He pays nothing, sacrifices nothing, suffers nothing. He is 'good' and 'without envy', and by His creative will He is the source of all cosmic purpose; but scarcely could he be said to love the world of His begetting; He is the author of deliverance, but not of redemption at a price. 'It was just this principle of redemption, implicit in the religious instinct of mankind, that by the historic event of the Incarnation was made the corner-stone of the new faith.'

But if Platonism was enriched and deepened and broadened by the infusion of the Christian passion of sacrifice, Christianity needed equally the clarification of the sacramental Idealism of Plato. Although the ultimate meaning of things remains a mystery of which no rational explanation is possible, it is none the less possible to build a reasonable edifice upon a superrational foundation, for to More, 'rational' and 'reasonable' are far from synonymous. 'It is a reasonable attitude towards the faith to hold that the Spirit of Christ may descend upon the elements for a divine purpose in the same way as, according to the theory of the Timaeus, Ideas are imposed upon the inert stuff of Necessity, not as a substance sup-

1. Ibid., p. 163.
planting another substance, nor as a substance mechanically con-
joined to another substance, but as actual powers of creative ad-
aptation.

It is a quieter of many doubts to hold that, as the Idea of Beauty is really present in material phenomena and renders the beautiful to the eye, while yet the Idea abides in its own unique and glorious integrity, so the Logos may be really present in the bread and the wine, making of them its own body; and by their mat-
erial instrumentality imparting itself to the embodied souls of men. In this way the miracle of the Real Presence becomes only one aspect of the ultimate mystery that confronts us in the dual-
ism of mind and body, and whithersoever else we turn, Further it takes on to More and an entirely different aspect when the rite is no longer regarded as an isolated miracle, but falls in with the 'most imposing and most satisfactory philosophy the brain of man has devised'. 'To the Platonic Christian the Eucharist is thus a visualised epitome of a consistently sacramental philosophy. Looking upon the spectacle of the Mass, he sees, as it were re-
enacted there before him, the vast drama of creation concentrated into a moment of wonder. The magic of order and beauty felt in the wide prospects, all remembered joys and exultations, are brought together in a little space:

'He hath made every thing beautiful in its time; Also He hath set the world in their heart.'

Such a sacramental attitude to the world and to material phenomena

1. Ibid., pp. 167-68.
2. Ibid., p. 167.
3. Ibid., p. 168.
is very different from the Oriental's attitude which sees no ultimate purpose of creation but only illusion in the phenomenal world, where deliverance is regarded as the utter escape of abnegation rather than as a gradual transmutation to the Everlasting Yea.

With his attaining to a sacramental attitude to life, More is at last set free from his former uneasiness in the presence of nature which we have already noticed. No man was more romantically susceptible to the beauty of nature: his descriptions of the sea are a delight and a wonder. In his brief cameo of his own experience of reading Homer beside the sea-shore at Maine one catches the eternal whisperings of timeless tides; and his picture of the boyhood of Walt Whitman beside the sea is alive with the sounds and the smell of the vast Atlantic. But if in the presence of nature he was frequently ill at ease, it was because of his fear of setting his heart on that which in the last analysis is ephemeral, and transitory. He had sought through his incursions into the fields of sociology, philosophy and religion to find a permanent point of repair amid the chances and changes of the phenomenal world. This he was to find in the coincidence of the deepest insights of Platonism and Christianity, and in the light of his new-found faith, he was to discover too the sacramental nature of all life, physical and spiritual, material and immaterial, humanity and nature. There was no longer any need to shrink from the beauty of the temporal, for indwelling within the temporal was the Eternal; and the glory he saw he now

1. New Shelburne Essays I, pp. 21
recognised as but a shadow of the greater glory to be hereafter.

Unfortunately this new attitude to life came to More too late for it to have far-reaching effects on his writings, but it is, I believe, of the greatest importance to a retrospective appreciation of his mental and spiritual development. Only in the light of what he became can we fully understand the tendencies of his earlier work. His final position was the consummation, not the denial or repudiation, of what had gone before, but that is not to see it merely as the logical conclusion of his Humanism. Somehow between the first edition of Platonism and Christ the Word there had burst in upon him the joy of a new discovery which was to irradiate his later work. Not that it made the blackness of contemporary chaos as he saw it in the work of Joyce and Proust any less black, or Satanism of Baudelaire any less Satanic. To his adversaries the More of On Being Human was as intolerant and reactionary and wilfully blind as the More of Aristocracy and Justice. But even though at present he saw the whole creation groaning and travelling in pain together, he had come to believe too in the future redemption of the whole creation, of nature as well as of man, and that belief lent to the outlook of his latter days the sense of meaning and purpose and freedom which he was swift to oppose to the futilitarianism and irresponsibility of so much of modern art. He could say with C.S. Lewis from whose paper on The Personal Heresy in Criticism he quotes:

