

ARTICLE VI.

SCHLEIERMACHER'S "ABSOLUTE FEELING OF DEPENDENCE," AND ITS EFFECTS ON HIS DOCTRINE OF GOD.

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GREAT men live and work after they are dead. An earnest thinker does not lose his influence when he leaves this earth, but often accomplishes more by his writings than by his life. He may be forgotten for a time, but if really great he will be recalled to the memory of men. His own people may know him no more, but he will have spiritual children in foreign lands and other ages.

Such is to some extent the case with that name stands at the head of this article. He had a great burning purpose, which was, in the words of Zeller, "to establish an eternal peace between living Christian faith, and free scientific investigation working independently for itself, so that the former may not hinder the latter, and the latter not exclude the former." Practically he lives to-day in the revival of religion in Germany consequent upon his efforts. As a scientific theologian he lives too, and has come recently to have a wide influence in our own land. He lives and will live in the power of that great truth, not first presented, but first thoroughly wrought out and made the leading idea of a system of doctrine by him, viz. that Christian truth is a perfect sphere underived from, and not tributary to, any other sphere of thought. The peace he sought, was to be established by the recognition of the fact that religion and science were once and forever independent the one of the other.

In this effort he did not stand alone, but was, as Zeller says again, only "the most important among those who for more than a century" had had similar aims.

¹ Quoted in Ueberweg, *Gesch. Phil.*, iii. 313.

The first of these to consider the subject from the philosophical point of view was Immanuel Kant. Having destroyed, as he supposed, by an unsparing, but not malevolent, criticism the pretences of the mind to *know* anything about God, or ontological questions in general, and thus annihilated the *science* of theology, he built up an edifice of *faith* upon those truths which the mind is compelled to presuppose in order to bring sense into the deliverances of our moral nature. If happiness belongs by congruity to virtue, then there must be a future life where happiness can be joined with virtue, as it is not in this, and a God who can secure their union. Thus Kant opened the way for the idea which Schleiermacher elaborated. He relegated science to the mind working under categories; he put religion in another realm, that of faith and of postulated propositions. Religion resting ultimately upon moral and the categorical imperative, was as independent and supreme in its sphere, as science in its. But his system was far from being the Christian system, and the pregnant idea lying in it, seemed to threaten ill rather than promise good to dogmatics.¹

After Kant there are two men who give us again a glimpse of this idea, yet only a glimpse,—the so-called Philosophers of Faith,²—Hamann and Jacobi. The former puts the certainty of faith into the place of the certainty of knowledge, for, says he, “the truths of religion must be experienced.” The latter was so much impressed by Spinoza’s argumentation as to say that all demonstration will bring us to the universe as a whole, and not to an extra-mundane Creator, as the ultimate principle of things. Accordingly Jacobi, just as he taught that we have an immediate knowledge of external things, taught that we have an immediate conviction of the supersensible, which conviction he calls faith. God is present to man through the heart, just as nature is present to him through the senses, and no object of the senses can

¹ Interesting are Schleiermacher’s allusions to the Kantian doctrine, *Reden*, § 39.

² Glaubensphilosophen.

so affect man as the absolute objects, — the true, the good, the beautiful, the sublime, — that is, God. We believe on God because we *behold* him. Thus religion is removed from the sphere of reasoning, demonstration, science, and made independent.¹

Jacobi thus anticipates in a certain degree the position of Schleiermacher. Both put religion in the same department of our nature, Jacobi in the "heart," Schleiermacher in the "feelings," and both declare we have an *immediate* knowledge of God. And yet Schleiermacher holds these views as we shall see, in a different way from, and upon other grounds than Jacobi. Still more closely allied in certain respects with Schleiermacher was another spirit, who cannot be called a philosopher, but who had nevertheless both the philosophic depth and earnestness, the critical sense of a man of literature, Lessing. In Landerer's words,² — "Lessing was the one who bowed down before the spirit of the age when he 'forged the Nathan's ring of religious freedomlessness,' . . . although we can say that Christianity, nevertheless always maintained its superiority in his view, — to be sure not the historical, but the inner, experimental Christianity of the heart. We should never forget that Lessing pointed to the immediate life of religion in the feeling as the insurmountable bulwark of Christianity against the objections of its opponents. 'If one should not be in position,' he once says, 'to answer all the objections which reason is so busy in making against the Bible, yet religion would remain undisturbed in the hearts of those Christians who have attained an inner feeling of the essential truths of the same.' This appeal to the felt facts of the Christianity of the heart, and our emancipation from a mere external authority of the letter of the Bible, are Lessing's fundamental thoughts in his contest with Göze."

But while Lessing stands at one end of a long night of religious struggle, Schleiermacher stands at the other, at the breaking of the day. Let us turn our attention now to him,

¹ See Ueberweg, *Gesch. Phil.*, iii.

² *Neueste Dogmengeschichte*, 192.

and while we note the great and true thought of which he is the earliest adequate expounder, let us not forget to trace his system as a whole, at least in its great outlines, and to gain a true estimate of its value. For while the peace he sought to found will be more firmly established with the progress of time, and that great thought of his that religion has its own independent sphere, will assume more and more weight and have greater and greater influence in deciding the laying of the foundations and the raising of the superstructure of dogmatic systems, yet Schleiermacher is not therefore to be implicitly followed. What is good we are to recognize and use, and what proves itself evil reject. This is both right, and, I believe, the truest honor we can show to the memory of any great man. Schleiermacher did indeed promote, or if any strong friend of his demands it, we will say, he did indeed originate, that course of thought which turned the tide of a scepticism and infidelity in Germany such as has never swept over any other land. But we may not hastily follow him in all things, or implicitly submit to his guidance in our own contests with unbelief.

We begin our consideration of his doctrine with

THE ABSOLUTE FEELING OF DEPENDENCE.

At the opening of the Glaubenslehre¹ we find the proposition (§ 3) "Piety is, when considered merely in itself, neither a knowing nor a doing, but a definite condition² of the feeling, or of the immediate consciousness." This proposition not only presents the now familiar thought that Schleiermacher grounds religion in the feeling, but limits that feeling to conscious feeling. The consciousness meant is, further, not a mediate one, which has been gained by reflection, for before this pious consciousness all definite thought or volition

¹ Our authorities for this sketch are the "Glaubenslehre" (G.); the "Reden über die Religion an die Gebildeten," etc. (R.), in an edition furnished with notes by Schleiermacher in 1821; and the "Dialektik" (D). In the Reden we have numbered the paragraphs of the text consecutively, 104 in all, and shall designate them by these numbers.

² Bestimmtheit.

may utterly disappear. It is a complete surrender and absorption of self in the object of consciousness. True, such a consciousness may afterwards accompany special acts of thought or volition, in the same way as a feeling of joy once excited may accompany us in all our subsequent acts for a long time. But in its essential nature it is as before said.

What the *object* of this immediate consciousness is, we shall subsequently see. We are now interested in getting clear views as to the consciousness itself, and shall find help in a passage of the *Reden*, § 22. When we contemplate any object (let me propose as an example a sleeping child), "the more distinct the image of the object contemplated becomes, the more all specific consciousness of self disappears." When every movement of the breast, every changing flush of the cheek, the whole innocent beauty of the face fills our thought, we do not think of ourselves. But on the contrary if this picture excites an emotion in the heart, the more sensation comes to fill our consciousness, the more the distinctness of the picture fades away, and we may stand "lost in thought," because seeing and being conscious of the object before us no more. Of such a character is the consciousness which constitutes piety in its essential and simplest form. It is a complete absorption of the pious soul in the object toward which piety is directed.

