SOCIAL IDEALISM AND THE UNIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS FORCES:
An Application of the Functional Point of View
in Religion

by
Howard Eikenberry Jensen

A thesis submitted to the Department of Sociology
and the Faculty of the Graduate School in
partial fulfillment of the re­
quirements for the Master's
degree.

approved by J. W. Blackburn Department of Sociology

May, 1915.
BIBLIOGRAPHIES.

Christian Unity


Gates, Errett: The Early Relation and Separation of Baptist* and Disciples. Chicago 1904.


Shields, Charles Woodruff:
The United Church of the United States. New York 1895.
Church Unity. Five Lectures. New York 1896
The General Principles of Church Unity.

Willett, Herbert Lockwood: Our Plea for Union and the Present Crisis. Chicago, 1901.

Young, C. A.: Historical Documents Advocating Christian Union. Chicago, 1904.

Christian Sociology.


Bailey, L. H.:

Batten, Samuel Zane: The Social Task of Christianity. New York, 1911.


Chapters in Rural Progress. Chicago 1908.


Löhrer, George Claude: Christianity and the Social State. Philadelphia 1898.

Macfarland, Charles Stedman:
   Spiritual Culture and Social Service. New York 1912.

   The Church and the Changing Order. New York 1907.


Rauschenbusch, Walter:
   Christianizing the Social Order. New York 1912.


Wilson, Warren H:


Rural Life Surveys of the Department of Church and Country Life of the Presbyterian Church, 1913. Ohio, Indiana and Missouri Surveys.

Psychology and Philosophy of Religion.


History.


Kent, Charles Foster:

The United Kingdom. New York 1908.
The Divided Kingdom. New York 1909.


CONTENTS

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

I. The new popular demand for religious unification.
      a. Modern demand for efficiency.
      b. Demand for economy and conservation.
      c. Modern ideal of world evangelization.
      d. The new Christian social consciousness.
   2. The nature of the popular demand.
      a. Its emotional and romantic character.
      b. Evaluation of the emotional element.

II. The ecclesiatical approach to the subject of unification.
   1. Its intellectualistic nature.
   2. Criticism of the intellectualistic point of view.

III. The problem of this thesis: To work out a statement of the function of religion and to apply the functional point of view in the solution of the problem of religious unification.

CHAPTER II. THE FUNCTIONAL NATURE OF RELIGION

II. The Functional view of consciousness as a basis for a functional interpretation of religion.
   1. Self-consciousness as arising within activity and functioning in its organization and control.
   2. Religious consciousness as arising within and functioning within a specialized field of activity. Its relation to social ideals.

III. The dependence of the religious consciousness upon the social group and its function within the group.

CHAPTER III. THE SOCIAL IDEALS OF THE HEBREW PROPHETS. 31

I. The nature of the prophets' social interest.
   1. The character of primitive social questions.
   2. The social nature of religious genius.
   3. The origin of prophecy and the prophetic ideals.

II. The prophets and their ideals.
   1. The moral unity of the clan and its god.
   2. Social justice.
   4. Ownership of Land.
   5. Democracy.
   6. Relation of the Cultus to social life.

III. The result of the prophetic activity.

CHAPTER IV. CHRISTIANITY AS A SOCIAL PRODUCT 55
I. The ideals of Jesus and their historical background.
   1. The triumph of the individualizing over the socializing tendency in Hebrew religion.
   2. The activity of Jesus a rebirth of prophetism.
   3. The transformation of the Messianic ideal.

II. The Early Church.
   1. Its first appearance as a Jewish sect.
   2. The early church as a body of believers loosely organized about the ideals of Jesus.
      a. Homogeneity of membership.
      b. Lack of ecclesiastical organization.
      c. Plasticity of doctrine.
   3. Influences contributing to the development of doctrine and organization.
      a. Struggle between the Jewish- and pagano-Christian groups.
      b. Contact with the mystery religions.
      c. The conflict with the heresies.

CHAPTER V. THE SOCIAL ANTECEDENTS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

I. The Reformation a result of social conditions.
   Martin Luther the spokesman of the people.

II. The Reforming Councils.

III. The Complaints of the German people.

IV. Luther's Address to the Christian Nobility of the
German nation.
Its relation to the complaints, and to the literary products of the preceding century. V. Luther an organizer of the German social consciousness.

CHAPTER VI. SOCIAL IDEALISM AND THE MODERN CHURCH
I. The Protestant Revolt and Social Idealism.
   1. Attitude of the early Reformers toward the dogma of authority.
   2. The development of the Protestant dogma.
   3. The futility of final statements of religious truth. This divisive effect.
II. The new social emphasis in religion.
III. The church's gain from its emphasis upon social idealism.
   1. Numerical increase.
   2. Unified social consciousness.
   3. Increased possibility of unification.
      b. Christian Union Commissions.

CHAPTER VII. THE ROUND PRAIRIE EXPERIMENT IN RELIGIOUS UNIFICATION
I. The Round Prairie Community prior to 1910.
II. The progress of religious unification.
   1. The first stage of the work. Spring & Summer 1912.
a. The development of social consciousness.
b. The relation of religion to community life.
c. The basis of religious co-operation.

2. The second stage. September 1912 to August, 1913.
   a. Singing School.
   b. Athletics.
   c. Recreation.

3. The third stage. August 1913 to December 31, 1914.
   a. The revival of August 1913.
   b. The new Constitution.
   c. The new social activities of 1914.

III. Difficulties encountered in unification.

1. Lack of a central body relating the separate churches to one another.
   a. Difficulty of attaching to any one communion.
   b. A suggested solution.

2. Lack of trained leadership. The need of seminary courses in religious unification.

IV. Unification a problem to be approach from the point of view of local needs.

CHAPTER VIII. OBJECTIONS TO UNIFICATION

1. The power of the church has been due to its dogmatic appeal. This objection takes no account of the new social interest. Refuted by rural life surveys.

2. Unification involves intellectual disloyalty. This objection confuses unity of purpose with uniformity.
of doctrine.

3. Attitude of the conservative minority.
4. Attitude of the professional minority.
5. Attitude of the Home Missionary Societies.

The practicality of the unification of religious forces as a community ideal.
CHAPTER I.
INTRODUCTION.

The unification of religious forces, in its various phases, has become a popular topic of discussion during the last decade. Editorial commitments upon the subject are constantly appearing in the leading religious journals of the day. An examination of the Readers Indices to Periodical Literature gives evidence of the increasing amount of space given to the discussions of this topic in our popular and quasi-scientific magazines. The newspapers are on the alert for stories of community churches, and their columns are open to the minister who is carrying the modern watchword "efficiency" over into the realms of religious activity. The Chautauqua and Lyceum lecturer has learned that he strikes a responsive chord in his audience when he approaches this topic with an intelligent grasp of the principles involved.

Various factors are entering into the creation of the new demand for religious unification. If it be legitimate to characterize the sixteenth century as one of Reformation and the eighteenth century as one of Revolution, surely we can epitomize the twentieth century in the one word "efficiency". It is the demand for greater efficiency that is leading us on to new methods in education, in agriculture, in industry and commerce, and in religion. All over the state of Kansas and other states as well there are overchurched
towhs and villages with undervitalized religious life as a result of denominational rivalry. Whether or not competition is the life of trade let economists decide; but this much is certain, competition is the life of religious bigotry and prejudice, and the toll it takes is seen in empty pews, abandoned churches and the general inability of the religious life of the community to express itself through any comprehensive, constructive plan of social action for the community welfare. There is waste of effort and of resources, needless duplication of buildings and workers, together with the prejudice developed by rivalry, and the resultant loss in social consciousness which the community suffers through religious dissension. Denominational welfare looms larger than community welfare, and religion is petty strife about dead issues belonging to dead ages which have no vital rôle to play in the modern work-a-day world. But if religion is to survive it must prove that it has survival value, that it functions in an intimate and indispensable way in our present-day life. We expect of it that it shall express itself in social action, and seek to conserve the highest social values, furnishing the ideals according to which the circumstances of life may be organized and controlled, so that the group life may be conducive to the fullest physical and spiritual development of the individual. Modern critics of religion are abandoning the attacks upon dogma and
tradition, such as those in which Robert G. Ingersoll used to indulge, and are attacking religion and religious institutions upon the much more strategic ground of inefficiency. Charles Stelzle tells of a group of social workers, themselves church trained, who, in commenting on a certain problem in philanthropy, agreed that the problem was being grappled with in a masterful way, despite the fact that its solution was being worked out by the church. Morrison I. Swift is typical of this new attitude of criticism of religion as inefficient and functionless. "Religion is like a sleepwalker to whom actual things are blank." He recounts a number of cases in which ruin had fallen upon the homes of workingmen because of social conditions over which they had no control, and comments as follows upon a case which is especially distressing. "This Cleveland workingman, killing his children and himself, is one of the elemental, stupendous facts of this modern world and of this universe. It can not be glossed over or minimized away by all the treatises of God, and Love, and Being, helplessly existing in their haughty, monumental vacuity. This is one of the simple irreducible elements of this world's life after millions of years of divine opportunity and twenty centuries of Christ. It is in the moral world like atoms or sub-atoms in the physical, primary, indestructible. And what it blazons to

1. See his American Religious and Social Conditions, 176-191
2. Swift, Hum. Sub.II p 11 (Phila 1905)
man is the impotence of religion in its very essence, and the imposture of all philosophy which does not see in such events the consummate factor of conscious experience. These facts invincibly prove religion a nullity. Man will not give religion two thousand centuries or twenty centuries more to try itself and waste human time; its time is up, its probation is ended. Its own record ends it. Mankind has not aeons and eternities to spare for trying out discredited systems of life."

Overdrawn as Mr. Swift's indictment of religion undoubtedly is, he has nevertheless attacked the Christianity of today upon its really vulnerable side. But the hopeful thing about the situation is that the church is itself awakening to a consciousness of its vulnerability, and is seeking, with increasing success, to enter into its true social functions. To the end that religion may become functionally efficient, two demands are made of her by the social body.

First, religion must be brought into vital touch with modern life. Whatever cannot be made to function in the social situation of the present world must be set aside with out-worn philosophies and discredited systems, useful once, and treated charitably because of the use and the meaning for faith which they once had, but which, like vestiges and anachronisms generally, survive only to hinder.

1. Swift, Human Submission Pt II 9f.
A second demand of religious efficiency is that there shall be united action on the part of all the religious forces of the group. The church can not exist only for the service of its membership, nor for the religious community within the group. It must seek to be an expression of the spiritual life of the society in which it exists, and to be an embodiment of the highest social ideals which have been achieved.

Hand in hand with the demand for efficiency goes the demand for economy and conservation. Five church buildings and five ministers are maintained where one would be sufficient, while large tracts of the country go unchurched. The field is too wide and human life too dear to waste it in the dreary routine of maintaining denominational representation where both community and denomination would prosper better without such representation.

The modern ideal of world evangelization has had tremendous influence in creating union sentiment among the churches. The conflicting creeds have hindered progress and stood in the way of co-operation on the mission fields. The divisions of American Christianity mean little or nothing to the Oriental. He is ignorant of their historic connections. Family and social ties, so powerful in perpetuating division in America, mean nothing to him. His religion comes to him first, not in terms of doctrine, but of life. Moreover, the ideal of world evangelization has called for more united
effort, necessitated more constructive planning on the part of the religious bodies and given less opportunity for friction than any of the religious problems near at hand in the home land.

Most influential of all has been the awakened Christian social consciousness. In the patristic church individualism ran riot. Society was viewed as wholly bad. The best the church could hope to do was to snatch a few individual souls as brands from the burning and preserve them as citizens for a Heavenly Kingdom. Religion became otherworldly, sad, sweet, sickly, saintly. "Is trade adapted for a servant of God?" asks Tertullian. "But, covetousness apart, what is the reason for acquiring? When the motive for acquiring ceases, there will be no necessity for trading.**** Do you hesitate about arts and trades and about professions likewise for the sake of children and parents? Even in the gospels was it demonstrated to us that both dear relations and handicrafts are to be left behind for the Lord's sake." So Tertullian advocates complete withdrawal from the world. The religious ideals were individualistic or small group ideals, so that their extension to larger group activities was an impossible task. Men have been trying to get on in a social world with an individualistic system of ethics. The disorganization which has resulted has been largely due to lack of communication and social consciousness in which the

1. Tertullian, De Idol 11&12.
individual has not felt his moral identification with the larger whole through sympathetic contact. The principle of compensation is forever at work in social evolution. Progress along one line is likely to mean delay in others. If there is not progress in equilibrium all along the line, maladjustments result which require new syntheses followed by periods of re-adjustment. Our industrial and commercial life has made such rapid progress that the church has not been able to formulate ethical and religious principles for its guidance. The result is seen in the inconsistent conduct of conscientious Christian business men not different from that of Ahab, who named his children for Yahweh on the one hand, while on the other he despoiled a freeholder of his inheritance and forced him to exchange a vineyard in Israel for an estate in Paradise. A down-to-date illustration comes to hand from the columns of the Christian Century as I write:

"A libel suit is pending in which John A. Patten, one of the most prominent laymen of the Methodist church and the leading stockholder in a company that manufacture and sell a patent medicine called Wine of Cardui, is suing the American Medical Association for an article which appeared in their official journal. The article characterized Wine of Cardui as non-medicine and drawing its popularity from its intoxicating effects. Meanwhile great agitation is abroad
among the Methodist churches as to what action the church should take with reference to a man whose money has been made in selling as a medicine a concoction whose label states that it is twenty per cent alcohol. ***** The prescribed doses of Wine of Cardui introduce into the system the same amount of alcohol daily as through the woman using the medicine drank two-thirds of a bottle of beer, or nearly an ounce of whisky. Mr. Patten is chairman of the Methodist Book Concern that employs all the editors of the Official Methodist papers. ***** The character of Mr. Patten in his private relations is not in question, as he is highly esteemed for many good works. The question among Methodists arises from a seeming inconsistency between private character and business ethics. The whole case is an interesting instance of the way in which the modern social conscience is changing things in every communion."

This individualism is a result of isolation of the religious sentiment which has not been extended to keep pace with the development of the commercial world. The remedy is to be found only by a broadening of the spirit by bringing it into immediate, intimate contact with the larger currents of life. Religion must produce social righteousness as well as individual righteousness. "We realize the gap between the thirteenth and twentieth centuries, and we feel that saintliness of character may yield absolutely worthless fruits.***
Smitten as we are with a vision of social righteousness, a god indifferent to everything but adulation, and full of partiality for his individual favorites, lacks an essential element of largeness; and even the best professional sainthood of former centuries, pent up as it is to such a conception, seems to us curiously shallow and unedifying."