"Surely the dilemma is plain. Either there is significance

in the whole process of things as well as in human activity, or there is no significance in human activity itself. It is an idle dream, at once cowardly and arrogant, that we can withdraw the human soul, as a mere epiphenomenon, from a universe of idiotic force, and yet hope, after that, to find for her some faubourg where she can keep a mock court in exile. You cannot have it both ways. If the world is meaningless, then so are we; if we mean something, we do not mean alone. Embrace either alternative, and you are free of the personal heresy."

More chose to embrace the latter, that man and nature meant intensely; and if they did not here and now mean good, man at least had been called to be a co-worker with God in the task of delivering both himself and his universe from the clinging vestiges of dark Necessity, to bring a bit of cosmos out of chaos, so that when the greater and the lesser Creator should survey His handiwork, He might see that it was good. And in the discovery of this teleology of both human and natural evolution, More found the teleology of the evolution of his own criticism, the last of life for which the first was made. To him as to a greater artist before him, 'Ripeness was all'.
Appendix A.

A Table of Contents of The Shelburne Essays.

Series One.
A Hermit's Notes on Thoreau.
The Solitude of Nathaniel Hawthorne.
The Origins of Hawthorne and Poe.
The Influence of Emerson.
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Oxford, Women, and God.

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The Greek Anthology.
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Thoreau's Diary,
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2. Tradition.
3. The Criterion.
IV. The Fetish of Pure Art.
V. The Phantom of Pure Science.

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George Borrow.
Henry Vaughan.
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Platonic Idealism.
The Platonic Teleology.
Illusions of Reson.
The Evolution of Hebraism.
The Telos of Christianity.
The Gift of Hope.

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Irving Babbitt.
Proust: The Two Ways.
James Joyce.
The Modernism of French Poetry.
Religion and Social Discontent.
A Scholar-Saint.
How to Read Lycidas.
Appendix E.

Sympathy and Egotism as Elements in the Development of Naturalism.

The evolution of sympathy as an active principle in philosophy and politics dates, according to More, from the eighteenth century and had its origin in England. Renaissance thinkers had recognised that the majority of men were governed by motives of self-love or egotism, and throughout the seventeenth century philosophers and politicians alike based their creed upon a recognition of this principle. Halifax accepted that egotism was the strongest motive underlying human conduct, the maxims of La Rochefoucauld suggest that man can be saved from his lower self purely by the promptings of his amour-propre; and the same principle was developed by Hobbes into a philosophy of State. The condition of natural man was one of constant hostility towards his neighbour, but because such a condition would ultimately bring about the destruction of all those involved in it, the members of the primitive society had made a compact whereby, in order to enjoy security, they had been prepared to make certain mutual concessions in order to ensure as far as possible a communal life.

On the other hand, the opposite principle of natural sympathy had been made an active element in communal

2. Shelburne Essays, X, pp. 63-64.
living by such pioneers as Grotius, and a sect known as the 'levellers,' who drew the sanction for their faith in sympathy from a belief in the will of an active and providential God. This belief was still shared by their opponents, in spite of their apparent cynicism, and Hobbes' reputation for atheism. With the eighteenth century, however, and the advent of deism the belief in the benevolence of a divine love intervening actively in the world of men became a vague sense of the power behind the universe, removed to the infinite inane. The idea of the consciousness of men, largely as a result of Locke's 'Essay concerning the Human Understanding' published in 1690. Locke does not deny the existence of the supernatural, but the practical effect of his theory of ideas and sensations was to bring the human soul entirely within the scope of the phenomenal laws of nature. Locke's doctrine was carried one step further by Hume's discovery in naturalism of a sufficient principle of human conduct without recourse to any external law. To some extent in Hume the two rival motives of egotism and sympathy are shown as active in human behaviour. Man is seen as basically governed by self-interest, but his own interests can only be assured by allowing the interests of others, even though they appear to conflict with his own. Justice is therefore not an attempt to act in accordance with an abstract and a priori principle of virtue, but virtue itself is a product of justice,

1. Ibid., pp. 157-160.
the sense of satisfaction derived from a mutual reconciliation of our own interests with those of others. The sensation of virtue comes from throwing ourselves into the place of others and seeing how our action will be indirectly profitable to ourselves. Once however, the individual becomes conscious of the springs of conduct, there is no room left for belief in absolute virtue and absolute vice; they are seen to depend entirely on sensations, agreeable or otherwise.