Pious consciousness thus elementarily considered does not differ from consciousness which has no claim to this distinctive name. Its distinctive element is presented by Schleiermacher in his next proposition (§ 4) as this: "that we are conscious of ourselves as *absolutely dependent*, or, in other words, as in relation with God."

The fundamental element of religion is, therefore, the absolute feeling of dependence. In this peculiar phrase, we are first called upon to explain the word dependence.

It is an admitted psychological fact that there can be no consciousness of ourselves, except as we are conscious of ourselves as under some modification. I am conscious of myself either as thinking, or feeling, or willing. If not in some one

of these ways, then I am not conscious at all. At any definite moment there will be a definite modification of the *ego*, and the question must arise, Why this modification, and not some other? or, Whence does it come? The only possible answer is, that, in the last analysis, I am as I am because I am affected by some other thing, determined by it, and so dependent upon it. I am at this moment, for example, thinking of paper, and not feeling an emotion of anger, because this sheet of paper by means of ethereal and nervous vibrations has produced an effect upon my consciousness, has determined me, and so I am dependent for my present form of consciousness upon it.

Now with this feeling of dependence there is joined in my experience a feeling of freedom. I can exert an activity which results in modifying the mode of the existence of that which I perceive, so that "it is determined by me, and without my activity could not be so determined" (§ 4, 2). As I write upon this paper, for example, it becomes covered with letters, words, and sentences, assumes the character of a written page in place of that of a mere piece of paper, — all of which could not be, did I not exert my freedom. Accordingly I stand in a relation of reciprocal causation with the world, and am in respect to it both dependent and free. Hence, in all my relations with the world I am conscious of *relative* dependence and freedom, for everything determines me, and either is or may be determined by me. And evidently there *can be* no *absolute* feeling of freedom, for if there is, it must be such in reference to some object, and I cannot even perceive that object without being determined by it, and so dependent upon it. If I will even write this one line on the paper before me, I must see the paper, and am thus brought into the mental state of perception, instead of that of remembering in which I might otherwise have been, and so the first condition of my activity, the writing, is my receptivity, the perception, of my freedom is my dependence.

If the feeling of absolute freedom is thus impossible, can

there be an *absolute* feeling of dependence, as our proposition above quoted declares, which can be made the foundation of religion? Schleiermacher not only answers this question affirmatively, but declares that the feeling of relative freedom is a necessary element of absolute dependence. The absolute feeling of dependence, says Schleiermacher (§4, 3) to render his words freely, "can in no way arise from the operation of any one definite object upon us, for there would always be a reaction of our being upon it, or else a voluntary relinquishment of such reaction, which itself involves the feeling of freedom." For example, even the distant landscape may be modified by our changing our position a few feet, and if we remain quite passive before it we are nevertheless conscious that we could exercise this activity upon it. "Therefore, strictly speaking, this feeling cannot exist at any particular moment, considered as a moment, because the content of every moment is always determined by that which, without, and upon which we are conscious of exercising our free activity. And still, just because at *every* moment we are, though free, yet dependent, and so *never* rise into a feeling of absolute freedom, we are conscious that we are, *on the whole*, dependent, that is dependent *absolutely*. Our whole activity is what it is because of the operation of something not ourselves upon us, and as truly so as that in respect to which we could have a feeling of absolute freedom, would be of necessity entirely determined by us. We are, therefore, absolutely dependent, and yet without the feeling of freedom to some extent this were not possible."

The *object* of the religious consciousness is made evident to us at this point. It is that which so encompasses us that we cannot escape from it, but are determined by it at every point,—it is the *universe*. But what is this feeling of *absolute* dependence which at any one moment cannot be given us by that moment alone? It will have to do with the universe as a whole, and since it is an immediate consciousness, as stated by Schleiermacher in his first proposition, it *must* be, according to his definitions as already explained, such a

contemplation of nature as a whole that in it I am completely lost in nature, and thus am conscious of her in her all-embracing working upon me, and become one with her.

To recur again to the interesting passage above cited (§ 22), this consciousness is parallel, and in some features identical, with that which occurs in the process whereby we become conscious of any object. There is the moment of complete surrender to the object (as the sleeping child), of vivid consciousness of the image excluding consciousness of self, and then that of preponderant consciousness of self in the thoughts which the object excites. Herein "the subject becomes consciously sensitive, and the object consciously an object, and now this coalescence¹ and intimate unification² of sense and object before they separate, and the object distinguished from sense becomes an object of conscious vision, and the subject distinguished from the object becomes consciously possessed of feeling, . . . that is the moment when we lie immediately on the bosom of the infinite universe, when we are its soul, for all its forces and its infinite life are felt to be our own, and it is our body, for we pervade its muscles and its members as our own." At such a moment we are absolutely dependent for we are wholly determined by the universe. We have an immediate consciousness of the universe, and if, now, this feeling of absolute dependence can be carried over into our active life, accompanying the concrete acts of our days, as the feeling of joy at some past event may pervade a long period of time, it constitutes piety.

The thought here expressed by Schleiermacher is so evanescent, obscure, and remote from American modes of thinking, that it seems necessary to let fall upon it what light is contained in other forms employed by him to express it. The *Reden* are, in fact, largely but one series of different expressions for this idea, which Schleiermacher found it difficult to make intelligible to his own generation. He says (§ 19), "Reflection is essential to religion

¹ Ineinandergeflossensein.

² Eingewordensein.

but the reflection of the pious man is only the immediate consciousness of the general being of all finite in the infinite and through the infinite, of all temporal in the eternal and through the eternal. To seek and find this in everything that lives and moves, in all development and change, in all doing and suffering, and to have and know in immediate consciousness life itself only as this being—that is religion.” Again, (§ 20), “True religion is sense and taste for the infinite.” We read, (§ 26), “The universe is in an uninterrupted activity, and reveals itself to us at every moment. Every form which it produces, every being to which it gives a special existence in the fulness of life, every event which it casts out of its ever fruitful lap, is an operation of it upon us; and in these operations, and what results from them for us, to take up into our life every individual thing, not for itself, but as a portion of the whole; every living thing not in its opposition to another thing, but as an exhibition of the infinite—that is religion.” And to quote but one more passage, (§ 29), “The entire religious life consists of two elements: that a man surrender himself to the universe, and let himself be moved upon by that side of the same which it turns toward him at any moment; and then that he transfer this contact—which as such, and in its definite form, is a single feeling—to the centre of his soul, and take it up into the inner unity of his life and being; and the religious life is nothing more than the constant renewal of this act.”

It may serve to bring Schleiermacher's thought out into sharp relief to place it against the background of the ordinary argument for the existence of God drawn from our feeling of dependence. Every thoughtful man feels, as he feels his own existence, his absolute dependence upon some higher being for all he is and has. He is in the world, but he did not put himself there. He thinks, but his course of thought is not caused by himself, and cannot be arrested by himself. His heart beats, but his vital force is not caused nor comprehended by him. He endeavors to comprehend the universe,

but there are limits to his soaring thoughts beyond which he can indeed see dim forms of truths, but which he cannot overstep. Moral perfection ever seems to rise above and recede from him as he attempts to attain it. Vague presentiments of a future fill his soul. Who or what is he? Whence came he? Whither goes he?