The demand for efficiency, economy, and conservation the ideal of world evangelization and the awakened social consciousness are forces which are preparing the way for religious unification and which are causing the present generation to lose its interest in the logomachies of the fathers. They are forces upon which the worker in religious unification can count, but which it will be necessary for him to organize and direct both wisely and patiently. The popular demand for religious unification is still in its emotional and sentimental stages. It exists on the part of Christian men and women as an aspiration and a hope, rather than as a possibility. Just now it seems to be producing its Augustines of the contemplative mood:—"O Lord thou hast made us for unity, and our hearts are not satisfied until they rest in thee, united!" This romantic element, this warm emotional glow is not to be discounted. It is here that the socially efficient religion of the future must look for its motive power, but the direction under which this power is to be unified and is to become effective

1. James Varieties of Religious Experience. 346
socially must come from other quarters.

The churches have tried to approach the question of unification from the intellectualistic point of view, seeking an authoritative doctrine as a basis of unification. The Protestant Episcopal Church has called for a "World Conference of Faith and Order" for the purpose of finding some such basis of unification, while the leading denominations have appointed their own Christian Union Commissions to co-operate with the Episcopal commission in arranging for such a conference. The Disciples of Christ and the Christian Connection have proposed union by the "Restoration of New Testament Christianity."

Both of these plans are admirably conceived, but are being worked out in such a way as to render them of doubtful utility in unifying the church. The former plan proceeds upon the assumption that some statement of the essence of Christian doctrine can be formulated which shall be adequate for all men and for all time. It overlooks the fact that the creeds have been socially determined, that is, they have been attempts to state religious belief in terms of the thinking of the generation that produced them, and consequently can be adequate for that generation alone.

The proposal to unite the church by means of the restoration of New Testament Christianity is an attractive one, provided New Testament Christianity is conceived of in idealistic rather than legal terms, but it has been regarded
with a great deal of suspicion owing to the fact that many of its exponents have assumed that we can reproduce a system of doctrine and organization in all its details without reproducing the entire social situation within which it functioned. They have failed to recognize that what we need is not a restoration of first century religious experience, but a twentieth century religious experience which shall be as adequate today as the first century experience was in its time.

Neither the popular demand for unification nor the attempt on the part of the denominations to formulate a basis for unification, have proceeded upon an adequate conception of the function of religion in society and in the individual. They have sought a statement of what religion abstractly is, not of what it does.

We have had enough of abstractly formulated religion. It is difficult to conceive of what advantage will accrue from union if it is to function, or rather fail to function, in the future as in the past. We need, not a static, but dynamic religious unity. Unification upon the basis of creed rather than function will give us an institution more arrogant because of its power, more unwieldy because of its numbers, less plastic and fluid because of organization, than any which the world has yet produced.

"Creeds," says Mr. Fielding, "are the grammar of religion, they are to religion what grammar is to speech. Words are
the expression of our wants; grammar is the theory formed afterwards. Speech never proceeded from grammar, but the reverse. As speech progresses and changes from unknown causes, grammar must follow. Creeds are not fountains of religious life, they are expressions of that life. They are statements by means of which men have sought to make intelligible to themselves their religious experiences. The New Testament is not the source of religion, but a product of religious activity. Christ was preached, His type of religious life was reproduced, and churches were founded in His name upon two continents, perhaps upon three, before a line of the New Testament was penned. Religion is fundamentally a type of human activity, secondly a type of thought. Religious unification is not a thing of doctrine, but of life. Its basis is not static, but dynamic. The problem confronting the worker in the field is not the formulation of a creedal platform which shall be an adequate statement of the content of religious consciousness, but the formulation of a program of activity by means of which that consciousness may become socially efficient, and attain unto its fullest and completest expression.

CHAPTER II.
THE FUNCTIONAL NATURE OF RELIGION.

The hopeless confusion in which all attempts to reach a satisfactory definition of religion have ended has made manifest two facts, (1) that religion must be stated in functional rather than idealistic terms, and (2) that this functional conception of religion must depend upon a genetic study of religion in the race and in the individual, drawing largely from the fields of anthropology, sociology, and psychology, both genetic and social. Religion grows with the individual and the race, becoming more and more complex as the individual emerges from the dim social background and comes to complete self-consciousness, and as the race itself develops a more intricate social organization. Hence, our statements of religious phenomena can be valid only for the time that was and is, ever needing re-statement in the light of further experience and reflection. The content of religious consciousness is ever shifting and changing from group to group and from epoch to epoch within the same group. Gods wax mighty and perish, and the conception of deity which is the life-breath of one group is anathema to its neighbors. There is no moral quality that has not been ascribed to the highest being of which a social group knows, scarcely is there an immoral trait that has not been at some time a quality of the deity. Nor have we been able to discover any type of emotion which belongs in
a peculiar way to religion or functions in a distinctively religious fashion. In one stage of its development a race finds the essential religious element in the fear of God,* and in another stage gradually passes into that state of perfect love which casts all fear out.# As attention shifts under the stress of practical necessity the religious consciousness shifts also, bringing first one, then another aspect of life into prominence, until the whole gamut of human experience has been run in sounding the heights and depths of religious life.

Religion functions within a social situation to which it is organically related. Prof. Leuba claims religious phenomena for the province of psychology, but the problems of religion are not to be settled once for all by the specialist, nor can psychology, strictly defined, claim them for its field.

The data of religion are not isolated mental phenomena, but phenomena which find their meaning in, and depend for their interpretation upon, the entire social life, of the race to which they are indigenous. But on the other hand, the anthropologist's treatment of the data of religion is just as likely to err by dealing with them as mere products or vestiges of culture, like weapons or pottery or burial mounds, overlooking their functions in

* Eccles. 12:13  # I John 4:18
mediating the highest social values which the group has achieved. Prof. Leuba seems to be exceedingly mechanical when he separates the psychological and historical fields for the study of religion.* The patent fact is not their discreteness, but their organic relationship, not as one set of facts depending upon another, but rather different aspects of a single fundamental social process.

Much of the work which has been done in this field is vitiated because it rests upon assumption in the interpretation of its data. It has been assumed that we can arrange some scheme of stages of evolution for religion such as fetishism, animism, naturalism, polytheism, henotheism, monolatry, monotheism, through which all religions have passed to their present form.

Social evolution is a complicated process. A certain complex of social and environmental forces brings about varying lines of development in varying social groups, so that any schematism is to be avoided. Another assumption is that similar practices are concomitant with similar ideas in different ethnic groups.** But under the stress of attention certain reactions may be built up which, if they are interpreted at all, are explained in different ways, because they have arisen in different social situations.

Modern theology, psychology and history of religion tend more and more toward functional interpretations.

* Introduction to the Psychology of Religion. Monist Vol. XI
** i.e. Westermarck et al. 197.
The phenomena of religion are meaningless when considered apart from the active life of social groups. The group forms the matrix out of which religion arises, conditions its development and practices and determines and tests its hypotheses. The progress of religious truth is effected by a process of readjustment and redistribution of conflicting values through interaction with a widening range of relevant values. It is not an independent development, but an organic part of social development as a whole. Religion, as a distinct phase of human experience, is an abstraction, a differentiation and specialization for the purpose of function. Hence, the futility of the attempted analysis and differentiation of an aspect of primitive social life which has as yet not been differentiated within the social matrix out of which it arises, such as Leuba and others try to make between magic and religion in its primitive stages. Magic, he holds is a coercive type of behaviour which is distinguished from religion by the lack of personal relations.* But no such line of demarcation can be drawn. Magic makes use of spirits in just as vital a way as does religion. The use of magical formulae was prohibited among the early Hebrews because of the recognition of spiritual powers opposed to Jehovah which it involved.**Christ was charged with the use of a personal magic in casting out demons. The early Christians were persecuted at first for their working miracles in the name of Jesus, which was regarded as a magical practice by their contemporary Jewish brethren.***

This was owing to the fear which they had of any one who would manipulate mysterious spiritual powers in an unsocial or anti-social way. Yahweh was the god of the nation. His blessings were of a social nature, and his curses were upon the people as a whole. But those who sought "familiar spirits" were to be disposed of as dangerous to the social body. The lines of differentiation, then, when they come to be drawn, are to be found in the field not of content, but of function. Religion is that which performs a certain function. Magic is that which functions with respect to a definite kind of need.

This tendency of a unitary response to become differentiated is a fact which is being emphasized by genetic psychology. In earlier genetic psychology it was assumed that the infant does not respond in a normal way as a whole, but in a number of random movements or independent reflexes to independent stimuli and that conduct is built up through the weeding out of the useless reflexes, and the organization of those so selected. But the evidence is against this view. (1) Phylogenetically and ontogenetically the individual has developed from a single cell which as a matter of necessity reacts as a whole to the stimuli received. (2) The adult does act as a whole, and in the infant the tendency to act as a whole is manifest. It but awaits the further integration of the nervous system to make
this unitary character of the response stand out clearly.

The theory of the genesis of conduct through the integration of independent reflexes is further controverted by the fact that the form does not single out one object from the field of objects and respond to it, and at the same time have different responses to the different objects within the field. The response is to the environment as a whole. One single object is indeed singled out if the act is to be efficient. But the response is always to the object singled out with reference to its relation to other objects. The response to the environment as a whole is further illustrated by the fact that the form does not begin by responding to certain stimuli as physical and to others as social. This is a later development, a result of some degree of abstraction. To say that we first enter into relations with other persons as things, and then ascribe to them our own feelings as persons is to make an unwarranted assumption. The child responds to the whole environment, but the adaptation to the social environment is well-nigh perfect, while that to the physical environment is very imperfect. A feeling-tone is thus developed about social responses which becomes the core of the social self. Those things are eliminated as physical to which we respond in a non-social way. It is upon this basis of responses that the distinction between social and individual psychology is drawn.
All our conscious life is essentially active, social and functional in its nature. Our response to environment is predominately a reaction, not to things, but to persons.* Thought is a series of mental processes tending toward expression in motor reactions. Words are the expression of certain reactions acquired in social relationships. Thinking implies that one shall be conscious of how he behaves in the presence of things, and his reactions are expressed in language. The special processes of thinking exemplify the general character of the thinking process as "our consciousness of an act or a series of acts adjusted to an object in such wise as fittingly to represent that object or to portray it, of to characterize it, and in such wise that the one who thinks is conscious of the nature of his act."**

In harmony with this view of thinking as a type of activity Royce defines conception as "the forming of General Abstract Ideas which take the form of portraying, depicting or describing the nature of the object by a fitting series of reactions." An image is never a general idea, because it must have this fringe of reaction attitude. An image of a tiger, e.g. becomes a general idea of "tiger" in distinction from "dog" or "cat" in proportion as it involves a definite reaction attitude. It is social life which has made us conscious of our actions and taught us

* c.f. Royce, Outlines of Psychology, ch.XII
** Royce, op. cit. 285
how to form abstract ideas. Judgment implies our acceptance or rejection of a given proposal or portrayal of objects as adequate or as fitting for its purpose, and is critical because we compare it with the judgments of our fellows. Reasoning is not a train of associated ideas, but a process of considering the results of proposed conceptions and judgments. It is a "consequence of social situations, and involves a comparison of various opinions as they have grown up."

But this conception of mental processes as types of activity implies the genesis of self-consciousness as a concomitant of this activity. "The self comes to consciousness only in contrast with other selves." * It is a result of comparing behaviours, ideals and feelings with those of other men. These comparisons make one conscious of the details of his own acts, of the criticism which they arouse in others, and of the feelings which they engender in himself and in others. "The self comes to consciousness in normal cases only with organized plans of conduct. Our * social self consciousness leads us to formulate such plans and to compare them with those of other people. Our consciousness of ourselves, as personalities is therefore simply that of relationship between social consciousness and the higher intellectual development which we have

* Royce. op. cit. 297.
already set forth in our account of the general nature of thought." *

The idea is, says H. Heath Bawden, a vicarious act. ** It is true, either as a record of a previous act or a plan for future action. The form which the object takes in consciousness, is, then, that of a collapse act. It is the result of the act's having passed over into experience. It implies three elements: (1) Stimulation which comes from a distance. (2) Contact stimulation and (3) motion which mediates between the two. This last element is called the act, and consists in movements which relate the distance experience to the experience which comes through contact.

However, in any such analysis or schematism, there is one restriction which must be ever borne in mind:— The unitary process of the act as a whole. When we speak of stimulation, of response, of movement, we must not allow the terms to mislead us into thinking that these are things which have other than functional existence. They are to be interpreted from their place and function in the sensory-motor circuit, and not terms of distinctions which we might abstractly draw between stimulation and movement as such.

* Ibid 298. Inadequate as this conception of Royce's may be, it is none the less valuable, and with an adequate conception of the way in which this social activity out of which the self emerges goes forward, together with an account of the mechanism whereby the individual is enabled to enter into this social activity with his fellows, would form a basis of a social psychology. But when Royce places under this process as basis and mechanism for it imitation and opposition in the sense of conscious copying and conscious contrast, the whole becomes wooden and utterly mechanical.

** Principles of Pragmatism, 167-175.
It is only with this restriction in mind that we can proceed in the analysis of the process.

1. Stimulation comes to form from a distance. Such stimulation has a high functional value; is of vital importance as indicating position, of the form's food or its enemy. Its significance, however, is with respect to possible positive or negative contact, i.e. approach or avoidance. But this distance stimulation is bare and meagre, a mere outline of experience. It must be rounded out with further contact stimulation to give it its interpretation, with the possible exception of color and bi-dimensional space-impressions.

2. Contact stimulation completes and gives the final interpretation to distance stimulation. Or, if the object is one to which the form has instinctive avoidance, the contact takes the negative form the appropriate response of which is instinctively released. But in case that the object is one to be avoided, but not instinctively so, the experience of this-thing-as-a-thing-to-be-avoided must be built up through these contact experiences. It is from such experiences that our interpretation of a distance stimulation as hot or cold, rough or smooth, etc, comes.

3. The act is the mediating experience through which the distance passes over into the contact experience. It consists in movements with reference to the object. Now
when an object of which the form has had previous distance, movement and contact experience comes within the field of stimulation, the result of these previous acts with reference to the object in question pass over into the stimulus itself and round it out and interpret it. An act which has thus passed over into the stimulus itself is a collapse act, or percept. It becomes the richer and fuller the more frequent and intimate these previous contact experiences have been.