Twenty years after Hume's Treatise of Human Nature (1739-40) there appeared Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments. Not only is man now seen to enjoy a sense of virtue resulting from sympathy with an act of justice, but he is himself led to act justly through a sense of sympathy with the feelings his conduct will inspire in others. Further, by his habit of reflection, to feel the same sympathy or antipathy with his own conduct as he would feel towards the conduct of others; and so his actions came to be motivated, not so much by love of neighbour or concern with his good opinion, as by love of his own estimate of himself. The word 'sentiment' from then on began to recur with increasing frequency. This was 'nothing else but the logical outcome of Hume and Adam Smith's theory of sympathy entirely dissevered from any supernatural principle as the source of virtue'.

The mood of universal benevolence which came to

1. cf. New Shelburne Essays, pp.147-149.
dominate the end of the eighteenth century had been already fore-shadowed by Shaftesbury and itself anticipated the spread of humanitarianism during the two ensuing centuries. This was given a new and far-reaching impetus by being allied to Rousseau's doctrine of the natural goodness of man which, more than any other doctrine of the period, was to colour all subsequent thought. Like Hobbes, he saw society founded on a contract granting mutual concessions to its members, but such a measure he saw not as a safeguard against anarchy, as Hobbes envisaged it, but as the root of all subsequent vice, contention and inequality, and a state therefore to be annulled in favour a return to the freedom and innocence which he believed to have been the primitive condition of man. Such was his doctrine in his Discours sur l'Inégalité (1755) but by the time of his Contrat Social (1762) there had been a basic change in his attitude. He no longer envisages men as independent and self-sufficient entities, living each in his own small world, co-equal and 'co-virtuous' with his fellows, but he sees them rather as bound into a community of the spirit by a mystical element known as the volonté générale, absorbing the individual desires of members of the State into one harmonious and all-embracing purpose. Men are united in a common bond of brotherhood, not by reason, but by the emotions and impulses they share. To find a touch of nature which makes the whole world kin it is necessary

1. Ibid., p. 168.
to dive into the flux of desires which all men have in common. Reason analyses, distinguishes, divides; pure feeling breaks down distinctions, synthesises, unites. It is not surprising therefore, that the movement of humanitarianism should find its main impulse in the thought of Rousseau.

But if the guiding principle and original impulse of this romantic revolution came from England and were translated into a homogeneous social code in France, their conversion into a metaphysical formula had yet to be accomplished by Germany. There the Romantische Schule transmuted the Rousseanistic doctrines of the natural goodness of man and his inherent sympathy with his brother into a mystical rapture of love so potent that even in the hearts of the most depraved it was able to move them to deeds of complete unselfishness, as in Schiller's play, The Robbers. It is significant, however, that in the country where the theory of natural sympathy found its most complete expression in literature, the most violent reaction was to set it in, and by the end of the century, Nietzsche should have been extolling the Superman, who represses every prompting of sympathy and altruism in favour of a ruthless egotism. The significance of this resides in the fact that whenever men give free rein to an indiscriminate and idealistic sympathy, there results almost invariably a corresponding outburst of egotism and tyranny. Sympathy, More

1. See Babbitt, Masters of Modern French Criticism, pp28-30, 329
2. Ibid., p.169.
allows, is good, but whenever it is prefaced by 'social', it takes on a dangerous connotation, in that the responsibility for individual conduct is now thrown upon society, with the result that man sees himself as a victim to be pitied and pampered rather than as a responsible human being answerable for the consequences of his behaviour.
Appendix C.


Mr. Parkes, in enumerating the reasons given for More's 'conversion', mentions the 'need for a supernatural world and after-life in order to make virtue and happiness identical: in this life, the virtuous man, if unfortunate, can only by an abuse of language be called happy.' This, he goes on, 'as More shows, was Plato's conclusion: but what More never points out is that it is utterly inconsistent with the hedonism he shares with Babbitt and which he advocates in the first volume of the series; either the purpose of morality is to make men happy in this world in which case unhappiness proves merely that the morality is wrong, or else the laws of morality are transcendental and not empirical which destroys the whole humanistic philosophy'. This, it seems to me, errs in two directions: on the one hand, by identifying More's views with Babbitt's even in the first volume of The Greek Tradition, and secondly, by not taking sufficiently into account the difference in More's own point of view which develops between the earlier and later volumes of the series,
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