Now all this is nothing more or less primarily than the perception by us in ourselves of marks of causation. Here are phenomena; existence, thought, action. They demand an explanation, that is, to be referred to their cause. I am not that cause, but as experiencing these phenomena am dependent on their cause. This cause is God. Such is the argument derived in accordance with the law of causality from the phenomena perceived. Even the perception of a limit of my knowledge is nothing but the same thing. I perceive dimly truth I cannot fully know, because I am not the adequate cause of my own thought. Were I, then all my thought would be perfectly in my own power, could therefore be perfected by me, and would contain no unperfectable elements. Such elements are given. By whom? By an adequate cause: by God. Thus this sort of a feeling of dependence is simply a perception of imperfection, and an argument in accordance with the principle of the cosmological argument to a cause; and when there is proper *feeling* in it, this is nothing but the strength of my conviction of this cause, and the accompanying feelings naturally excited by the thought of him.

How different this from Schleiermacher! Schleiermacher's feeling is consciousness, this feeling is emotion. The former immediately possesses God; the latter follows mediately upon an argument about God. The former is a consciousness of God; the latter takes its rise in a consciousness of ourselves. The former is consciousness of God as now determining me; the latter reflects on my origin and my destiny. The former is unique, mysterious, lying on the border-land between consciousness and absorption into the Divine Being; the latter common and parallel with many other applications of the law of cause and effect, rational

and dry in its processes, only kindling into fervor in its consummation, but neither mysterious nor mystic.

Having defined the religious consciousness as a feeling of absolute dependence, Schleiermacher has further defined this in the extract quoted above from § 4 as relationship with God. All our previous study has only brought out the relation of the soul in this feeling with the universe, but not with God. Schleiermacher must proceed, as he does (Glaub. § 4, 4), to show how the two ideas are the same. He says: "When absolute dependence and relation with God are made equivalent, in our proposition, the meaning is, that the source of our receptive and active existence, which is posited with this consciousness, is to be designated by the expression God, and that this is the truly original meaning of the same."

THIS FEELING AS THE FOUNDATION OF DOGMATICS.

God and the universe are therefore to Schleiermacher in some respect the same. What the more precise statement of this general thought will be we must see later; but now, having defined the nature of religion, we will pause to define its sphere. For here we are to find the precise form of that great thought which was to receive its first full statement from Schleiermacher, that religion has a sphere of its own. That sphere he defines to be the feeling, and thus asserts that it is distinct from all knowledge, and from all the sciences, which are forms of knowledge. Philosophy, historical criticism,—even when it pertains to the contents of the Bible itself,—science, and morals, are all branches having to do with the intellect or the practical activity of man. They have their respective realms and are to be studied and comprehended within those realms. So religion has its realm, as independent as they, and may claim to be judged from within and for itself. The feeling of absolute dependence is thus made the fountain-head of all Christian doctrine. Christian doctrine treats of piety. Piety is the feeling of dependence. Systematic theology has, therefore, only to unfold what is involved in pious feeling.

ing into *fer* will be worth while to linger over some of the passages or *mystic* which Schleiermacher develops this idea. § 19 of the *ness* is one of these. He says, substantially: "The aim of science of every kind is to understand, or know nature or thought, in its peculiar essence. This may lead science up to the idea of a highest and general Governor, in whom the unity of nature consists, and through whom alone it is to be comprehended, and it may say that it cannot comprehend nature without God. Yet all this is not religion, and has nothing to do with it. The measure of knowledge is not the measure of piety, and even the knowledge of God which the pious man has, is, as *such*, different from that which the man of science has. Contemplation is as necessary to him as to the other, but the contemplation of the scientific man rests upon the nature of one finite thing in its connections with, and opposition to, other finite things, and in reference to God, upon the essence of the highest cause, and its relations to all causes and effects, while the pious man is immediately conscious of the general being of all finite in the infinite, of all temporal in the eternal. So in morals, the moral philosopher endeavors to conceive of each human act in its individuality, and in its relation to other acts, which altogether form a system of conduct. The pious man seeks for and traces out in all this, action proceeding forth from God,—that is the activity of God in man. The two methods of viewing the subject will coincide in their results, if both are correct, but the building of the moral *system* is no affair of the pious man as such. Religion accordingly maintains her peculiar territory and character by separating herself entirely from all such science and morals, even when their objects coincide in a certain sense with her own. And yet, neither of these separated domains fills all space, and human nature is not perfected, and the common field not filled out till religion is set side by side with science and morals. She is the necessary and useful third to both the others, and not inferior in dignity and glory to either of them."

The same views are stated more definitely by Schleier-

macher in respect to dogmatics, as follows (Reden, §§ 26, 27): We may take ourselves, he says, so far as possessing the religious feeling, as the object of our consideration, and thus study this feeling itself. The result of this consideration may be called, when reduced to scientific form, a principle or concept, and even a religious principle or concept. And such principles and concepts may be arranged in a system. Thus the system of dogmatics may be formed, and the process is a legitimate and useful one. But when all this is complete, let it ever be understood that it is only knowledge about religion which is thus gained, and not religion itself, which consists in the feeling. Religion may exist in those who know nothing about it formally; and, on the other hand, it can never be produced in one who possesses it not by putting it together out of its elements, or imparting a knowledge of it, as a science may be taught. Religion is therefore a system, in the sense that it has a necessary coherence, so that the way in which one person is affected in a religious sense by a given subject is analogous to the affection of every other person in similar circumstances. Mere chance does not control in this realm. The different great religions, Judaism, Mohammedanism, etc.,—and within Christianity Catholicism and Protestantism,—give examples of the systematic coherence of the different modifications of the religious feeling. Just so there is a system of music, which we call harmony. There are different styles of music in different nations; but harmony is everywhere the same, and has its own internal laws. But, on the other hand, just as the mere knowledge of the laws of harmony does not constitute harmony, which is rather the concord of sweet sounds; so it is not religion, or any necessary part of religion, to be conscious of this inner coherence. How sad were the case of man if systematic knowledge were necessary to religion! For many of the systems are exceedingly bad, theologians having neglected, more than any other class of men, to listen attentively and devoutly to the utterances of that which they have attempted to describe. And in one further respect is

the fundamental difference of religion from these systems of dogmatics evident, in that the latter attempt to develop one truth from another, while in religion all truth is *immediately* known.

These ideas in respect to dogmatics reappear in the Glaubenslehre, or System of Doctrine. The problem to be solved here, says Schleiermacher (§ 2, 1), is not to set up a system of doctrine of which use ought to be made in the Christian church, or in which the doctrines of the Christian religion are proved according to the principles of reason; but to set forth systematically that doctrine which has really arisen within the church itself. In conformity with this conception Schleiermacher has attempted in his whole system nothing more than the systematic development of the fundamental principle as above announced. In every doctrine he gives that form which naturally flows out of his "feeling of dependence," without proof or further discussion, except so far as necessary to the proper unfolding of his ideas. Texts of Scripture are sometimes referred to, but never properly quoted; and of exegetical argumentation there is not a trace. The idea of his work is most emphatically that his views shall shine by their own light.