The percept has a functional value as an interpreter of distance stimulation; especially is this true when the stimulation is of a kind which tends to call out a number of instinctive responses. I see, for instance, a shadow looming up through the mist. It may be form of a friend, of a wild beast, of one lost in the storm. In any case, my response will be of a different nature. It is my previous experiences which interpret the present one, determine the stimulus and call for the response. The stimulation, the idea and the response therefore belong together. They form one circuit. None is exclusively sensory, motor or cognitive. To label them so is to assume that Platonic dualism which made movement wholly physical, intellection (ideas, percepts) wholly psychical while sensation stood on the borderline between soul and body, a thing neither bird nor beast nor fish! The stimulation involves certain motor adjustments and co-ordinations, and a cognitive process of recognition.
of this particular stimulus as such a one. If as I write, some one shouts "paper" the stimulus must be identified in terms of present activity and correlated therewith before an adequate response can be secured. It will vary as to whether I am to read the latest report of the Italian earthquake, or need my own supply replenished, etc. We have to do, then, not with stimulus, idea and motor response, but with sensory-motor co-ordinations in which the response is read into the stimulus and identifies it. Each form of the experience is a development a mediation of preceding experiences. In fact, the image itself passes directly over into stimulus in case the external object is absent, and so enables us to act in the absence of the appropriate stimulus. But we obscure the fact by referring to it as a "response centrally aroused."

The object emerges in consciousness because the individual is engaged in some activity with respect to it, because it is demanding attention. When our instinctive reactions are no longer satisfactory, new reactions are built up through the readjustment of the old reactions in consciousness. The idea remains as a record of this readjustment and functions in future readjustments so that the extremity of instinct becomes the opportunity of thought.

The general theory of consciousness upon which

* Moore, A.W. "Pragmatism and Its Critics" 120
functional theories of religion depend may be briefly stated. Activity is prior thought, which arises as a necessity of purposive conduct. It singles out the pertinent stimuli and selects the appropriate response. It develops through the failure of habitual reactions and so extends its field and develops its technique in the heat of conflict. It is not enough for consciousness to deal with the present, it must be anticipatory of future actions as well. The organism must get ready for the crises which approach. But this very technique which gives us control opens us to attack from another quarter.* "Prescience, prescience", moaned Rousseau, "this is the source of all our misery."

Biologically, function determines form, and the need of the organism leads the way for function. The horse needed a hard hoof for racing over the turf to escape its jungle and forest dwelling enemies. Triceratops compensated for lack of mobility and intelligence by the development of tremendous cephalic armour plates. The more pronounced a particular need has been, the more urgent and important for the life of the organism the function, the more rigid and specialized has been the structure through which the function found expression. Hence, the manner of life of such organisms has been rigid, and when, in the course of geologic ages conditions of life have changed, desperate efforts for survival have been put forth before degeneration and defeat.

* Foster, G.B. "The Function of Religion"
The trilobites, the brachiopods and cephalopods each in turn dominated the seas became specialized and rigid, and then, with changing conditions of life were fact to face with the necessity for further evolution or destruction. This struggle is attested in the highly ornate, curious sports which have heralded the decline of these forms of life. They are the result of the stress and strain of function seeking adaptation of form. The function brings about adaptation of organism and environment, and makes possible the control of the environment for the needs of the organism. If this can not be done, the structure of the organism must change to make possible this functional adaptation or the organism must perish.

The human organism has evolved under the pressure of needs. In the struggle for life a certain cast or direction was given to the organism wherein the possibilities of future adaptation of the organism lay. The nervous system is a mechanism evolved for this function of control, and ideas result from its efforts, and give efficiency to the system.

The religious consciousness is one with consciousness in general in functioning in this way, and is composed of the same kind of material as other aspects of mental life. The function of the religious consciousness is to give control over certain phases of experience; particularly those phases of experience about which the life interests of the group center and into which the group reads the highest social values and ideals. These ideals and values
can not be given a statement that is universally valid. They are determined by the social life of the group. To function properly they must be plastic. Leuba's criticism that they are vague and indefinite is beyond the mark entirely. Were it otherwise they would not be social not functional, but rather idealistic. The structure which the religious life of a group builds for itself, the ritual and the institutions, objectify and intensify the religious values of the group. As doing intensifies knowing, and as the word intensifies the idea, so the ritual intensifies the doctrine. Ritual and institution perpetuate the funded experience of the group. They form a social heritage, through them each generation inherits what previous generations have won, and is free to go on to make fresh conquests for itself.

This functional conception of religion in its various aspects, depends upon the modern conception of all consciousness as social and active. It is in harmony with what we really know of the genesis of consciousness in the individual and the race. It views religion as an organic part of the life of every group. It is in harmony with the general theory of biological and social evolution with respect to the interrelationship of function, environment and form. The religious consciousness concerns itself with ideals of conduct to which the highest social values are
attributed. These ideals are the results of group activity. They are social through and through. They are therefore determined by their social utility in the life of the group and change where the group life is altered. In the case of the Hebrew people as every race which has left a record of its religious development in the form of sacred books, we can trace certain well-defined stages in which the religious ideals correspond to the form of the social group. The primitive stage is represented by patriarchal stories in Genesis. Religion is a family affair. It clusters about the ideal of family solidarity. The father is the priest, the place of worship is where the families' tents are pitched, the altar is a pile of stones, the occasions of worship were those in which the fate of the family was involved. When the ideal of the life of the Hebrews changed from that of the nomad to the agriculturalist, the change registered itself in religious observances.

Worship was localized at the high places. A definite priest-hood arose, with fixed times of worship, and prescribed ritual. The earliest legal code of the Hebrews, the "Small Book of the Covenant" in Exodus, ch.34, consists of twenty enactments, all of which apply to an agricultural community. There is no hint of industry or commerce. This agricultural system culminated in the large Book of the Covenant, (Ex. 20:23 to 23:19).

1. Gen. 12:6-8
2. Gen. 31:46
The religious ideals develop slowly because they stand at the core of the group identity. When the outward conditions of life change, the social ideals of the past tend to survive in the life of the present in which they appear as incongruous, functionless elements. The religious genius is one who feels this incongruity, who refuses to accept the group standards of the past, but who sets himself to reconstruct them in the light of present needs. Of the type of experience which marks one off as a religious genius Prof. James says, "Naked comes it into the world and lonely; and it has always driven him who had it into the wilderness, often into the literal wilderness out of doors, where Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, St. Francis, George Fox, and so many others had to go!" But the appearance of these men was due in each case to the inadequate functioning of the religious consciousness of their times. They returned from their "wildernesses" with religious ideals reconstructed to meet the needs of their times; and they succeeded in reconstructing the religious life only in proportion as these new ideals were capable of extension with the group's expanding life. It was in this function that the Hebrew prophets appeared. Every new social need they brought forth a "Thus saith Yahweh." They were great constructive statesmen, whose task it was to exalt a small tribal god until he became Yahweh of Hosts, King of Kings and Lord of Lords;

1. James, Variety of Religious Experience. 335
and to extend the simple ideals of a nomadic people, until they became applicable to all nations.
CHAPTER III.
THE SOCIAL IDEALS OF THE HEBREW PROPHETS.

The Hebrew prophets were the great social idealists of their times. They forged their doctrines in the heat of great social conflicts that shook the nation to its center. The periods of greatest prophetic activity were conterminous with the periods of national re-adjustment. "A prophet never appeared in Israelitish history unless there was some great national, social, religious or moral need, and, conversely, there never was a great crisis that did not call forth a prophet or prophetess." They were "concerned with subjects which are not today thought of as religious, but in early times there was no distinction between sacred and secular - everything was religious." It has frequently been insisted upon that the prophets were not interested in the social per se, but in the distinctively religious aspect of life. That is to say, their interest in social questions was only because of the bearing of these upon the religious life of the nation. But in view of the comprehensive character of primitive religion, this distinction is not only meaningless, but confusing. Our division of the social field into its economic, political, ethical and religious phases is wholly abstract and arbitrary, so that when we speak of the social ideals of the prophets, we must understand the word "social" as referring to the

1. Kent, C.F. Sermons and Apocalypses of Israel's Prophets p.10
collective aspect of human life in its widest sense. The life of any human society is a unitary, vital process. It is folly to speak of the ethical as apart from the religious as some writers are prone to do, as if the two were not continuously acting and reacting upon one another and upon the general social life of the group.

Furthermore, false antitheses have been drawn between the individual and the social aspects. They have been opposed to one another as two mutually exclusive phases of life, or as contrary tendencies within the group life. As a matter of fact, they are complementary. They are two phases of a single process. Both depend for their meanings upon verbal nouns. Individuality is the process of individualizing. Sociality is the process of socializing. "Useless each without the other." For the production of the richest personality, society must form a stable basis for the variation and totality of the moral life of the individual. Hence, when, in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the individual emerges as such, we are not to mark it as "a new and contrary movement in prophecy, presaging its decline", but as the coming to view of one aspect of a single process for which conditions are now for the first time ripe. Only in view of this unitary character of the social process can we identify religion with consciousness of the highest

social values and be free from the charge recently made by a Divinity student, "this emphasis on the social will destroy our personality and rob us of our souls!"

All the foregoing considerations tell in a general way against the rather ambitious work of Mr. Louis Wallis. But Mr. Wallis' book has some particular deficiencies of its own. He narrows the prophets' activity to the Mishpat struggle, and in so doing he makes them wholly reactionary, retrogressive, overlooking the great constructive ideals which dominated the later prophets. Mr. Wallis identifies the "regular" or "false" prophets with those who opposed, and the "insurgent" or true prophet with those who defended the ancient Mishpat. But in one case at least this simple classification is in error. Those prophets who maintained, against Isaiah and Jeremiah, that Yahweh will not destroy his people were more true to the ancient conception of the unity of Yahweh and His people, according to which the destruction of the latter meant the humiliation of the former. Nor did the prophets naively arrive at the truth that the surviving Amorite Baalism was responsible for their national corruption. While it is true that they did protest against the heathen elements in the cultus, the prophets' conception of the pure worship of Yahweh was determined by the religious needs of their times, a god vastly different than the Yahweh of the ancient Mishpat. The element of

2. op. cit. p. 168
truth in Mr. Wallis' contention is that the prophets identified this god who used the nations as his scourge and in so doing transcended the ancient clan god, with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The prophets, then, were "social idealists" in the widest sense of the term. They appeared when the social ideals of the past were inadequate to the social situation of the present. Their function was one of readjustment and reconstruction. In the individual, the extremity of instinct, the failure of habit, is the opportunity of consciousness, which emerges in the function of the building up of new co-ordinations, the organization of new habits. So with social consciousness, its opportunity for advance is the break-down of social habits, and the necessity of building up of new adjustments. Social consciousness is called into being by, and advances in the solution of, a problem. The prophet came into being with a peculiar type of religious problem and disappeared with it. Prof. James' fine phrase describing religious genius, "naked comes it into the world and lonely" is particularly inadequate when applied to the Hebrew prophet. Social conditions of the past gave him his tools; social conditions of the present gave him his problem; social conditions of the future gave him his vindication as Yahweh's prophet. We can always count on finding the prophet in the main current of great events.
They flourished when things were stirring. As the Southern Kingdom was less progressive, less agitated than its northern sister, it is in the north that the scene of the first prophetic activity is laid. Amos, the first great prophet which the Southern Kingdom produced, went north to utter his prophecies against Israel. It was only in the days immediately preceding the Fall of Samaria that prophetism became of consequence in Judah, as a result of the problems which the fall of Israel involved upon the Southern Kingdom. The prophets, were they living today, would pour out their scorn upon those officious souls in the modern church who are warning the preacher to stay out of politics and their contempt upon the timid souls in the ministry who give ear to their injunction.

The origin of prophecy in Israel is lost in obscurity. It developed from the common phenomena of soothsaying and divination among the Semites. The first great prophet was Moses, and while in later traditions he is represented as law-giver rather than prophet, there still lingered reminiscences of his prophetic activity. His significance for Hebrew social history as traditional

1. Amos 7:12
2. J.M.P. Smith, The Prophet and His Problems, pp. 3-10
3. Deut. 34:10 cf. 18:15
liberator requires no further comment, and the question of its actual historic elements is beyond our scope, for this at least is certain, that he appeared as the first of a long line of social reformers and idealists whose influence determined the later faith of his people.

Moses is connected with the emergence of the Hebrew racial consciousness. The next mention of prophecy is Deborah, "a prophetess and a mother in Israel," who rallied the Hebrews to the overthrow of Jabin, King of Canaan. Judges mentions another prophet in connection with the Midianite oppression. Although we have hints of pre-prophetic activity since the days of the Exodus the first mention of pre-prophetic societies is in connection with the establishment of the monarchy. It is noteworthy that this society was located at Gibeah near the Philistine rendezvous of Michmach. These pre-prophetic societies are again active when "the evil spirit from Yahweh" came upon Saul so that David fled for his life to Ramah. These societies, however, are rarely mentioned in the narrative except in connection with the great prophets to whom they seem to stand in the relation of disciples.

2. Judges 6: 7ff
3. I Sam. 2:27
4. I Sam. 10:5ff
5. I Sam. 13:5; Kittel; Vol II
6. I Sam. 19:18ff p.115
7. II Kings 2:3,5; 4:38; 6:1
Owing to the paucity of the record little is known of the distinctive social ideals which were the bond of these early prophetic societies, except as these ideals became manifest in the later prophets who were great enough to impress their personality upon the tradition of the race. Nevertheless, we are not wholly in the dark upon this question. Social Ideals of primitive peoples are the products of intimate group life. As these face-to-face contacts of man are much the same the world over, they give rise to similar social ideals which hark back to similar social experiences. The primitive kinship group is the "nursery of human nature". Prof. Edward Westermarck, in his exhaustive treatment of the subject, has shown the remarkable uniformity among all races of the ideals which determine conduct within the group, and Prof. Charles Horton Cooley has given us a keen analysis of these primary social ideals and a genetic account of their emergence in group contacts.