We have now clearly before us Schleiermacher's views as to the sphere of religion. Religion is founded in feeling, may be described by aid of the intellect, but ever moves in the sphere where it originates, and can neither be derived from or proved by that intellect, or confounded with the operations of the will.

There would be one apparent advantage gained for dogmatics were this position sound and tenable. Schleiermacher would gain his object, and the "eternal peace" between religion and science would be forever made possible, if not secured. There are many points with which apologetics has now to busy itself which might then be neglected. If religion is concerned only with the feeling, what do I care about the metaphysical possibility of miracles or their historical reality, since these are matters of the intellect? Did

Christ really rise from the dead? It is of no consequence, if Schleiermacher be right; for eternal and Christian truth is independent of historical facts. And there is force in the idea that no religion depending upon a historical basis can become or be the absolute religion. It must not be liable to be shaken by every assault upon those historical facts, because, while *connected* with them, it is at the same time *superior* to them. Christianity can only be the absolute religion because it is at the same time the *natural* religion found in all human consciences, and the perfected and divine *form* of such natural religion. Christian dogmatics must therefore — and this is the true element of Schleiermacher's thought — be in a certain sense independent of extra-dogmatic science, and yet — here we contradict Schleiermacher — must embrace that science so far as to harmonize with it. In the old fable of the water and fire with which hell was to be put out and heaven burned up, that men might serve God neither from desire of reward nor fear of punishment, but from love, there is this truth, — that no service of God is true service till it proceeds from a love untainted by selfishness. Yet nevertheless hell and heaven exist, and must be taken into account and made proper use of. So dogmatics must be independent of, and yet connected with, science. The Christian needs no help from the argument from design to prove to him the existence of God; he knows it from his own spiritual experience. But if nature does not also testify in her linked system of designs to a Designer, then she is not in harmony with the testimony of the soul, and thus discord is introduced into the universe.

Schleiermacher's view of religion is too restricted, and the foundation too narrow upon which he attempts to rear the structure of dogmatics. Philosophy and Christian theology alike demand that thought shall never cease to work upon these themes, or be content until religious and scientific thought of every kind unite in one harmonious system. The postulate of speculation in this department is: The universe is one. There is proof enough for theism in the Christian

heart and experience; but the fullest view of it is not gained till the attributes of Deity are developed largely under the teaching of nature. Thus Schleiermacher's view of the sphere of religion is both right and suggestive, and wrong and misleading. It does not furnish a good starting-point for a wise development of theological science or wise apologetics to-day. It is too narrow; but we fear that it may be more — that it may be so incorrect as to fail to yield all the facts of Christian consciousness, or even to contradict some of them. We fear that it may be found not even to afford a basis for a consistent Christian theism, much less a Christian theology. We must therefore pursue our examination further, and pass to one of the results of Schleiermacher's fundamental principle, and consider

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD.

We have already remarked that to Schleiermacher God and the universe are in some sense the same. The most natural way of identifying them is by pantheism; and he has often been accused of pantheism — an accusation to which much force has been lent by the well-known passage in which he would offer a lock to the manes of the sainted Spinoza (Reden, § 20). This point will then principally claim our attention: Was Schleiermacher a pantheist?

Schleiermacher's proof of the existence of God is our immediate consciousness of it in the feeling of absolute dependence. He even applies the word *Gottesbewusstsein*, consciousness of God, to this feeling.¹ If we have an imme-

¹ Bretschneider as translated in the Bib. Sac., Vol. x. p. 614 (the original is not before me) says: "The author [Schleiermacher] understands by the divine consciousness [*Gottesbewusstsein*] not the consciousness of God, that is, the knowledge of him, but 'the being of God in man in the form of consciousness and conscious activity.'" We are not sure that we understand this. But lest it should be held to invalidate the above statement of the meaning of the word *Gottesbewusstsein*, we repeat that this means grammatically and according to Schleiermacher's usage, the immediate consciousness of God, and add the following references: G. I. § 32, "The finding of one's self absolutely dependent in immediate consciousness, is the only way in which in general one's own being, and the infinite being of God can be *one's consciousness*." How this can be, is ex-

mediate consciousness of God, this is of course superior to any mediate proof of his existence, and so Schleiermacher says (Glaub. I. § 33): "The recognition that this feeling of absolute dependence, since our consciousness represents therein the finiteness of being in general, is not something accidental, nor different in different persons, but a universal element of human life, completely supplies the place for Christian dogmatics of all the so-called proofs of the existence of God."

By immediate consciousness, then, we know God. But what kind of a God is this which we thus know? Is it a pantheistic God, as is often declared?

Schleiermacher always disclaimed the name of pantheist, and that with much earnestness and warmth.¹ When to one of the passages of the Reden (§ 20) — "so far as the general being of all finite in the infinite lives immediately in you" — the objection had been made that he did not speak of the highest being as of the *cause* of the world, but as of the world itself, he replies, in his note, that it is impossible to think of the world as a true whole, without thinking of God at the same time. In a similar vein, he writes (Reden, § 43), "How could any one say I have sketched a religion without God, when I have certainly set forth nothing else than precisely the immediate and original being of God in us through the feeling? Or, is not God the only and highest unity? Is it not God alone before whom and in whom everything individual disappears? And if you behold the world as a whole and a totality, can you do this otherwise than in God?"

plained in Reden, § 22, as above cited. Gottesbewusstsein is identified with Selbstbewusstsein, when in G. I. § 32, 1, we read of "the consciousness of God contained in (enthalten) consciousness." So again, § 33, "the feeling of absolute dependence, and the consciousness of God given in and along with it" (darin mitgegeben). Similar phrases occur, G. II. § 94, 2. These expressions, so consistent with the whole doctrine of Schleiermacher as presented above, are to interpret such further expressions as second Rede, note 18: "all pious notions set forth the immediate being of God in us through the feeling," and not *vice versa*.

¹ Certainly the word "Weltgeist," R. § 32, cannot be properly used against him, as he fully shows in his note on the word.

Certainly so much as this must be admitted, that Schleiermacher might justly refuse to be classed with Spinoza or accused of a hasty materialistic pantheism. Not that Spinoza deserves such a characterization as the last phrase might seem to imply. His pantheism begins in the identification of all things as modes of the one substance — God; but it should never be forgotten that he ended with the “intellectual love to God” as the highest virtue of man. Still, his system is that of a hard and mathematical necessity. There is life in his world, but this is only one of those elements from experience which he has, in spite of himself, illogically introduced into a system which to be self-consistent must be purely rational. The properties of the one substance — God, are contained in it as the properties of a sphere are in it. There may be a process in our knowledge of those properties, but they are in themselves co-existent, of necessity, from the first. In God there can properly be no change, no true life, no real causation, no freedom, no God, — as alone the world can worship a God. This is not the doctrine of Schleiermacher, as we shall see. And as for a pantheism which says the material world is all, denies spirit, teaches a blind force working in nature, and reduces us to the “philosophy of dirt,” — there is none of this in Schleiermacher, and could be none in a man who, whatever his defects, stood at the beginning, and was the fountain-head of modern religious thought in Germany.

How remote Schleiermacher is from being a disciple of Spinoza may be seen not only from single expressions, but from the whole foundation and development of his theology. He defines the nature of God (Glaub. I. § 55) as “absolute spirituality,” and explains this as meaning that the divine causality is to be conceived as “absolutely living,” and remarks that this is an essential attribute of God if the absolute feeling of dependence or piety is to be true and real, for a blind and dead necessity would not be anything with which we could stand in relation. Again he says, God is not to be identified with the world. “There is a profane

explanation of the absolute dependence, viz. as if it expressed only the dependence of the finite individual upon the totality and sum of all finiteness, and as if that which is posited in it were not God but the world. But we cannot view this explanation otherwise than as a misunderstanding. We know also what it is to have the world posited in our consciousness, but this is different from the positing of God in the same. For the world, if one posits it as unity, is nevertheless a divided unity, which is at the same time the totality of all antitheses and differences, and of all the manifold which is determined by these, of which every man is a part, and of all whose antitheses he partakes. Being one with the world in consciousness is, therefore, nothing else than being conscious of ourselves as a part sharing in the life of this whole; and this cannot possibly be a consciousness of absolute dependence. Rather, since all co-existing parts stand in reciprocity with one another, this 'being one with the whole' has in the case of every such part a twofold character,—a feeling of dependence, it is true, so far as the other parts spontaneously operate upon it, but also, as well, a feeling of freedom, so far as it is also itself spontaneously operative upon the other parts,—and the one cannot be separate from the other. The absolute feeling of dependence is therefore not to be explained as a positing of the world, but of God, as the absolute undivided unity. For neither can there be a feeling of freedom in immediate reference to God, nor can the feeling of dependence in reference to him be of such a kind that a feeling of freedom can be added to it, as an antithesis; but on the highest plane of Christian piety, and in the clearest consciousness of the most unlimited spontaneity, the absoluteness of the feeling of dependence in reference to him remains undiminished" (Glaub. I. § 32, 2).

But the question remains still unanswered, and we have not yet met with any decisive rebuttal of the charge of pantheism. The essence of pantheistic systems is, that they deny, or avoid, or fail to affirm the *personality of God*, by which we mean his intelligent and free activity. Our ques-

tion with reference to Schleiermacher may be accordingly more sharply defined as this : Does he view God as personal ?

In one remarkable passage he denies the personality of God, or at least will not affirm it. This is Reden § 43. After having spoken of the concept of God, which when rightly formed is only "the apprehension and analysis of the different ways in which the unity of the single and the whole expresses itself in the feeling," he goes on to say : "Only that the case is not the same with this idea of God as it is commonly conceived, as with other ideas, because this claims to be the highest, and to stand above all others, and yet is itself, *because God is conceived too much like us, and as a being personally thinking and willing*, brought down into the region of antitheses. Wherefore it seems natural, that the more anthropomorphically God is conceived, the easier another form of conception arises over against the first, *a concept of the highest being not as personally thinking and willing, but as the general Necessity, exalted above all personality, producing and combining all thinking and being*. And nothing seems less proper than when the adherents of the one view accuse those who, repelled by its anthropomorphism, have taken refuge in the other of being atheistic, or, on the other hand, when the latter accuse the former, on account of their anthropomorphism, of idolatry, and declare their piety to be of no value. *But any one can be pious whether he hold to the one view or the other* ; yet his piety, the divine in his feeling, must be better than his concept, and the more he seeks to find in the concept, and the more he looks upon this as the essence of piety, the less he understands himself."

There is in this passage, as it seems to us, a grave misconception of the demands of true piety. Piety is, in plain language, essentially a choice of the will of God as our law of life, a *Sich-hingeben*, as Schleiermacher has it, and is ever accompanied by the desire to please him. But both of these elements demand a personal God. The Christian's experiences — his feelings, not in the Schleiermacherian sense, but the

ordinary one,—demand such an idea of God as shall make personal pleasure on God's part in the obedience of the Christian, personal answers to his prayers, personal help in his struggle with temptation, possibilities, for such are the actualities of experience. True piety cannot consist then, in our view, with a pantheistic conception of God, except so far as we must recognize the possibility of self-contradiction in man, whose heart, like Jacobi's, is often Christian while his head is heathen. Yet Schleiermacher is not inconsistent with himself at this point, and if piety is consciousness of absolute dependence on the infinite and free self-surrender to this, not by way of active service, as we define piety, but by passive commission of one's being, it is of no consequence what sort of a force that may be to which we give ourselves. Hence, we are led now to suspect, what I think we shall subsequently find established, that Schleiermacher's system, whether actually pantheistic or not, does not logically demand a conception of God more elevated than the pantheistic.

It is true that some of Schleiermacher's expressions seem to raise a doubt whether he means by "personal" precisely what we mean by it, viz., possessed of intellect, free-will, and conscience. Sometimes it seems to be nothing more than individuality, as a stone has individual existence apart from other stones, e.g. in several such passages as Reden § 3,—*sich als ein besonderes hinstellen*. But our passage makes this plainer where "personally thinking and willing" brings out clearly the first two elements of personality as we define it, and where these are explained as being "like us." Another passage in which he defines the conception against which he is contending shows that he did not labor under any indefiniteness of idea, for he speaks (Reden § 44) with disapproval of the idea that the highest Being personally thinks and wills, as existing external to the world.

This point being settled, the expressions of Schleiermacher in which he sets a low value upon personality assume more significance and importance. The whole of § 44 of the Reden, did our space permit us to transfer it entire to

these pages, would throw great light upon the matter. We content ourselves with the following extracts from it. "The way in which the Deity is present to a man in the feeling, decides upon the worth of his religion, not the way in which he, ever inadequately, pictures this in the concept [of God] of which we are now treating. When, therefore, as it commonly happens, with how much right I will not here decide, he who stands upon this level, but spurns (*verschmähen*) the concept of a personal God, is either in general called a pantheist, or more particularly is named after Spinoza, I will only remark that this disdain of thinking the Deity personal, does not decide against the presence of the Deity in the feeling, but that the reason of it may be *humble consciousness of the limitation of personal existence in general, and particularly also of the consciousness which is connected with personality*. . . . The inclination to this concept of a personal God, or the rejection of the same, and the inclination to that of an impersonal omniscience, depends upon the course of the fancy ; fancy being understood, not as something subordinate and confused, but as the highest and most independent in man. . . . Among truly religious men there have never been zealots, enthusiasts, or fanatics for this concept [of a personal God] ; and so far as one understands by atheism, as is often the case, nothing but delicacy and reluctance in reference to this concept, the truly pious would contemplate it with great composure. . . . Whoever insists that the essence of piety consists in confession that the highest Being is personal, though he must thereby shut many excellent men out from religion, cannot have had much acquaintance with piety, or have understood the deepest words of the most zealous defenders of his own faith."

Landerer (*ibid.* p. 333) quotes from a letter of Schleiermacher's to Jacobi the following sentences: "You (*viz.* Jacobi) deify consciousness because you do not wish to deify nature, but the one is as much an idol-making deification in my eyes as the other. . . . Can you better envisage God as personal, than you can envisage him as *natura*

naturans? Must not a person necessarily become a finite thing to you if you will give it life? Are an infinite understanding and will anything else than empty words, since understanding and will, in that they are distinguished from one another, also necessarily limit each other?"