The fundamental social ideal of all primitive groups is that of the moral unity of the group, including all its members, ancestors and gods. Those who partake of the common sacrificial meal are brethren, partaking of a common life. Responsibility is group responsibility;

revenge is group revenge. It is noteworthy that the Passover, a feast characteristic of nomads and shepherds, is the only national feast which traditionally antedates the Exodus. The unity of the clan-group of primitive Hebrew shepherds was the circle of tents of the clan, and this unity was symbolized by the coming together of the clan into one house or tent at the Passover Feast. The fate of the god, of the clan and of the individual was one and inseparable. The inevitable consequence of such group unity is loyalty. Loyalty to the group, insofar as one identifies himself with the group, is the means by which he is loyal to himself. Truth and service within the group are bound up with this loyalty. Kindness and brotherhood are terms denoting proper conduct toward kin and brethren. Justice is a further essential social ideal of primitive groups. The group is shot through with popular feeling. Democracy, in the sense of congeniality to the general sentiment of the group, is cherished, for transgression upon the rights of a member means, not the violation of individual, but of group, rights, for which the group is responsible, and for which it will suffer if the transgression goes unpunished.

As the Hebrew people passed from the primitive clan to the national stage of their history, the prophets were busy endeavoring to extend these primary group ideals, and make them applicable to the wider range of national life.

2. H.P. Smith: Religion of Israel, p. 40
It was a problem which called for constructive genius of the highest order, for the ideals which they sought to make effective are in no sense primitive, but primary in the sense that they are the true ideals of all group life, the product of face-to-face association. Christianity itself, and democracy of the highest order, will come to fruition in proportion as these ideals are realized in modern life. They lie at the basis of human nature, that is, they are basic to those sentiments and impulses that are human as being superior to those of other animals, and that are the property of mankind at large, belonging to no particular race or time. Insofar as the prophets identified "primary ideals" with primitive conditions and sought to attain the former by re-establishing the latter, they were reactionary, but insofar as they sought to bring these primary ideals into a higher synthesis with reference to contemporary conditions they were great constructive moral leaders. The early retrogressive tendency in prophecy constantly tended to make room for the new constructive tendency.

The disorganization of social life which confronted the prophets was a result of lack of communication and social consciousness in which the individual no longer felt his identification with the larger whole through sympathetic contact. The principle of compensation is forever at work in social evolution. Progress along one line
is likely to mean delay in others. If there is not progress in equilibrium all along the line, maladjustments result which require new syntheses, followed by periods of readjustment. These periods of readjustment, of the extension of the ideals of the primitive group to the broadening character of life as it assumed national proportions were the periods of Hebrew history in which the prophets were active. In this respect, the task of the prophets was identical with the task of the modern church, and the difficulties which they encountered were similar to those with which modern preachers of the social gospel have to contend. The church today is striving to extend the social ideals of early Christianity to the complex problems of modern life, and to insist upon their thorough going, consistent application in all the social relations of men. This is our task, as it was the task of the Hebrew prophets.

Early prophetic societies found their point of departure in the conception of the moral unity of Israel and Yahweh. Deborah calls down vengeance upon those who failed to recognize this moral unity and group responsibility:

"Curse ye Meroz, saith the angel of Yahweh: Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof because they came not out to the help of Yahweh, to the help of Yahweh against the mighty."

The first mention of pre-prophetic guilds is in

1. J.M.P. Smith, The Prophet and His Problems, pp. 50-58
2. Judges, 5-23
connection with Saul's attempt at unification and conquest.

It is extremely suggestive that, "after leaving Samuel, and before he struck the blow which lead to his election to the kingship, Saul came into contact with these politico-religious fanatics and catching their spirit, was so transformed that his associates and kinsmen noted it." The prophets were forever thrusting themselves into the current of events, seeking the unity of the people of Yahweh with their God against all odds. Gad and Nathan stood intimate to the king as his counsellors during the reign of David. On the death of David Nathan sought to perpetuate this unity by establishing Solomon upon the throne before the death of his father, that the kingdom might not be rent in the quarrels among the king's sons, for the law of primogeniture was not yet established in the royal house of Israel. Solomon, however, disappointed the prophets in his toleration of foreign cults and in his foreign alliances. The ancient unity was threatened, and the prophets lead the revolt against him. Whether or not the prophet contemplated the division of the kingdom itself is uncertain, for the narrative in I Kings 11 has undergone several editorial redactions. At any rate, the difference in topography,


Kittel, Vol.II, 138
resources and conditions of life between the north and the south gave rise to varying types of national consciousness and the split was inevitable. Henceforth we find the prophets the champions of the same ideal of unity of the people and their God against other peoples and gods in the Northern Kingdom with even greater zeal than heretofore, for the stress in the north was greater, and conditions were in more rapid flux than they had been a century before. The capital now lay in the wake of intercourse between Egypt and the east, and the kingdom was subject to new disorganizing influences. Elijah and Elisha were the most active of all the prophets in this struggle to maintain moral unity. Elijah denounced the House of Omri and Elisha sent one of the sons of the prophets to anoint Jehu to lead the revolt against it, and to carry out the vengeance of Yahweh. Ahab and his fathers had failed to observe the unity of the people and Yahweh. Elisha goes himself to battle against Moab. So unreservedly did they exert themselves in the cause of national unity that the appellation was fittingly applied to both; "the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof."

From this time on the ideal of unity between the

1. I Kings 21:19
2. II Kings 9
3. II Kings 9:25,26
4. II Kings 3:11
5. II Kings 2:12
II Kings 13:14
people and Yahweh took a turn. The prophets became conscious that Yahweh is no patriot of the "my country right or wrong" type, and began to announce the day of Yahweh's wrath upon his people. Thus they became advocates of a higher moral unity. But this conception was a slow development. Gradually Yahweh's fate was distinguished from the fate of the nation, until finally the prophets were convinced of his triumph in the face of the national doom. Amos could announce the destruction of Israel unflinchingly for Yahweh still had Judah left. Micah could announce the destruction of Jerusalem and the plowing of Zion for he counted upon the Judean peasants. Isaiah was more fearless in his denunciations. His doctrine of remnant enabled him to see in the very destruction of the nation the triumph of Yahweh. "Yahweh of Hosts is exalted in justice, and God the Holy One is sanctified in righteousness." Jeremiah stood in the court of the temple and announced the doom of the temple itself.

In this new ideal of moral unity, this new conception of the unity between Yahweh and his people, the national elements gradually recede and the individual elements come forward. Isaiah's doctrine of the remnant is itself individualistic. It became more so with

1. Micah 3:12  
2. Is. 30:1ff 31:1ff  
3. Isaiah 5:16  
4. Jeremiah 26:2ff  
Jeremiah, who saw the basis of kinship in the nation destroyed, and that of righteousness coming forward. The process reached its culmination in Ezekiel, for whom sanctuary and nation alike were ideals of the past, and whose faith must rest upon a basis of individual righteousness. The righteous remnant shall return from their captivity and be established in the land of Yahweh.

With this change in the ideal of moral unity came the clash of the true prophet with the false. The false prophet was true to the ancient ideal of the unity of Yahweh and his people. He will not desett his people. Ahab shall conquer at Ramoth-gilead. Amos must prophecy against the king at his own royal sanctuary. Jeremiah must not prophecy against the temple. The false prophets were traditionalistic. The true prophets were students of contemporary events, Mr. Louis Wallis to the contrary notwithstanding. The false prophet saw in the established system and in the kingship the embodiment of the unity of Yahweh and his people. The true prophets evolved a social consciousness which called for a unity of a higher sort, a conception so high that the people failed to grasp its significance. They invited the threatened destruction as a thing impossible, unheard of, and mocked the prophet as a preacher of nonsense.

1. E.g. Ez. 17
2. Ezek. 28:24-26
3. I Kings 22: 6
4. Amos 7:12
5. Jeremiah 26
6. Isaiah 28: 9,10
The persecution of the prophets was another phenomenon which marked this change in the social ideal of unity. The false prophets felt that Yahweh must be for them, and no one could prevail against them. The mouth of the man speaking otherwise should be smitten. It was Jezebel, not Ahab, who sought Elijah's life for his reform of the cultus. To Ahab Elijah was the troubler of the kingdom's unity. For a prophet to speak against this was treason. Jehoiakim burned Jeremiah's roll when he came to the words wherein Jeremiah announced him as deserted of Yahweh. Under Zedekiah he was suspected of desertion to the Chaldeans and arrested.

Closely connected with the ideal of unity and subordinate thereto was the ideal of justice, of right relations between man and man. "Yahweh, the tribal God, was a brother and friend to every member of the clan." The prophets came forward in the name of Yahweh as the champions of social justice. Amos denounced the lavish sanctuary feasts because they were based on extortion. Because of the oppression, violence and plunder of Samaria Yahweh will utterly destroy her. Hosea denounces Israel

1. I Kings 22:24 5. Jer. 38:4
2. I Kings 18:17 6. H.P. Smith, Religion of Israel
3. Amos 7:10 7. Amos 2: 6-8 p.135
as a luxuriant vine, but this luxury flourishes upon the misery of others, the priests themselves fatten upon perverted justice. But what Yahweh desires is kindness. In the words of Isaiah, "Wash you, make you clean: put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes: cease to do evil: learn to do well: seek justice, set right the oppressor, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

But instead of this, the wicked have been justified for a bribe, and the cause of the righteous is discounted. For all this perversion of social justice the chief men are to blame. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the chief of the nations to whom the house of Israel come." "Yahweh will enter into judgment with the elders of his people and with the princes thereof: it is ye that have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses: what mean ye that ye crush my people and grind the faces of the poor?"

But this idea of Yahweh as the champion of the poor and oppressed remains a nationalistic one. In the days of the Deuteronomist it is considered proper to exact

1. Hos. 10: 1  
2. Hos. 4: 1ff  
3. Hos. 4: 8  
4. Hos. 6: 6  
5. Isa. 1:16,17  
6. Isa. 5:23  
7. Amos 6: 1  
8. Isa. 3:14,15.
interest from a foreigner, but not from a Hebrew. Yahweh still appears as the brother and the friend and protector of the kinsmen, but not of the foreigner.

The origin of slavery among the Hebrews is obscure. In nomadic groups there is close contact between slave and master which makes for sympathy. As in the case of Eliezer, a slave might inherit his master's goods in default of an heir. Sheshan married his daughter to his Egyptian slave, Jarha. When the Hebrews entered Canaan they put the captives to taskwork. But in these cases the slave was a foreigner. When the Hebrews began to make slaves of their brethren is unknown. It had become so settled a custom that even the prophets accepted it. In II Kings 4 we have the story of a prophet's widow whose sons were about to be sold for their father's debt. Elisha saves them by a miracle, but makes no comment. A Hebrew might be sold for debt or through failure to return stolen property. Frequently, however, a man was forced into slavery for a trifle. Amos declared that Yahweh will punish Israel because "they have sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes." In Deuteronomy manumission of Hebrew slaves was to take place after six years of service. In the times of Jeremiah the law was more often neglected than obeyed and that prophet protested,

1. Deut. 23:20
2. Gen. 15:2,3
3. I Ch. 2:34
4. Judges 1:28,30
5. Amos 2:6 8:6
6. Deut. 15:12
not against slavery per se, but against the efforts of greedy masters who were attempting to re-enslave those who had been liberated for their military service against the Chaldeans.

Land in early Israel seems to have been owned in commonalty, but used in severalty. The earliest laws in the Book of the Covenant give nothing about the inheritance, sale or redemption of land. Later there seems to have been laws against the alienation of inheritance. Boaz buys the inheritance of his kinswoman Ruth, and Jeremiah that of his uncle Shallum of Anathoth. Naboth replies to Ahab: "Yahweh forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." But poverty gradually forced the poor to give up their inheritances for a pittance. They became indebted through crop failure or through foreign invasions and were forced to relinquish their land or their liberty. Micah denounced land grabbers in severe terms. "Woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and seize them; and houses, and take them away: and they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage. Therefore, thus saith Yahweh: Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks, neither shall ye walk haughtily; for

1. Jer. 34:8:22  
2. Ruth 4  
3. I Kings 21:3
it is an evil time. In that day shall they take up a parable against you, and lament with a doleful lamentation, and say, We are utterly ruined: he changeth the portion of my people: how doth he remove it from me! to the rebellious he divideth out fields." Isaiah protests against the same evil, and declares that it will profit the oppressors nothing in the end. "Woe to them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land! In mine ears, saith Yahweh of hosts, Of a truth, many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant."

The prophets were likewise the champions of popular feeling. The early ideal was a democratic one. Saul was taken from following the plow to lead against the Ammonites. This was the kind of a man we might expect a prophet to choose as king. But the kings failed to live up to this democratic ideal. David never lost entirely the simplicity of his early shepherd days. But Solomon was reared at court, married an Egyptian princess, built for her a palace and a sanctuary and walked in the ways of the nations round about. He divided the nation into districts for taxation to support a magnificent court. The omission of Judah from this tax list must have aroused the hostility

1. Micah 2: 1- 4
2. Isaiah 5: 8, 9
3. I Sam. 11:5
4. I Kings 4:7-19
of the burdened tribes. Ahijah of Shiloh had chosen Jeroboam as the leader and spokesman of the democratic spirit of the Northern tribes, whose plea to Rehoboam was, "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father and the heavy yoke which he put upon us lighter, and we will serve thee." The attitude of the people is apparent. (1) They recognized the kingship as within the choice of the people. (2) They protest against the aristocratic character of the rule of Solomon. (3) They reject Rehoboam for his undemocratic policy: "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." (4) They consider themselves amply justified in not recognizing the undemocratic hereditary kingship. "What portion have we in David? Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse." Conservative, stolid, aristocratic Judah accepted the hereditary principle, but the north was the stage of revolution and regicide headed by popular leaders who secured the crown by appealing to the democratic sentiments of the people, and by the winning over of the armies. It is noteworthy that the Rechabites are traditionally represented as furthering the revolution of Jehu. The Rechabites existed in Jeremiah's day as a society of men with a

1. I Kings 12: 4
2. I Kings 12:14
3. I Kings 12:16
4. II Kings 10:15
prophetic cast who did not drink wine, build houses, sow seeds not plant vineyards, but who lived in tents, dominated by the primitive, democratic, nomadic ideals. They were a pastoral people in the north of Israel, and it is quite believable that their ancestors played an important part in the revolution of Jehu.

Jezebel mocks Ahab for his democratic tendencies. "Dost thou not govern the kingdom of Israel?" Elijah protests against this violation of popular rights. "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" Hosea distrusts the kingship. The kings are not the men to save Israel. Indeed Yahweh has had nothing to do with the institution of kingship, or if he has been instrumental in setting up a king, it is to punish his people. Samuel is represented by the earliest record as being a leader in the choice of a king. But we have seen what kind of a man it was to be, from the least of the families of the smallest tribe, and the least in his father's house. The record in I Samuel is much later and gives the judgment of later prophecy upon the monarchy. "This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take you sons and appoint them unto him for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots; and he will appoint

1. H.P. Smith Religion of Israel. p189. 2. I Kings 25:7
5. Hos.  8:4  6. Hos 13:11
7. I Sam. 9 to 10:17  8. I Sam 9:21
them unto him for captains of thousands, and captains of fifties; and he will set some to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and the instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your men servants and your maid servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks; and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king whom ye shall have chosen you; and Yahweh will not answer you in that day."