In the sixth note on the second Rede Schleiermacher says: "Under mythology I understand in general the presentation of a purely ideal object in historical form when anything is set forth as *happening* in the Divine Being, e.g. divine decrees which are formed in reference to something which has already occurred in the world, or also to modify other divine decrees, which are therefore prior, *to say nothing of the individual divine decrees which give to the idea of the hearing of prayer its reality.*" This "mythology," of course, he utterly rejects.

Before leaving the Reden, as we are about to do, to return to the Glaubenslehre, let us notice one remark of Landerer's in the work quoted above (p. 333). "Schleiermacher does not content himself, when considering piety, so far as it is connected with the belief in a personal God and a personal immortality, with viewing these religious ideas only *in distinction from* the subjective disposition and experience, and removing the relative and pictorial element in them, but he makes point against these ideas from the pantheistic point of view, as if they had originated only in a false introduction of the interest of knowledge; yes, even as if they would be found to rest upon defective piety." These remarks are, we think, fully justified in the above quotations.

We turn first to Schleiermacher's treatment of the attributes of God. He begins his presentation by saying (Glaub. I. § 50): "All attributes which we ascribe to God, are intended to designate not something special in God, but only something special in the manner of referring the absolute feeling of dependence to him." This is in entire consistency with the fundamental idea of Schleiermacher in reference to the function of dogmatics, an ontological knowledge of God being no object of dogmatic research. In his remarks upon this

section, he says "that the speculative content of all affirmations in respect to the divine attributes is denied out of the simple consideration that there are several such attributes. If they are to be regarded as expressing something in the nature of God, he is thereby drawn down into the region of antitheses, and thus his unity destroyed. The latter is the indispensable prerequisite to all piety, for in the feeling of dependence we have given to us and must ever have, only one simple being. Yet we may adopt any form of speculative doctrine which leaves this necessary condition of all piety unaffected."

The object of the theologian in setting forth divine attributes, in Schleiermacher's view, is only to explain the absolute feeling of dependence. As this is a consciousness of the operation of God, the divine attributes are modes of explanation of the divine causation, and are to be referred always to this. His next proposition therefore is (§ 51): "The absolute causality to which the absolute feeling of dependence points, can only be described thus: that it is on the one hand distinguished from that causality contained within the system of nature, and consequently antithetic to it, but on the other hand, in its extent posited equal to it."

Beginning the nearer definition of his theme, Schleiermacher says (§ 52): "By the eternity of God we understand the absolutely timeless causality of God, which conditions time itself, as well as everything temporal." § 53: "By the omnipresence of God we understand the absolutely spaceless causality of God, which conditions space itself, as well as everything in space."

More interesting for our present purpose is the definition of omnipotence (§ 54). "In the concept of the divine omnipotence are embraced (1) that the entire system of nature, comprehending all spaces and times, is founded in the divine causality, which, as eternal and omnipresent, is antithetic to all finite causality; and (2) that the divine causality, as our feeling of dependence expresses it, is perfectly displayed in the totality of finite being, consequently also that every-

thing really becomes, and occurs, to which there is a causality in God."

This seems to draw perilously near pantheism. The activity of God is not only made the cause of the force of nature, but absolutely identified with it. Still it may be that God reigns over nature as personally superior to it, though for reason identifying his activity with it. This "causality in God" may mean only a "positive volition of God," by which the last sentence of the paragraph quoted becomes only an expression of what all admit, — that when God wills a thing it comes to pass. If the definition is thus to escape pantheism, it must rescue the personality of God. The central point in the idea of personality is free-will, and this involves necessarily the choice of possible alternatives. God must at least be *able* to do what he does not do. Now, we shall see from the following extracts that this essential element of personality is denied, and that God thus becomes identified with the universe, as an impersonal, necessary force. Schleiermacher says (§ 54, 2): "We come to the idea of the divine omnipotence only by interpreting the absolute feeling of dependence, and consequently we are without any point of departure for making claims to a knowledge of the divine causality which shall go beyond the system of nature which that feeling embraces." We translate here as literally as possible, even at a sacrifice of the English, for the sake of doing no injustice to our author.¹ He proceeds: "In reply to this, it seems of course possible to say that what we call the All, consists of the real and the possible; that Omnipotence must therefore embrace these two; but that if it displays itself completely and exhaustively in the totality of finite being, it embraces only the real, and not the possible. But how little the distinction between the possible and real can be a distinction for God becomes clear when we note in

¹ The German is: "Wir kommen zur Vorstellung der göttlichen Allmacht nur durch die Auffassung des schlechthinigen Abhängigkeitsgefühls, und es fehlt uns also an jedem Anknüpfungspunkt, um an die göttliche Ursächlichkeit Ansprüche zu machen, welche über den Naturzusammenhang, den eben jenes Gefühl umfasst, hinausgehen."

what cases we ourselves chiefly apply it. We think, in the first place, many a thing possible in an object in consequence of the general concept of the genus to which it belongs, which is not however real, because the special form of the existence of the same excludes precisely this thing, while in case of other individuals of the same genus, other forms which were also possible under the generic concept are excluded for the same reason. But here something appears possible to us only because the determination of the particular form of the individual presents a problem which we are never able perfectly to solve. In reference to God such a distinction between the general and the individual is non-existent; but in him the genus is originally the totality of all its individual existences, and these are, again, at the same time posited and established with their place in the genus, so that what does not hereby become real, is in reference to him also not possible.

“So again, we say, there is many a thing possible in consequence of the nature of an object — its inner determinateness through the genus and as an individual being taken together — which nevertheless does not become real in and on the same, because it is prevented by the position of the object in the sphere of general reciprocal causation. We make this distinction with right, and ascribe to that which is thus thought of as possible, as well as to the other, a truth, because we are able only by means of this indirect process to come out of the unfruitful sphere of abstraction, and form a living conception of the fact that the development of the individual being depends on a variety of conditions. Could we, however, get a general view for every point of the influence of the entire system of reciprocal causation, we should say at once, what has not become real was not possible within the system of nature. But in God the one is not separated from the other, — that which exists for itself established in one way, and the reciprocal causation established in another way, — but both are established with and through one another, so that in reference to him, only that is possible which is founded as much in the one as in the other.

“All cases of this distinction which have a truth for us, may be referred to these two. For the idea of a possible beyond the totality of the real has no truth even for us, because not only does the pious consciousness not bring us to this point, but more, however we may have arrived there in any case, we are thereby compelled to assume a self-limitation of the divine omnipotence which can never be given to us, and for which no reason can be assigned, except so that what was conceived as possible should be compelled to come into existence not as an increase, but in some way as a decrease of the real,—whereby the whole presupposition is destroyed.”

The absolute irreconcilability of these passages with the conception of a free will will appear at once to every reader. The point is, however, rendered clearer by the following passage in the paragraph succeeding that above quoted. “A distinction between *can* and *will* exists as little in God as that between real and possible. For whichever of the two may be greater than the other, the *will* or the *can*, there always lies therein a limitation, which can only be removed when we place the two equal in extent. But even the separation of the two, as if *can* were another condition from *will*, is an imperfection. For if I am to think of a *can* without a *will*, such a *will* must proceed from an individual impulse, and one therefore occasioned [in God by some other being]; and if I am to think of a *will* without a *can*, such a *can* cannot have its ground in the internal power [of God], but must be one given from without. If, consequently, because there is in God no willing from individual impulses, and no power increasing and decreasing under influences from without, we cannot separate the two in thought in respect to God, therefore, because volition and power together necessarily constitute activity, neither are volition and activity to be separated from one another, nor power and activity, but the entire omnipotence is undividedly and undiminishedly that which does and works all.”

This is positive pantheism, and it seems to us unnecessarily

so. Schleiermacher in conformity to his fundamental principles might have said: We have in the absolute feeling of dependence the immediate consciousness of God. We never come in contact with nature but so that this consciousness may immediately arise within us. Our experience, and consequently this consciousness, stops with nature, and therefore we have no occasion to inquire for a God beyond it, and all such inquiry must end in idle speculation, unverifiable at the bar of consciousness. God is living force; more, as to his personality, etc., we do not, and cannot know. This would have been a negative pantheism—a failure to rise into the clear light of Christian theism. But here are positive statements as to what the relation of genus and individual is, as to the ontological meaning of the nature of an object, as to the mode of the operation of the divine will, as to the origin under certain circumstances of divine power,—all of them speculation, and as it seems to us peculiarly doubtful speculation. Schleiermacher thus oversteps the limits of his method as laid down by himself, and only succeeds in confounding himself with the opponents of Christianity. The foundation on which he would build was too narrow, and the structure he could raise upon it too insignificant for either his soaring intellect or his Christian faith. He ought to have begun again at the very beginning. Not doing so, he has fatally marred his work, but he has also shown us at the same time more clearly the insufficiency of his first principles.

If further proof of the real scope of Schleiermacher's theology be needed, we may point to his utterances respecting the Incarnation. If our interpretation of him be correct, there can be no true incarnation, and if not correct, still the relation of God to the man Jesus will illustrate the mode under which the divine nature is conceived. The presentation of this subject begins at § 93. The historical reality of the appearance of Jesus in the world is firmly maintained, and it is declared that there must be in him a truly archetypal (*urbildlich*) element, which must appear in every historical element of his person. In § 94 this archetypal element is more fully defined.

“The Redeemer is like all men in consequence of the identity of human nature, but distinguished from all through the constant power of his *consciousness of God, which was a proper being of God in him.*” The natural interpretation of these words, whereby all such assumption by Deity of flesh in Jesus Christ as the church teaches is forever denied, is the correct one. Many passages might be cited in proof of our statement, but one or two will suffice. In § 94, 2 we read: “To ascribe to Christ an absolutely powerful consciousness of God, and to ascribe to him a being of God in him, is one and the same thing.” And again: “so far as we posit the consciousness of God in his consciousness as steadily and exclusively determining every moment, and consequently *this perfect indwelling of the highest Being as his peculiar being and his innermost self.*” In § 95 he remarks: “The church’s formulas of the person of Christ stand in need of an extended critical treatment.”

But was Schleiermacher after all truly a pantheist? He was so far as his treatment of Christianity is concerned, in his Dogmatics, but it may have been because he was caught, entangled, in a false method. Was he really himself, in his speculations, when out in the free field of unrestrained thinking, a pantheist? This question cannot be avoided, and will press itself with power upon every one who has learned to love him in his personal character, or prize him as a helper in the great religious reformation of Germany in this century. In concluding this article we therefore address ourselves to its answer, and turn to the *Dialektik*, Schleiermacher’s purely philosophical work.

The fundamental idea of Schleiermacher’s philosophy is that knowledge and being correspond. He opposes Kant at this point, who held that we have an experience and a knowledge which not only *may* not, but *do* not, correspond to the reality of external things. Knowledge possesses to Schleiermacher reality and meaning only as it possesses a real correspondence to being possessing actual, objective existence. Thus there stand over against each other these two

realms of ideas and of things, and what is formally true of the one holds also of the other.

The intellectual world forms a system of concepts which may be arranged, as is familiarly done in logic, under a scheme of genera and species, terminating at the lower end in individuals, and at the upper in the most comprehensive concept which can be imagined. A familiar example of such a concept would be that of being, so long used in logic as the *summum genus*. Beyond this there will be found, if thought proceeds in the same direction, a limit,¹ as Schleiermacher calls it, which the editor of the *Dialektik* has well defined² as follows: "Schleiermacher has designated by the term 'limit' not simply that which as a concept is the highest in the series, which comprises all other concepts under itself, but also that unity which lies absolutely above the concept, above even the highest concept, to which one draws no nearer however high he ascends in the series, and which consequently is not identical with the totality of knowledge, but is its absolute foundation." Within the sphere over which this limit stands exalted every concept sustains the double relation of genus to all species below it, and species to all genera above it.

Now, parallel to this intellectual world, and interpretable by it, there is the world of being. This, too, has its scale of superior and inferior members; only here the concept is replaced by force, and genus and species become force and phenomenon. Every phenomenon is a force to those members of the series below it, and every force a phenomenon to those above it. The summit of the series would be that force which, like the *summum genus*, would be only force, and never phenomenon — the force in all the lower members of which they would be only manifestations. Such a force would, however, be strictly a member of the series. Beyond it, constituting no link in its chain, but the presupposition and foundation of the whole, there must be something corresponding to the limit in the intellectual world, and this is

¹ "Grenze," — "die obere Grenze des Begriffes," § 183. ² Note to § 183.

the Deity. It is defined by Schleiermacher's editor as "the truly unconditioned, all-conditioning; while the highest force [in the above-mentioned series] conditions other things only in such a way that it is itself also conditioned by them."

The absolute foundation of the world of being is sometimes represented by Schleiermacher as *corresponding to*, sometimes is *identified with*, the limit of the intellectual world. It is the absolute unity, indivisible, containing within itself no antithesis, and standing in no antithetic relation with being. The highest force, because it is higher than some other force which stands in the relation of phenomenon to it, is a member of the antithetical series, and corresponds consequently to the *summum genus*, and for this reason it cannot be the Deity (§ 183).

This, then, is Schleiermacher's conception of God, philosophically derived: God is the absolute foundation of all thought and being. Schleiermacher defines the difference of his system from pantheism at this point, by saying that "the latter makes the Deity identical with the highest force, that is, it is the all-embracing and one force of which the other forces and the being of the world are only the phenomena." Spinoza's conception of God, he says, is a mere abstract formula (§ 183). Later he says (under § 186): "The Deity of Spinoza is nothing but the highest force of which I have spoken." He mentions under the same section the different ideas about God in relation to matter which have been presented in opposition to that of Spinoza, and says finally: "A third view stands, as must be confessed, higher, viz. that God created the world out of nothing, in which it is presupposed that the final step in the series was chaotic matter. But if the Deity be so conceived, what is it? Nothing but the highest unity of force, set free from all limits, of which the world is the total manifestation and the revelation; for it is force which produces the phenomenon; and the thinking upon God would then be nothing else than what the physical and ethical thinking also is — no transcendental thinking at

all.¹ The idea whereby it has been proposed to confute Spinoza is really the very idea of Spinoza himself."

Schleiermacher has thus apparently risen above pantheism; but he has finished his discussion by rising to such a height above the Christian doctrine also, that from his dizzy elevation the latter seems the same as Spinoza's, just as objects upon the earth are confused to the eye of the aeronaut. This conception of God was obtained by an abstract and purely intellectual process. God is thus in no proper sense of the words given to us. We may know *that* he is by a necessary implication of thought, but *him* we do not know, nor have we formed any idea *what* he is. The conception of God gained up to this point is therefore defective. Schleiermacher seeks to remedy this defect in the following manner; and we beg leave, before passing over to this point, to call the attention of our readers in advance to the dissimilarity of process and similarity of result with those already seen in the Glaubenslehre.