This language is "almost a literal description of the abuses of the royal prerogative under such kings as Solomon and Ahab."

The original character of the cultus had been that of communion in which the social feeling reached its highest. The head of the family was the family priest. Any one might be consecrated to the priesthood. The ritual was simple and democratic. Obedience rather than

1. 1 Sam. 8:11-18  2. Kent, The United Kingdom,102  3. H.P. Smith, Religion of Israel. p. 40  4. The Patriarchs, and Judges 17:5
elaborate sacrifices, had characterised their wilderness life. But when the Israelites entered Canaan Yahweh became a god of Agriculture and of War. It was inevitable that the ritual of the gods of fertility of the Canaanites should be assimilated to that of Yahweh, or that Yahweh should be worshipped as a Baal. Hosea saw clearly that the primitive religious life had deteriorated through Canaan- itish influence. Israel hath said "I will go after my lovers that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink." The elaborate sacrifices are offered because of the oppression of the poor. Sacrifice that is based upon such extortion and oppression is an insult to Yahweh. Yahweh turns away from it, "for your hands are full of blood."

There is unity of sentiment among the prophets in condemning sacrifice which was based upon extortion and which was given to atone from the lack of right social relations. Not sacrifice itself, but the iniquitous, un- social character of those who were multiplying them, was the occasion of their protest. The Rechabites in Jeremiah's day tried to re-establish the ancient worship by re-establishing primitive conditions of life. But the prophets sought to make the ritual and expression of as true social relations between men and Yahweh in their own age as the

1. Amos 5:25  
2. Smith, H.P. Religion of Israel.  
3. Hosea 2:5  
4. Amos 2:8  
5. Amos 4:4,5  
6. Isa. 1:15
primitive cultus had been an expression of the social unity of the primitive clan. The prophets were progressive; the Rechabites, retrogressive.

The results of the prophet's championship of the social ideals were manifold, and their consequence for the religious life of the future can hardly be overestimated. Their labor upon the ideal of unity resulted in a new ethical inwardness which placed responsibility upon the shoulders of the individual, so that the ruin of the nations saw the triumph of their faith. But if the relation between Yahweh and His people is based upon moral rather than upon physical likeness, he is finally able to triumph over race and time and the whole pantheon until at last "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him."
CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANITY AS A SOCIAL PRODUCT.

The appearance of Jesus marked a new epoch in religious history. His was an attempt to vitalize the earlier religion and to make it functional in the world of His day. In Him the prophetic spirit struggled to break through the crust of legalism which had been hardening since the seventh century B.C.

The Deuteronomic Reform in 621 B.C. marked the beginning of the triumph of the legal over the prophetic elements in Hebrew religion, and gave a tremendous impetus to the individualizing tendency which had been slowly at work since the entrance into Canaan. The Reform brought about the centralization of worship at Jerusalem. Sacrifice, which had been the spontaneous expression of the religious life of the people, was henceforth governed by prescribed rules as to time, place and participants in the rites. The rural clergy became attached to the Jerusalem Temple priesthood and a new type of religion resulted. "Prophetism had emphasized the value of the ethical element, and of man's right relation to his fellows as indispensible to his acceptance with God. Legislation lays its stress upon the distinctively religious element, and the necessity of man's right relation to God himself."

The individualizing tendency in Hebrew life was accelerated by the destruction of the peasants' shrines which centralization of worship involved. The sacrificial fires of the high places were quenched. The result was the secularization of country life, the turning of the religious sentiments back upon themselves, the suppression of their social expression in public worship except for those who found it possible to attend the national religious ceremonials at Jerusalem.

It was in the Exile that the triumph of the individualizing tendency was complete. The Exiles were ruthlessly torn away from family and national relations and settled in a foreign land with no opportunity of public worship. If the worship of Yahweh was to survive at all, it was to survive as an individual rather than a social function. It was here that Ezekiel carried the doctrine of individualism to the extreme of refusing to recognize the power of physical and social heredity in determining individual responsibility. Yahweh had promised to spare Sodom for the sake of ten righteous, but Ezekiel declares, "If a land sinneth against me by committing a trespass, and I stretch forth my hand upon it ***** and cut off from it man and beast,***** though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it they should but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." 

1Gen. 18:32
2. Ez. 14:13ff
Group solidarity was emphasized in the commandment "I Yahweh thy God am a Jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me." But Ezekiel declares "The soul that sinneth, it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." 

It was here in Babylonia beside the River Chebar, that the irrepressible, religious idealism of the Hebrews, removed from the social situation which gave it birth, struggled for expression and found it in the only way open to it, that Judaism was born. Here Ezekiel embodied the individualistic point of view in a new code which should serve for the coming Messianic order. The individualistic, ritualistic point of view went on crystallizing in the Holiness Code, which was finally enlarged and incorporated in the Priestly Code in the days of Nehemiah-Ezra.

When Jesus appeared, this individualizing tendency had been hardening into a system for six centuries. Phariseeism was the result. It placed emphasis upon the individual relations maintained between the believer and God to the exclusion of the relations maintaining between men. Religion had ceased to function in social relations. Jesus came in the spirit of the prophets, to quicken religion in

1. Ez. 40:48
2. Ex. 20: 5

Ez. 18:20
social action. Christianity was not a movement born out of the blue. It appeared first as a rebirth of prophetism.
The life and teachings of Jesus reveal his points of contact therewith. He refers to himself as a prophet, and shares in their experience and fate. He is supported in the prophetic way, by alms, He teaches as the prophets taught, wherever He can get men to listen. Like them, he committed his teachings to his disciples, who carried it forward after after his death. The teaching itself was prophetic in form, in spirit and in content. It was neither creed nor tradition bound. He recognized the need of the present as having outgrown the legal enactments of the past. His desire was to separate the religious ideal from the law into which it had crystallized, and to extend that ideal in such a way as to make it applicable to the present need. He criticized the vicious elements in the religious practices of his day without consideration as whether this criticism went clear down into the law, or whether indeed it cut under the law entirely. He broke with the legalizing tendency and gave his disciples, not laws, but principles, not doctrines, but ideals. For him truth needed but one vindication, and only one was possible, that it should work in practice.

1. Kennett, R.H. "Jesus the Prophet" Hibbert Journal 1906-07
2. Mk. 7:19 ff pp.136-155
3. Jn. 7:17
He taught that salvation consists, not in thought about God, but in life that is godlike. He emphasized, not doctrine, but duty, and gave the world, not a system of facts, but a faith. His principles can never be applied without a thorough going consideration of conditions. The attitude of Jesus can never be determined upon abstract grounds. The cramping of the ideals of Jesus into rules of thumb and their ex cathedra application has made the history of the Church at once tragic and pathetic.

The ideals of Jesus had social antecedents. On the side of content he taught little that was new. His contribution consisted in making concrete and vivid ideals which had before been but abstractly and vaguely conceived. The way was prepared for him in the Messianic ideal of the prophets, and his success was possible only because of his purification and spiritualization of this ideal. Each crisis in Israel's past had been interpreted by the prophets as heralding the dawn of the Messianic era, and the man who loomed large in the national consciousness at the time was hailed as the Ideal King who would usher in the Golden Age as the Messiah, God's Anointed. Isaiah saw him in Cyrus, Haggai and Zechariah in Zerubbabel, and the Jews of the second century B.C. in Maccabeus. It was this expectation which caused his countrymen to try to make him King, and

which explains their joy at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Into this hope he resolutely refused to enter. His new conception of the Kingdom and the functions of the Messiah had been wrought out in the Temptation struggle, through which he saw that it was to be spiritual in its nature, not based on a selfish clamor for bread alone; spiritual in its method, not appealing to miracle, and spiritual in its resources, not recognizing the right of evil to exist. Other looked-for Messiahs had come into conflict with the political power, and failed. Jesus lifted the ideal above the political where it gained in power until it overshadowed the state and absorbed its functions.

Such a movement as that of Jesus was made possible by the existence within Judaism of religious sects. The Christians at first considered themselves the true Jews, and were content to remain within Judaism. When at last the break with Judaism came, the movement survived because it was a time of flux in religious faith. New sects after the form of mysteries were continually appearing in which no ties of kin or race were recognized, which were open to all upon the performance of the prescribed rites.

The Early Church was a body of believers loosely organized about the ideals of Jesus. The organization of the church developed under the stress of need. At first

1. Matt. 21:9
we hear of but two classes within the church, the "apostles" and the "believers" or "brethren". After a few years the Christian community had grown in numbers and importance. Administrative duties became complex, and division of labor resulted. Seven men were chosen to have charge of the daily ministrations to the Hellenists, that the Twelve might be free for "prayer and the ministry of the word." These, however, were temporary officers, not deacons. They ministered in spiritual matters also. One of them, Stephen, became the first martyr. Another, Philip, was an evangelist as well. The deacons appear later. They do not appear in the earlier epistles of Paul, Galatians, Thessalonians and Corinthians. In these letters the officers of the community are not mentioned. Questions of faith and practice, even to the extent of expulsion of those of irregular life are never addressed to officials, but to the community as a whole, or at best, to the discerning within the community. It is in the later writings of Paul, the prison and pastoral epistles, that the officials figure, and then in such a way as to leave us very much in the dark as to the duties of each order and their relations to one another. Moeller has brought forward an interesting list of questions on this point which can be answered only with such qualifications as "possibly," "probably," "perhaps".

Our confusion to the organization of the early church is no doubt due to our desire to find for the officials of the church universal functions which did not exist. The organization of the church was determined by local conditions. The Jewish synagogue had been accustomed to presbyterial government, and it is most likely that in Jewish Christian Churches this form of government was adapted to the new needs.

In the case of churches organized on Gentile soil, there was no such pattern to follow. These sprang up first as household communities. The believer in whose house the church first assembled is recognized in a quasi-official way. In certain cases persons of recognized social rank, means, and Christian zeal appear as patrons and patronesses.

There is scarcely less plasticity on the side of doctrine than on the side of organization. The early Christian preaching was in close contact with human need. Jesus had identified sin with a failure to recognize social duties. The earliest Christian document, the Epistle of James, further emphasized this service side of religion. The sermons recorded in the early chapters of Acts stress the social side of Jesus ministry. He was one who went about doing good, for God was with him. The harmartiologyst and

1. Acts 15:6
2. Rom. 16:5, I Cor. 16:19
3. I Thes. 5:12, Rom 12:8
4. Matt. 19:42
5. James 2.
soteriology of the medieval church appear only in the germ.

The great social factor in the development of Christian doctrine was the struggle between the Jewish and pagano-Christian groups. The Jewish groups tended to emphasize the connection with the law, and to bind observance of the law upon Christians. This group was localized under the Davididae at Jerusalem. The pagano-Christian groups, on the other hand, did not recognize the law as binding. The law was a burden to its progress, a vestige to be sloughed off, that the organism itself might live. It was this movement which finally transferred the church from the Jewish to the Graeco-Roman basis. The success of the Pauline missions gave Gentile Christianity prestige, while the overthrow of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. brought about the decline of the Judaizing tendency, and its final degeneracy into a sect. Here, as so frequently in the history of the church, it was the success of the one movement that made it orthodox and the failure of the other which made it heretical.

From the first century onwards Christianity was determined in organization and doctrine by its contact with the Graeco-Roman World. On the side of doctrine and ritual the influence of the mystery religions was incalculable. Christianity, at first open, came to have exoteric  

and esoteric doctrines and mysteries only to be witnessed by the initiated. Baptism, under the influence of mysteries, takes on a new significance. It becomes an "enlightenment" or "seal" after Justin Martyr and Tertullian. It is no longer administered by a believer in simple fashion, but by a "mystagogos." It assumes sacramental significance.

The Lord's supper loses its simple character as a communal meal and becomes esoteric. Only the baptized are allowed to witness it. The table upon which the bread and wine rested becomes an altar, and the bread and wine themselves become "mysteria".

Another social factor in the development of Church organization and doctrine was the conflict with the heresies. The doctrine of the Visible Church was developed against the Gnostics as necessary to preserve the identity of the body of believers against the attacks of those who had risen from "pistis" to "gnosis." The gnostic controversy gave impetus, too, to the formulation @p the New Testament Canon, by the appeal which the gnostics made to the sources. Marcion for the first time set up a closed canon of Apostolic Writings, consisting of ten expurgated Epistles of St. Paul, and by a system of exegesis he claimed to preach the Gospel which Paul knew. In order to protect itself, the church evolved the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, which made the bishops the defenders and interpreters of the faith.
This tendency was emphasized in the struggle with Montanism, in which the bishops' authority made the inspiration of the Church valid as against that of Montanism.

This latter heresy was of great importance also in bringing about united action on the part of the isolated congregations. "Synods about and against Montanism were held, the first ecclesiastical synods known. In presence of the uncontrollable authority of the prophets, the universal priesthood of the free spirit, the need began to be experienced of binding protection and support in the constitutional and institutional forms of church representation by the bishops, and an objective standard in the fixed word of Scripture."

As the church gained in power and the empire declined, the political ideal of the world state was changed by the church into the religious ideal of a world church. Here again function determined form. The social situation of the times called for organization and centralization, and the papacy appeared in response to this functional need. Uniformity of doctrine and practice was possible because of this centralized power. Heresies were ruthlessly suppressed, and religion becomes cold, gray, monotonous.

Neither time nor space permit the adequate

treatment of this topic, which itself has called forth volumes. Multiplication of instances is useless. Enough material has been presented to make our thesis clear, that Christianity appeared as a movement having social antecedents, that it was called forth by social needs, and that social conditions determined its development, both on the institutional and doctrinal side. It did not appear ready-made as a mold of form and dogma cramped down over life, but as a form of development which life itself took, having about it the "twang and odor" of things that are primal and human, and therefore indispensible and social.
CHAPTER V.

THE SOCIAL ANTECEDEENTS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION.

There is no more interesting period in church history for the interpretation and testing of the functional point of view in religion than that of the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther will continue to be, for us, the hero of this crisis. His capacity for organization, his genius for leadership, his kingly personality, his deeply religious nature all conspired to make him the spokesman of his age. But great historic movements do not leap, full-born, from some one man's heart and brain, like Wattawamatt from the lightning-riven mountain oak. The forces making for social evolution are ever at work, silently and unobserved. Only when laws and customs have become so crystallized as to be a check to progress do they express themselves in social upheavals, in revolutions and reformations. So the Protestant Reformation was not a one-man movement. It was the result of economic, political and social tendencies which the best minds of Germany had perceived for two centuries. As the author of the "Kolhoffischen Chronik" wrote in 1469, "Ich bin der Meinung dass Deutschland niemals so schwere Lasten und Steuern zu tragen hatte, wie diejenigen wozu es jetzt und seit 200 Jahren durch allerlei Finten und Listen herangezogen wird, wie es jedermännlich

aus den Ordnungen der Kaiser und Päpste merken und sehen kann. These wrongs had long been the topic of discussion in Synods, Reichstags and assemblies of the princes. They had been drawn up and circulated among the German people in the form of pamphlets which bear the general title of Gravamina, or grievances. A study of these Gravamina in relation to the reforms of Martin Luther, especially in connection with his "Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation" will reveal the reformer, not as one who called attention to abuses which men had never felt before, but rather as one who was able to organize the vague demands for political and ecclesiastical reform and to make them effective through a masterly appeal to men's religious sentiments.

For the first definite expression of the grievances of the German people we must go back to the reforming councils. The Council of Pisa had called attention to the abuse of papal reservations, first fruits and tithes, and demanded the remission of debts owed the Papal Camera by the churches. The Council of Constance demanded further limitation of papal reservations, annates, tithes, and indulgences, the abolition of collations to benefices and expectative favors, and sought to regulate the income from benefices during vacancies. Basel was still more

1. Ibid 59
2. Ibid 2
radical, and abolished all annates, fees for pallia, papal reservations and taxes. The Decrees of Basel were confirmed for Germany by the Charter of Acceptance adopted by the Diet at Mainz, March 26, 1439, The vantage thus gained was soon lost in the struggle of the weak emperor with a strong pope. Largely through the intrigues of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini a reconciliation was effected between Frederick III and Eugenius IV, which was perfected by Nicholas V in the Concordat of Vienna. The Pope then declared a Jubilee-Indulgence for the year 1459 in commemoration of this reconciliation. As a result of this indulgence thousands of pilgrims flocked to Rome, and Nicholas was enabled to deposit 100000 gold florins in the bank of the Medici. Not content with this measure of success, the Pope sent Nicholus of Cusa into Germany to proclaim the indulgence and to institute clerical and monastic reforms. A storm of protest greeted him. The grounds upon which he was opposed were drawn up in a letter of doubtful authorship. They are:

1. Cusa devotes himself to local reforms, when the times demand a national council to map out a thorough going system of reform to be applicable throughout the empire.

2. Papal briefs that formerly cost 7 or 8 florins now cost 12 or 14.

3. Ecclesiastical benefices are bought and sold like swine and cattle.

1. Pastor, L. History of the Popes Vol II, 74, 102
2. Gebhardt, op. cit. 5-8
(4) One benefice is given to several claimants in order to create litigation and increase the revenue of the papal Curia.

(5) A plurality of benefices is held by Cardinals, and the services in the chapels are neglected.

(6) Bankers and usurers frequent the Papal Court and furnish the Pope and Cardinals with money, for good or evil God only knows.

(7) The retainers of the Cardinals are vile persons.

(8) The Pope is not satisfied with the treasure which the Jubilee-Indulgence brings to Rome, but must send the Cardinal to Germany, to erect collection-boxes and sell indulgences. The people waver in their fidelity because similar demands have so often been made under the pretext of converting the Bohemians and Greeks, but nothing was done.

Although this gravamen is unofficial, it is interesting testimony to the hatred of the Papal Curia which was being developed amongst the lower clergy. And it served as a fore-runner of the first official gravamen, drawn up by Archbishop Jacob of Trier and Johann of Lysura in 1452, entitled "Abschiedt Zwischen Geistlichen Kurfursten." It demands a convocation of the ecclesiastical electors in order to reform the empire and to correct ecclesiastical abuses. It calls upon the emperor to enter Germany to advise.

1. Gebhardt, op. cit. 9
2. Gebhardt, op. cit. 11
with the estates concerning these reforms, and requests a general council according to the Constance Decree "Frequens." This gravamen was closely followed by the fall of Constantinople, and a demand for tithes on the part of the Pope to finance a crusade against the Turks. The Diet then in session at Frankfurt answered that the pope was not sincere in the proposed crusade; it was but a pretext for exacting greater revenue.

In the meantime Nicholas V died. One of the first official acts of the new pope, Calixtus III, unmindful of the protest of the Diet, was to send legates, nuncios, mendicants and questors into Germany to collect the tithe whereupon the Archbishop of Mainz summoned a provincial synod to meet in Aschaffenburg in May, 1455. In this synod a document was drawn up and presented to the Pope. This document is of special interest to us because it gives a detailed list of "Beschwerde" which serve as a basis for the gravamina drawn up during the following decades. It demands twelve reforms, the most important of which are:

1. That a commission should be appointed to draw up evaluations of benefices which shall serve as a basis for the levying of all future tithes and annates.

2. That papal reservation of benefices of the first dignity should be abolished.

1. Gebhardt, op. cit. 12
2. Pastor op. cit. III, 3
3. Gebhardt, op. cit. 15
(3) That Bishops should be required to appoint the successors to smaller benefices within three months of their vacancy.

(4) That the fees for papal briefs should be reduced, especially for Germany, where specie is scarce.

(5) That the papal custom of appointing several claimants to one benefice be abolished.

(6) That the clergy should be amenable to lay courts.

The storm of protest aroused in Germany by the further attempt to collect tithes resulted in the appointment of Aeneas Sylvius as papal nuncio who should investigate conditions in Germany. While on this mission he received a letter from Martin Mayr which contains a series of Gravamina destined to appear again in the work of the reformers of the next generation. After a brief introduction in which he congratulates Sylvius on his elevation to the cardinalate, he enumerates the following complaints:

(1) The Pope considers himself bound by the decrees of neither Constance nor Basel, nor even by the concordats of his predecessors, but appears to despise the German nation, and to desire to ravage it.

(2) He pays no regard to the prelates who have been duly elected, but rather, annuls their election and

1. Bebhardt, op. cit. 33f.
appoints whomsoever he will.

(3) He continues to reserve benefices and dignities of every order for the Cardinals and members of the Curia.

(4) He distributes countless expectatives.

(5) Annates and "medii fructus" are exacted without respite. In many instances the amounts have been increased.

(6) Ecclesiastical appointments are made without regard to merit.

(7) New indulgences are declared daily in order to increase the papal revenue.

(8) Tithes are levied without the permission of our prelates.

(9) Cases which come under the jurisdiction of the German courts are drawn to Rome without distinction.

"A thousand pretexts are trumped up", he complains, "by means of which the Papal See drains our purses. Our nation, formerly so celebrated, which has paid for the Roman crown, blood down, is now plunged into poverty. She has become a vassal state. For many years she has lain in the dust and bemoaned her unhappy lot, her poverty."

Upon the elevation of Aeneas Sylvius to the papal dignity he determined to introduce a new era of crusades and to place himself at the head of European affairs by prestige gained in triumphing over the infidel and the Turk.

1. Gebhardt, op.cit. 33
But his ambitious plans could not succeed without increased revenue. Diether, Archbishop of Mainz, refused to pay an enormous annate demanded of him. The Count Palatine, the Elector Frederick of Brandenburg and his brothers Albrecht and Johann became partisans of Diether, and on the second of March, 1461, they addressed a letter to the Pope in which they complained that, whereas the Council of Constance had decreed that no tithes should be levied without the consent of a majority of the prelates, nevertheless the Pope, through his legate Bessarion had not only collected tithes under the pretext of a Crusade, but they had collected even double and triple tithes. The churches have fallen into the hands of usurers because they have been impoverished by tithes, annates and fees for indulgences. Another brief was drawn up that same year under the leadership of Diether in which the Germans complained of the double and triple tithes, the Bull Execrabilis, the increase of annates over the old rates, the violation of the decrees of Constance and Basel, the neglect of the Concordat of Vienna, and all manner of burdens imposed upon the German people by the Holy See.

The following decades are very fertile in Gravamina. A study of them reveals very little that is new. That presented to the Emperor Maximillian by the lower clergy in 1510 is a fair sample of them all. The clergy complains

that the pope can not be depended upon to keep faith with them. He sets aside the regular canonical elections, bestows pluralities upon his Cardinals, grants expectatives that give rise to ruinous litigation, extorts annates, commits the cure of souls to unworthy men, levies tithes under the pretext of a crusade, carries cases to Rome in order to furnish business for the Papal Curia, and is forever issuing new indulgences.

When we turn to Luther's address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation we seem but to be reading a chapter from these gravamina; or better, we seem to be reading a synthesis of them all. The exact extent of Luther's knowledge of the Gravamina we have no means of knowing, but that it was very wide his writings bear witness. He is cognizant that all previous efforts at reform have miscarried, "because", he says, "The Romanists have, with great adroitness, drawn three walls around themselves with which they have heretofore protected themselves so that they could not be reformed." When they are pressed by the temporal power they maintain that the temporal power has no authority over them, but that they are lords of spiritual things, and of temporal things as well. If one attempt to call them to account by means of the Scriptures, they

1. Luther; Martin "An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, in Neudrucke Deutche Litteraturewerke, Halle 1877 p. 6
2. Luther, op. cit. 7
claim that they alone are the authoritative interpreters of the Scriptures. If one threaten to reform them with a council, they declare that the Pope is supreme over the councils, and that no one can call a council but the Pope.

Then follows a catalogue of the wrongs which the German people suffer at the hands of the Papal Curia, with which all learned men "should occupy themselves day and night, if they love Christ and his Church." The Pope lives in worldly pomp, surrounded by a vast court for the support of which Germany is drained. Only about one per cent of this court is actually of account in the transaction of Papal business. Annates have been granted by the Emperors to the Popes, so that they might have a fund with which to wage war against the Turks and infidels, but the Popes have abused this good simple piety of the Germans, and have converted the annates into a regular tax and source of revenue. From the revenue thus collected they have founded many posts and offices at Rome. The same is true of the abuse of Indulgences. When a benefice falls vacant in a Papal month, the Pope fills it with an appointee of his own choice, and considers that benefice ever afterward as a fief of Rome. He charges heavy fees for the pallia of archbishops, to which he has not the slightest right.

1. Ibid, 12
2. Ibid, 14
3. Ibid, 17
4. Ibid, 17-20
5. Ibid, 21
6. Luther, An den Christlichen Adel, 22
7. Ibid, 23.
The pope engenders strife about benefices in order that he may throw out all claimants and appoint a member of his court. He grants benefices to Cardinals "in commendam."

The Cardinals place such churches in the charge of ignorant monks, who neglect the services. Benefices which can not be held by the same person without violation of canon law are incorporated as one, even as a bundle of fagots are tied together with a string, and the whole is given to some favorite of the Roman See, so that "there is many a courtling at Rome who holds 22 cures, 7 priories, and 44 prebends." In short, the Pope and his Curia will stoop to all manner of abuses in order to increase revenue. They have their financial agents abroad, as the Fuggers at Augsburg, who become their tools.

After this catalogue of abuses in the style of the gravamina of the two previous generations, Luther proceeds to suggest reforms, which show a marked resemblance in their general outline to those demanded in the Gravamina as early as 1455. "Wie wol nu ich zugering byn stuck furtzulegenn, solches grewlichs wessens besserung dienlich," continues Luther, "wil ich doch das narn spiel hynauss singen, und sagen ssouil mein vorstand vormag, was wol geschehen mocht und solt, von weltlicher gewalt odder gemeinen Concillio."

1. Ibid. 24
2. Ibid, 25
3. Ibid 26
4. Ibid 28-30
5. Gebhardt, 15
He proposes twenty seven articles respecting reform which should challenge the attention of the Christian nobility. Nothing will suffice but the speedy abolition of annates, commendas, reservations, papal months, incorporations and unions, fees for palla, papal cases, archeepiscopal and episcopal oaths, pilgrimages to Rome, and sacerdotal celibacy. He demands a reformation of the curricula of the Universities, and then, in a section that showed the influence of the work of Lorenzo Valla concerning the forged Decretals of Constantine, he attacks the authority of the Pope in temporal matters. The address closes with a complaint because of the low moral status of Christianity in general, and that of the clergy in particular. Men don not enter the ranks of the clergy from high spiritual motives. Rather, "Vorzweyffeln machet das mehrer teyl munch und pfaffen."

The first part of the Address gives Luther's explanation of the failure of previous attempts at reform. The second part deals with the grievances of the German nation with which the gravamina have made us familiar. This section differs from previous gravamina, not in the complaints themselves, but in the citation of more contemporary facts to substantiate the complaints. The last section advocates reform measures that find their roots in the Decrees of Constance and their germs in those of Basel.

1. Ibid, 30-66
2. Ibid, 66-72
3. Ibid, 72-75
4. Ibid, 79
concluding complaint as to the low morality and intellectual- 
ity, and inefficiency of the clergy reminds us of such 
literature of the preceding decades as Sebastian Brant's of 
"Das Narrenschiff", wherein such passages are frequent 
occurrence, as when he speaks of the worldly clergy,

"Wer vogelhund in kirchen furt
und ander lut am beten irrt

derselb den gouch wol stricht und schmiert."

"Christus gab uns des exempel,
der treib die wechsler uss dem tempel,
und die do hatten tuben fiel
trieb er in zorn uss mit eim seil.
Solt er ietz offen sünd usstriben,
WEnig in kilchen wurden bleiben;
er fing gar dick am pfarrer an
und wurt biss an den messner gan.
dem huss gots heiligkeit zu stat,
do got der herr sin wonung hat." 3

Of their ignorance he says

"er wigt priesterschaft so gering,
als ob es si ein liches ding.
es findet man ietz vil junger pfaffen,
die als vil kunnen als die affen
und nement doch selsorg uf sich,
do man kum eim vertrut eim vich;
wiissen als vil von kirch regieren
als pullers esel kan quintieren." 4

The unworthy motives which parents have in view when they 
dedicate their sons to the church come in for their measure 
of criticism:

"mancher die hend dar an beschisst
und losst sich jung zu priester wihen
der dan sich selb dut maledien
das er nit lenger gbeitet hat." 5

1. Brant, Das Narrenschiff p. 80, lines 1-3
2. Ibid pg. 81, lines 25-34
3. Ibid pg. 81, lines 25-34
4. Sebastian Brant, "Das Narrenschiff", page 141, lines 15-22
5. Ibid page 141, lines 34-37
How vast the body of material, how deep-rooted the sentiment that Luther found ready to his use! Yet how disorganized and impotent, too! His task was to be that of one who rouses from lethargy, organizes and leads. The times demanded, not a weaver of dreams, but a man who dared to act, and who could inspire others to action. As such, Martin Luther was the hero of the Reformation, the spokesman of his age.
CHAPTER VI.