The distinction between intellection and volition enters Schleiermacher's system at an early point. The certainty of the former is secured by its dependence upon the transcendental ground or limit of thought, that is, upon the Deity. "But," he says, "we need a transcendental ground for our certainty in willing, as well as for that in knowing, and the two must be the same" (§ 214). The somewhat obscure phrase "certainty in willing" is explained in the words: "The ground of the agreement of our volition with being — that is to say, that our action really goes out of ourselves, and that external being is accessible to the reason, and will receive the ideal stamp of our will, lies only in the purely transcendental identity of the ideal and real" (ib.). It means, then, the certainty that volition is no mere subjective process, without meaning or place in the system of nature. This transcendental ground, common to both intellection and

¹ The passage (under § 186, p. 119) is ambiguous, but I think the sense demands the above translation: "Das Denken Gottes wäre dann nichts anderes, als das physische und ethische Denken auch ist, durchaus kein transcendentes."

volition, must be given in both, if given at all, and if given in both, then in "the relative identity" of both; i.e. in that in which the two come to an identity, viz. in the *feeling*, which, as the end of thought and the beginning of volition, is the identity of both, but only a *relative* identity, since one or the other of the two always preponderates. "With our consciousness there is also given to us the consciousness of God as a component part of our self-consciousness as well as of our external consciousness" (§ 215).

Precisely what this feeling is remains somewhat indistinct. Certainly it is not exactly the religious feeling of dependence, although allied to it. Schleiermacher says: "The intuition of God is never really attained, but remains only indirect schematism." Here he refers to an intuition given in the feeling. He continues: "However, it is under this form entirely pure of everything foreign. The *religious* feeling is, to be sure, one really attained, but it is never pure, for the consciousness of God in it is ever through something else" (§ 215).

But, however this feeling and the religious feeling may differ, they agree remarkably in the kind and degree of knowledge of God which they produce. Schleiermacher says, almost in the words of the Glaubenslehre: "We have knowledge only of the being of God in us, and in things, but not at all of a being of God external to the world, or in itself" (§ 216). Further: "There is no antithesis of concept and object,¹ and of *will* and *can* or *ought* posited in him." "The being of God in itself cannot be given to us; for there is in him no concept, except in the identity with the object. We have, therefore, a concept of him *only so far as we are God*, i.e. have him in us," — a marvellously illogical conclusion, and yet Schleiermacher's. Again: "If a being of God external to the world were given us, God and the world would be in this way separated, and by this means the idea of God or the idea of the world is in any case

¹ Or, "except it is identical." — Germ. "Denn es giebt in ihm keinen Begriff als in der Identität mit dem Gegenstande."

destroyed. For (a) if both, without reference to the separation, are yet to coincide at all points, the world, which is posited under the forms of time and space, must be posited as an infinite one, in which infinity it cannot be conceived of as dependent, and so does not appear to require a transcendent ground. Or (b) if, to save the dependence, the two do *not* coincide at all points, but the being of God extends beyond the being of the world, the question rises, whether the entire being of God which extends beyond the world, differs from that [part] which is reflected in it. In the affirmative case, there is posited a difference in God, and he is not the absolute unity. In the negative, the being of the world could not be founded in him, because otherwise the part of him extending beyond the being of the world must also found a world, and consequently the world must be equivalent to his entire activity, — whereby we are brought back to the former supposition.”

So much for negative results. Of positive definitions as to our knowledge of God, Schleiermacher gives us few. He says: “The two ideas, the world and God, are correlates. They are not identical, but one is not to be thought without the other,—the world not without God; God also not without the world” (§ 219). “We have no right to establish any other relation between them than that of their co-existence”¹ (§ 224). Any other expression than this is useless, for it will either destroy the idea of the world or of God, or will amount to the same thing with it. Yet the ideas are not the same.

In pausing at this point, as the final result of Schleiermacher’s philosophical consideration of this subject, we must beware of thinking that he means thereby to leave the question of the personality of God, as commonly understood, untouched, and simply to avoid discussing it. This is no more the purpose of the Dialektik than of the Glaubenslehre. It is definitely intended to exclude the idea of personality, on the supposition that to admit its possibility, — I had almost

¹ “als das des Zusammenseins beider.”

said to leave its possibility unrefuted, — were that “saying something more” so rigorously opposed. Personality is, and must be, positively denied. Free activity on God’s part, as for example, in the creation of the world, is a descending into the antithesis of the necessary and the free, and is accordingly unthinkable (§ 225, note; compare passages above quoted from § 186).

The sum of the whole matter from the stand-point of philosophy is, then, this: (a) Schleiermacher’s conception of God is to him absolutely undefinable in a positive way, and negatively defined is lacking in all the elements which the mind of man demands to constitute the idea of personality. It consequently amounts to nothing. If the formula of Spinoza is abstract, as Schleiermacher says, his own is empty. (b) His practical God is simply the force of the world considered as independent of its phenomenal appearance; that is, it is the world itself, for while *logically*, it is *not really*, different from the latter. This is, according to our conception, pantheism.

If we now cast a glance back over our whole study we find certain suggestions as to the permanent value of Schleiermacher’s work. We refer here, not to the many incidental services which he rendered, and which the church has ever affectionately to cherish, like his vindication of the historical reality of the Redeemer’s life; but to the main trend of his system, — to his services to dogmatic thought. His aim was to establish an eternal peace between science and religion by vindicating for religion an exclusive sphere of its own. The idea was grand. He founded religion, therefore, upon Christian experience, a foundation broad enough, and one on which dogmatics builds to-day more than ever before, and in which she has what Schleiermacher sought, an independent sphere. This service is permanent and incalculably great. But he defined experience as a determination of the feeling, which was an unwarrantable restriction, and narrowed even this to a form half mystic and intangible. He excluded all the reg-

ulated and precise knowledge of the intellect from theology, even when they had common objects of thought. He would simply give an interpretation of Christian experience as defined by him, and constitute this into the system of Christian truth. The result was an indistinct and undefined pantheism. The tendency of his heart to mysticism prevented him from rising above it, but the demands of his mind for clear thinking compelled him to define it more closely. Though he had excluded philosophy from theology, he was compelled, by the irresistible tendency of the human intellect, to philosophize, and constructed a pantheistic philosophy to justify a pantheistic theology. And thus his entire system, from the nearer definition of its first and true conception, is but one great architectonic failure, and a beacon of warning rather than of welcome to every voyager of the seas of thought. Kant, Hegel, and Schleiermacher are but

“ruined columns left alone
Of a temple ne'er complete.”

Religion does constitute a sphere by itself. Christian experience is a sufficient foundation for a Christian theology. But the universe is one, and all God's ways testify of him. A complete theology will therefore draw from nature; there need be no quarrel between science and theology, though there will be conflict. Perfect harmony between the two will only be gained when a perfect knowledge of God's ways in gracious dealings with the soul is joined by a perfect knowledge of his ways in nature, and that will be only in heaven. Meantime the theologian must “stand and wait,” but in confident hope, KNOWING IN WHOM HE HAS BELIEVED.