SOCIAL IDEALISM AND THE MODERN CHURCH.

The reformers broke with the ecclesiastical system of the Middle Ages when the rise of new social conditions rendered that system inadequate to give expression to their religious life. They were seeking for a truth which should have its authority in its own intrinsic worth. They had no thought of substituting the Bible for the Pope. The doctrine of an infallible Bible was foreign to them. Erasmus held that the authors of the Biblical books were fallible men, mistaken in some respects and ignorant in others. For him the Word of God was found wherever truth was found. Luther doubted the authenticity of the Epistle of James, Calvin that of II Peter and Revelation. But as the Catholic dogma of authority took shape in the conflict with the early heresies so the Protestant dogma of authority was formulated in conflict with the Anabaptist heresy and the Catholic reaction in the Sixteenth Century. Christianity, was again turned from idealism to dogmatism. Protestantism turned backward to take up the fallacy of the Middle Ages, that salvation is by knowledge, by assent to intellectual propositions. Protestantism drew up its creedal tests, which were as rigid, and enforced as rigorously as those of Catholicism. Catholicism offered an authority embodied
in a social organism rich with traditions that gripped the imaginations of men. Protestantism offered an authority embedded in a book and interpreted in a literal, legal creed. There can be little to choose between these two alternatives. "Oh Luther," cried Lessing, "thou hast delivered us from the yoke of tradition! Who shall deliver us from the yoke of thy letter?"

A final statement of truth is no more possible in religion than in science. Each such statement has served its day in more or less adequate fashion, and become antiquated in the succeeding generations. The result as manifested in the history of Protestantism has been that each generation has felt the stress of new needs not met by the old creeds, or has become conscious of the points at which the old creeds have been repressive, and has attempted to restate its religious faith in terms of its own experience. the old creeds are held to tenaciously by those who have not felt the strain of newer and more complex social influences. All modern religious sects bear the marks of the times and localities that gave them birth. Most of them have claimed possession of the complete truth to the exclusion of all others. They have preached their distinctive beliefs with burning eloquence and consuming zeal, if not with convincing logic, and each creed has failed to make any great headway with its rivals. The Council of Nicaea sought unity. It

1. Sabatier, Religions of Authority, 146
2. Lessing; Theologische Schriften 2 to Abtheil 262
attempted to bring cessation of strife in Church and State by the way of iron-clad theological definition. The half century of debate which preceded the triumph of the Nicaean formula prepared for the church a legacy of logomachies.

As long as religion is conceived of as something to be abstractly stated, the unification of religious forces is impossible. Nor is it desirable. A statement of religious faith which does not find its basis in terms of one's own experience is useless. It approaches the religious problem from the wrong vantage point, "Life comes before thought, religion before theology." The search for religious truth involves the attainment of values which can never be embodied in a creed. Lessing voiced the conviction of all stalwart, courageous souls when he said, "If God were to offer me in one hand the immutable truth, and in the other the search for truth, I should say in all humility, "Lord, keep the absolute truth. It is not suited to me. Leave me only the power and the desire to seek for it, though I never find it wholly and definitely'."

Happily, the emphasis in religion is undergoing a rapid change. The outward is taking the place of the upward look. If abstract doctrines have tended to divide men, the undertaking of common tasks now tend to unite them.

1. Sabatier, Religions of Authority. 337
2. Lessing: Theologische Schriften, 2 to Abtheil I 261.
The challenge of the modern world to religious faith is too insistent for men to be interested in the dead theological issues of past generations. "The young and able minds have gone over to social Christianity, almost in a body in the last ten years," declared Prof. Rauschenbusch, "They want not only mercy, but justice, not only social service, but social repentance, social shame, social conversion, social regeneration. They are moving up to a new level of religion, moral insight, and manhood. This is true of denominations as well as individuals. The life of a tree is in its outmost ring, and the life of religion is in the new experience of God that is now pressing into our life. On the scroll of the everlasting Gospel, God is today writing a flaming message of social righteousness, and you and I must learn to realize it."

The fruitful epochs of the church have been those in which it has most nearly identified itself with the social ideals of the age. Jesus cast his teaching into the current of the people's thinking, "and the common people heard him gladly." After the early church had shaken itself free from the Judaizing tendency within it, it entered upon a new era of progress. When the Protestant Revolt was in its formative period, the peasants of Germany hailed it with enthusiasm, until it dashed their hopes to the ground.

1. In an address "The Social Revival" delivered at Chicago 1912.
Religious sects come into being in response to some functional need of religious experience not provided for in the religious institutions already at hand. "They arise as a result of complex and more or less profound social influences, and have their nucleus in a few strong personalities who become organizing and radiating centers." Because of its very nature, religion has everything to gain and nothing to lose through the adoption of a social gospel for the age in which it is living. For this reason, the pulpit is becoming more and more alive to social questions. An increasing number of seminaries are adding courses in social and economic problems to the prescribed work of the divinity curriculum. In December, 1912 there was held in Chicago a Conference of Theological Seminaries in which over fifty seminaries distributed over the entire country were represented. The purpose of the conference was the standardization of the theological curricula, and the discussion of plans for studies in social subjects in that department.

The emphasis of the social aspect of religion means a tremendous gain in social consciousness. The emphasis of doctrinal differences tended to create a denominational consciousness, by setting one group of religiously minded men over against the others. On the other hand the

directing of attention in all communions toward the common problems that protrude themselves so insistently into our daily life is bringing about a unification in thought and action, and laying the basis in consciousness for a permanent and vital religious unity. It follows inherently from their nature that whereas abstract doctrines are centrifugal, social ideals are centripetal in their influence.

The most significant concrete expression of the demand for religious unification is the "Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America". A score of years ago the leaders in the Protestant denominations began to see that if Christ's prayer for His followers "That they may all be one" is to be realized, there must be closer co-operation among the Christian communions. Various local and independent movements looking in this direction were launched. These met with more or less success and led to a national Inter-Church Federation Conference which convened in New York City in 1905 at which the Federal Basis of co-operation was drawn up in the form of a statement, not of what was to be believed in common, but what was to be done in common. This basis was accepted by thirty denominations, which convened in Philadelphia in 1908 upon the basis of federation adopted. The second Quadrennial Session met in Chicago in December, 1912. The main activities of the Federal Council are (1) the co-ordinations of the social programs of the
churches as expressed in the "Social Creed," (2) the cooperation of the Home Mission Boards to prevent overlapping and competition on the Home Mission field by allotting to each board a certain district (3) the organization of State Federations to act in an advisory capacity in State and local questions, and (4) the organization of local and city federations to secure the united action of churches in matters of local interest.

The Federal Council unquestionably marks a long step toward unity. It is revealing to the various denominations that "mere uniformity is a will of the wisp, and that they can not speculate themselves into unity, nor ritualize themselves into unity, nor ecclesiasticize themselves into unity. But they can do what is infinitely more important. They can work together in establishing the rule of Christ in all hearts and all society."

Another late movement looking toward unification is the appointment of Christian Union Commissions by the more important of the denominations. The Protestant Episcopal Church was the initiator of this movement, at the General Convention of that church in 1910 the following resolution was passed:

WHEREAS, there is today among all Christian people a growing desire for the fulfillment of Our Lord's Prayer

that all His disciples may be one that the world may believe that God has sent Him,

BE IT RESOLVED that a joint commission be appointed to bring about a conference for the consideration of the questions touching faith and order, and that all Christian communions throughout the world which confess Our Lord Jesus Christ as God's Saviour be asked to unite with us in arranging for and conducting such a conference."

The suggestion embodied in the foregoing resolution was taken up with alacrity by the leading denominations, and like commissions appointed. The first informal meeting of the commissions was held in New York City on May 8, 1913. Thirty communions were represented. Evidently these commissions conceive of their task as being that of assembling a Twentieth Century Nicaea or Constantinople, for the resolutions embodying the results of that conference state "That the true ideal of the World Conference on Faith and Order is of a great meeting participated in by men of all Christian Churches within the scope of the call, at which there shall be consideration not only of points of difference and agreement between Christians, but of the values of the various approximations of belief characteristic of the several churches." A general committee was appointed representing all the commissions to the conference for the purpose of considering
1. What questions must be considered before it can be decided upon how the World Conference shall be convened, what its membership shall be, and when and where it shall assemble.

2. How such prior questions can best be considered and answered.

3. How the matters for consideration by the World Conference shall be ascertained and referred to the committees which are to study them, and how and when those committees shall be appointed.

The emphasis upon the doctrinal element of religion in these resolutions is somewhat startling. There is no hint of the wider social aspects of the problem of religious unification. The commissions seem to have mistaken uniformity for unity. Beyond a more fraternal feeling among the religious bodies and a better appreciation of the religious values expressed by the divergent creeds, little can be hoped for as a result of the labor of these commissions. They proceed upon the assumption that unification can be brought about by legislation, that it can be imposed from above and work its way down into the local problem and solve it! But a plan of unification, to be effective, must be worked out in the light of the particular situation to be met by it. It must be called into being in response to the needs of those into whose hands its working out in practice is to be entrusted, that is to the religious people of each local
community. Unification must come as a product of local need, not of a legislative commission. It cannot be imposed. It must be grown.
CHAPTER VII.

THE ROUND PRAIRIE EXPERIMENT IN RELIGIOUS UNIFICATION.

The discussion which follows must needs be personal. It is a statement of the writer's own experience in bringing about religious unification in a rural community in Kansas, out of which the point of view presented in this thesis was developed.

In December, 1910, I became pastor of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church at Potter, Kansas, a village of two hundred people, situated seventeen miles northwest of the city of Leavenworth. Between that city and Potter there was at that time a strip of territory about ten miles wide in which there were no religious services of any kind. The territory is a strictly rural one. The direction of its social life seemed to be the most immediate need. The young people provided for their own entertainment and recreation in a haphazard way, or had these furnished by commercializing agencies whose influence was in every way pernicious. There were several cheap dance halls open one or two evenings a week at which drinking and carousing were prevalent. The Sunday ball games were fostered by the more vicious who profited by betting and bootlegging. Besides these, the petty gamblers had several places of rendezvous where they entrapped the youths with dice, cards and liquor.
All attempts at conducting Sunday School and church services in this territory had failed. No one religious body in the community was equal to the task. Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Disciples had abandoned their efforts in turn. The denominational appeal had nothing of interest for those who most of all needed the ministrations of religion. The writer decided upon this as an ideal community in which to attempt religious unification and to try out a social gospel. He looked about for some center adjacent to his own parish in which to begin his activities. An abandoned Presbyterian church which had once been in control of the Cumberland branch of that denomination was located in what is known as the Round Prairie Community four miles east and two miles south of Potter. A few men living in the Round Prairie vicinity who were known to be awake to its social and religious needs, were consulted in regard to reopening the abandoned church and beginning a non-sectarian religious work for the community. The response was immediate and enthusiastic. It was decided that we should begin with a Union Bible School, meeting at three o'clock on Sunday afternoons, followed by a preaching service at four, and that such recreational and social activities should be added as the need might suggest. The plan was then presented to the Official Board of the Christian Church at Potter and their support for this new activity assured. Several months
had been consumed in preliminary discussions, conferences and canvasses. A further delay was occasioned by the necessity of securing the permission of the Presbytery to use the building for this purpose. A committee was appointed to attend the presbyterial Sessions at Lawrence and secure this necessary co-operation. The Round Prairie work was at last undertaken in March, 1912. Twenty persons were present the first day, representing Disciples, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Lutherans. The purpose and method of the new work were vague and indefinite in the minds of all. It was evident that our first problem was one in social psychology. A social gospel must have an organized and well-defined social consciousness to which to appeal and from which to draw its power. We set about organizing the community spirit and clarifying certain ideals for the guidance of our community life. The first sermons were designed to aid the community in taking stock of itself. Conditions, needs and possibilities were outlined. Interest and attendance increased slowly. People began to be interested in what was actually going on in their midst.

The next problem was a religious one, to show that these things are actually the concern of religion. The church has falsely distinguished between the religious and the secular, between things "sacred" and things "profane", as if life were not all of a piece, as if there were spiritual
qualities not manifested in social relationships, and material conditions which do not finally register themselves in the human spirit. Christ said "I am come that they might have life, and have it abundantly". Nothing that can bring to a community more abundant life is foreign to the religious interest.

The third problem encountered was a practical one, a problem in method. It was necessary to work out a basis upon which men of divergent views might co-operate in worship and service with no surrender of conviction or denominational preference on the part of anyone. It was pointed out that tolerance is one of the first essentials in Christian living. One of the disciples of Jesus came to Him one day and said, "Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name, and we rebuked him, for he wasn't following us!"

But Christ answered, "Rebuke him not, for he that is not against you is for you." The spirit of tolerance is par excellence the spirit of Jesus. Furthermore, religious people, ministers and laymen alike, must be as courteous and reasonable in religious as in secular matters. The real specialist in secular affairs is always content to leave the test of the worth of his method to results. The teacher of religion must claim to be no more than a specialist in religion. Hence he must teach frankly, courteously, as
any other specialist. Men must accept has instruction reasonably as that of any other expert, using what is applicable to their own needs or problems, and letting the rest go by. Tolerance, courtesy and reasonableness form the basis of religious cooperation.

The preceding paragraphs give a fair description of the method of approach to the problem of unification which was necessary and successful at Hound Prairie. It was not a method which was evolved abstractly, but one which gradually developed within the situation itself. The first summer's work was devoted almost exclusively to the organization and development of a social consciousness within a nucleus of the community, from which to proceed to the more significant social aspects of the community's problem.

The fall and winter months in the country are those in which the social need is greatest. The rush season is over, there is little to be done, and time drags. We took advantage of this opportunity to organize a singing school. A man who had had experience in chorus work was found who was willing to give instruction in vocal music. Meetings were held on Friday evening of each week. The musical training was a minor feature of these gatherings. Their main function was that of social intercourse. The opportunity was given for the people of the country side to come together and discuss topics of community interest.
When spring came, a ball team was organized. Saturday afternoon was given over to this sport. Participation was not confined to those attending the religious service, but was open to all. A large number of Catholic young men attended these games, and a better community spirit developed. Before the season closed, there were five regular ball teams, besides several "pick up" teams, playing every Saturday. The result was soon seen in the decline of Sunday baseball at Round Prairie, and in closer fellowship of all residents of the community.

In addition to baseball, fishing trips and picnics were arranged. Care was taken to make these community rather than church affairs. In no case was it allowed to appear that the price of admission was to be paid by attendance at religious exercises.

The work of the summer 1913 closed with an "evangelistic" rally conducted by the pastor. A series of sermons dealing with local religious needs was prepared and delivered. As a result of these services thirty-four persons not members of any religious body expressed a desire of uniting with the church. This increase placed upon us a new responsibility, and opened to us a new opportunity. Until now the matter of membership had not been stressed. Members of all communions were invited to work with us at Round Prairie without withdrawing from their present religious affiliations. The problem of organization was not attempted.
A standing committee on finance provided for the budget which in 1913 included five hundred dollars for repairs to buildings and grounds. Special committees were appointed when there was need of them. Occasional business meetings were held to which all Christian people were urged to attend, that the benefit of their counsel might be had.

Our needs now called for a more permanent organization and definite membership. The minister was requested to draft a plan of organization. This plan underwent a complete change in practice. Every section was tested out and varied to meet the local situation as it arose, so that when finally completed, the Constitution of the United Congregation of Round Prairie was not an abstractly formulated plan of organization to be formally adopted and its worth determined in practice. It was rather a statement of practice of the congregation as it had developed in response to the congregation's needs. The Constitution as it existed in operation Jan. 1, 1915, follows:

Article I Name. This Federation shall be known as the "United Christian Congregation of Round Prairie."

Article II Purpose: Its purpose shall be the bringing into this community of "abundant life" through the teaching and practice of the Gospel of Christ. It aims to be an association of believers in the Ethics of Jesus
for the purpose of rendering the principles of life as taught by Him more effective in private and social relations within this community. As a means to this end this association desires to foster the public worship of God and to encourage all legitimate social activities for the betterment of our community life, believing that no man liveth unto himself, and unto himself can no man die.

Article III. Doctrine: Believing that the principles upon which Christian people are agreed are more fundamental and permanent than those about which they differ, all disputed points of doctrine shall be left to the individual conscience. It is the desire of this union that each individual shall realize his own responsibility before God and that he shall be true to his own convictions.

Article IV. Membership:

Section 1. Associate Members: Members of any evangelical Christian communion living in this community may become associate members of this union without withdrawing from their present religious affiliation. Such members shall state to the pastor or clerk their desire. The clerk shall then enroll them on the Associate Membership List. Such associate members shall be entitled to full rights and privileges in this union.

Section 2. Admission by Letter. Members of any evangelical Christian Church presenting letters to this
Union shall be enrolled on the Membership List, on which shall be designated the particular church and denomination from which they were admitted. The letter by which they were admitted shall be preserved and shall be returned to them upon their dismissal, together with a letter of commendation from this union.

Section 3. Admission of Converts: All persons not members of evangelical Christian Churches who desire the Christian fellowship of this Union shall be enrolled under whichever name the individual may desire, and according to the tenets of the communion so designated. The individual shall have the right to demand that iniatitiatory rites and ceremonies be performed by a minister of the communion of his choice. In case no such demand is made, the minister of this union shall officiate, unless he can not conscientiously do so, in which case it shall be his duty to provide a minister acceptable to the candidate. Upon dismissal, the Union shall grant a letter of commendation which shall state the denominational form under which the individual was received into membership.

Article V. Minister: The minister shall be a regularly ordained clergyman of good standing in the ranks of some evangelical church. He shall not be required to sever his relations with his own communion. He shall be required to make himself familiar with the basis and ideals of this union before assuming his ministerial duties in connection
therewith. He shall be the choice of a majority of two thirds of those attending the annual business meeting of the union.

Article VI. Annual Business Meeting: The annual business meeting shall be held the first Friday evening in December, at which reports shall be received from the pastor and committees of the union. The pastor for the ensuing year shall be employed at this meeting.

Article VII. Officers: The central executive body of this union shall be the Executive committee of which the pastor shall be an ex-officio member. The Committee shall consist of one representative each from the Disciple, Presbyterian and Methodist communions, and one representative from each communion which in the future shall have seven or more members in this Union. Communions represented by less than seven members shall be represented on the executive committee by one member chosen at large from their own number. Each communion shall chose its representative annually, to hold office from Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st.

Article VIII. Finance: The Executive committee shall appoint a committee on finance, from within or without its own membership, as it may choose. Said committee shall provide for the general expenses, care of building and running expenses of service, without regard to any ratio apportioned to the denominations in this union.
Article IX. Benevolences and Missions. The Executive committee shall appoint a missionary committee which shall recommend to the congregation the missionary budget for the year.

Article X. Social Service: The Executive committee shall appoint such directors of the athletic and social life of the community as the need suggests.

Article XI. Property: The property shall continue in the possession of the Presbyterian Church. The building and grounds shall be turned over to the Union, and shall be kept in repair by this organization during the continuation of this union; in consideration whereof the Union shall pay the Presbyterial and Home Mission dues of the Round Prairie Presbyterian Church, amounting to seven dollars per annum.

Article XII. Amendment: This Constitution may be amended at a special meeting called for the purpose, notice of this meeting having been read from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays.

The success of the Round Prairie Church is to be attributed largely to the provision for Associate members, over half of the members of the Church being so classified. This clause provides for the church affiliation of the members should the union fail, and serves to make the transition from the denominational system less abrupt. People are loathe to break religious ties with their histor-
ical and sentimental connections. The associate membership plan obviates this difficulty.

The year of 1914 saw marked advance in all spheres of the Church's work. The activities of the previous year were continued, and an attempt made to provide for the girls and young women by means of basket ball teams and tennis clubs. The minister began a good roads agitation, and suggestions for the consolidation of schools. A farmer's club was organized for the purpose of discussing scientific methods in agriculture.

Such an experiment in religious unification faces a great danger in that it is likely to become self-centered, and to lose in contact with the religious situation at large what it gains in intensity in its own community. It lacks touch with the larger problems of religious advance looking beyond its own interests. We have tried to avoid this by engaging in various benevolent and missionary enterprises but with small success. There is no central body with which these union churches can be identified. Identification with some denominational body is scarcely advisable. People do not desire to engage in union religious work, only to be swallowed up at last in some denomination other than their own. This is union by absorption, a plan in which all religious bodies have believed but with which none have succeeded. Each union which ends in this way but serves to make men suspicious of ulterior designs lying behind union
movements in general. I believe that the solution of this problem lies ultimately with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. Through this body the union churches of the country can be brought into touch with one another without the fear of finally being attached by any denomination. Certain definite benevolent and missionary responsibilities for union churches should be outlined by this Council, and a journal established devoted to the interests of these churches which shall serve as a clearing house of ideas and a means for discussion of plans and problems of religious unification.

Finally, the problem of religious unification is one the solution of which depends upon an educated ministry. The problem can never be solved by the application of rules. Ministers must learn to judge social situations in the process of development, and to formulate plans for meeting them in action. Especially must they be trained in problems of rural life, for it is there that the churches are facing the alternative of unification or death. Courses in the history and principles of church union should be added to those in social problems already given in the Seminaries.

The whole of our experience in dealing with this problem emphasizes the fact that religious unification is a problem dealing with concrete situations, not of formulating abstract doctrines.
A local need must first exist for a united church. A trained leader must appear in the community with a plan of action prepared with that particular situation in view. Lastly, a union of religious forces once effected, the institution through which they operate should be saved from isolation by being kept in constant touch with other institutions of its kind. The developing of leaders lies with the Seminaries, and the provision for a mediating, coordinating agency with the Federal Council.
CHAPTER VIII.

OBJECTIONS TO UNIFICATION.

A host of objections to the unification of religious forces have been raised in attempt to maintain the supremacy of the old creeds against the modern functional tendency in religion. The major portion of these has been advanced by persons who have no conception of the issues at stake and is of a wholly superficial character. But there are a few objections which represent candid recognition of the difficulties to be encountered. These must be faced frankly.

It is urged, in the first place, that the success of the church has been due to its dogmatic appeal. The aggressive denominations have been of the rather exclusive type, while the communions in which the broader point of view has prevailed have remained stationary or lost ground. The ministers who have had the largest success in recruiting the ranks of the church have been of the legalistic type. An exclusive doctrine serves as a ground of organization for a denominational consciousness by clearly defining the issue between it and others. Such an appeal is impossible if we are to have a united church upon the basis here maintained.

But this is to confuse power with numbers. The strength of a religious organization is not to be measured
by the numbers on its roll of membership, but by its ability to make its religious idealism function in social relations. A minister's influence is not to be measured by the number of persons whom he has inducted into the church, but by the way in which he has contributed to a constructive social policy which shall tend to make the community one, conducive to the realization of the highest spiritual life in the individual.

Whatever may have been the craving for legalistic, dogmatic formulations of religion in the past, the dogmatic appeal is rapidly losing favor in face of the increasing popular interest in social questions. The writer has in mind a country cross roads at which there are three churches of the narrow and exclusive sort. Each believes in "the old Jerusalem gospel with no compromise." According to the view that the church is strong because of its denominational consciousness and doctrinal appeal, we should here find religion at the highest point of efficiency, and yet the churches have so notoriously failed in their task that the community is known as "No God's Corner".

The Department of Church and Country Life of the Presbyterian Church has collected statistics upon this subject. Of the three counties studied in the Indiana Survey, Davies, Marshall and Boone, the last named county, with the fewest churches, has the largest proportion of its population in the churches, and has had the greatest increase in
membership during the past ten years. In this county the rivalry of churches has died out, and many useless organizations have disbanded. The result is that in face of a six percent decrease in population there has been a ten percent increase in church membership. The same condition was found in Ohio.

The investigations of Gill & Pênchot in Vermont confirm those of the Presbyterian Board with respect to the relation existing between the denominational appeal and decrease in membership. For the period of twenty years covered by the investigation, church attendance in one-church communities decreased thirty percent as against fifty per cent in two-church communities and fifty-five percent in three-church communities. Henry Wallace, whose judgment in matters of this kind is worthy of the highest respect says, "Unless the country church resolves that it will be a community church rather than a denominational church, it does not deserve to prosper. In doing community service the country church is getting back to the teachings of the Master. In building barricades from material not quarried from the rock of Zion to defend itself against other churches, it is getting away from the teachings of the Master and does not deserve to prosper." The power of the appeal of a church united for social service is

1. Indiana Survey, p. 31 2. Ohio Survey, p. 24
4. Ohio Survey, p. 32.
tremendous. It has within it the warmth and passion of things human which the coldly abstract doctrinal formulations have always lacked. It is doubtlessly true that there will be loss attendant upon the period of transition which unification implies, but this loss will be compensated for many times over when the transition is once effected.

A second objection is that unification means intellectual disloyalty, that its result must be the obliteration of the sharp edges of honest convictions until they shall become indistinct and blurred, valueless for conduct. But this is to confuse unity of purpose with uniformity of belief. The latter is undesirable, even if possible. To each person must be conceded the right to look into his own experience, to state what he finds therein, and to relate that experience to the experience of others. This attitude toward matters of belief is consistent with the fullest intellectual loyalty, and it is only as this attitude is assumed that intellectual loyalty is possible. Under the present denominational system, clergymen take upon their lips confessions of faith which they know to be scientifically untrue, but to which they give verbal assent "because of what these confessions have meant in the history of the church." Surely there can be little intellectual loyalty in a system which compels one to assent to that in which he can not believe. There is as much variety of
opinion within each denomination as there is between the
average position held between one denomination and another.
It is difficult to see wherein the removal of the denom-
inational barrier means loss in intellectual loyalty. Rather
one should say that the effect of holding to be true what
one can not believe to be true is morally disintegrating.

There remain for our consideration three sources
of objections to unification back of which lie motives that
are very human, however deplorable they may be. Doubtlessly
each community has its conservative minority who will look
upon all attempts at unification as sacreligious. They
desire to maintain the status quo. They have not felt the
pressure of new social conditions. They imagine that
conditions are today the same as in the first century.
"All talk of modern pioneering in religion is so much
turgid rhetoric." There are no new commandments to be
discovered, and no ordinances which the fathers did not
know. All that remains for us is to be imitators, not
originators, historians not prophets. The best that one can
do with this type of objector is to avoid useless antagon-
isms and to let his objection die with the burden of its
own years.

The objection of the professional minority of
ministers is more serious. They have been trained in
denominational systems, with little knowledge of religion
in its broader interpretations. Their record with their associates and their hope of advancement is bound up with their success in advancing denominational interests. This minority can be removed only through the higher education of the ministry so that they shall have a proper sense of proportion for religious values and an appreciation of the claim of community as against denominational and individual interests.

The most fruitful source of denominational competition in the past has been the Home Missionary Societies. As soon as a new town sprang up in the west, a half dozen societies would send men to organize and build churches in order that their denominations might "get in on the ground floor". There came into my hands recently the circular of such a society, representing one of the large denominations, with an appeal for funds. The sole basis of the appeal was made upon a table showing the number of counties, county-seat towns, and towns of over five hundred in population in the State in which there was no church of that particular denomination. No further information as to the religious needs of the communities in question was deemed necessary. It sufficed that the denomination was not represented.

In many denominations control of the property of the local church is retained in the hands of the missionary societies or similar organizations, and unification is
impossible without their consent. I have personally, on two occasions, been opposed by these interests in attempting to establish community churches. The Missionary Secretaries frequently oppose unification movements because they do not wish to see their denominational interests suffer or they will try to attack movements which began as community churches. In the case of the Round Prairie Church I was urged by representatives of my own communion to organize the work under the Christian (Disciple) banner.

No word of criticism is in order against the general idea of home Missionary boards. They performed a great service in maintaining the cause of religion on the frontier. But all Home Missionary Boards should follow the time honored practice of the Congregational Board of not establishing a church before making careful inquiry as to whether the religious organizations already in the field are meeting its religious needs in an adequate way. Some of them have still to learn to subordinate their own interests to community religious welfare.

The unification of religious forces is a practical community ideal. The objections to it have failed to appreciate its significance. It is based upon sound psychological and social theory. It is in harmony with the anthropological and historical data of religion. It will be attained in
proportion as men turn from the "beggarly rudiments" of
dogma and ritual to the social values of life and action,
as they cease their tithing of mint and anise and cummin
to seek the weightier matters of justice and mercy and love.